



FACULTY OF HUMANITIES SCHOOL OF SOCIAL SCIENCE

THE CUSTOMARY SIGNIFICANCE OF USING 'IHLAHLALOMLAHLANKOSI' IN DEATH PROCESSES WITHIN
THE ENQABENI COMMUNITY

BY

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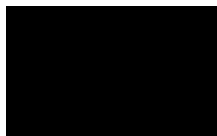
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Dedication

This thesis is dedicated to all the youth of South Africa. It concerns me as a youth in Africa that our customs seem to be competing with the rise of industrial revolutions or westernization which sort to erode the significance of our customs, hence this thesis is only an academic achievement to me as a student in anthropology, but I hope to preserve indigenous knowledge, which future generations will look at and be proud of. I also dedicated this thesis to those individuals who are doing Bachelor of Social Science in Augmented and those who come from disadvantaged families, who are currently doubting if they will ever obtain a master's degree from UKZN, as they are forever reminded that they are part of the 'massification project'. For me, finishing this thesis is a sign that you are also capable of achieving more, 'broken crayons do give good images. Black child, *inkunzi isematholeni*.

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ABSTRACT

This study contributed to the African qualitative understanding of the significant use of *Ihlahlalomlahlankosi/Umlahlankosi* (tree branch/leaf), also known as *Ziziphus Mucronata*, in death processes by the eNqabeni Community in Pietermaritzburg, KwaZulu-Natal, South Africa. Drawing from the Social Constructivism Theory, indigenous knowledge and in-depth interviews conducted, as well as the purposive sampling. Twenty (20) research participants, between the ages twenty-five (25) and seventy-nine (79), voluntarily participated in the study that was ethically cleared by UKZN HSSRC. The scope of this study was in cultural anthropology, which shaped the wording of themes that are thematically described in the dataanalysis chapter. Data analysis revealed ten themes, theme one: Defining Ihlahlalomlahlankosi; theme two: The customary use of Ihlahlalomlahlankosi in all death rites; theme three: Importance of practicing this custom; theme Four: Gendered use; theme five: Social constructs; theme six: Disposing the Ihlahlalomlahlankosi leaf. theme seven: Knowledge transmission; theme eight: Uses; theme nine: Symbolic signs and the last theme; theme ten: Industrialization. Such themes are contributed by this study into the existing body of knowledge, and they recognize the well of indigenous knowledge that the community of eNqabeni holds in relation to *ihlahlalomlahlankosi*. They further offer a heterogenic view of the use of this topic against the literature reviews that exist. These themes confirmed that cultural relativism is socially constructed because of indigenous knowledge that has historically existed amongst people of the same community, culture, family, or society; it reveals that the celebration or observationof customs, rituals, and other cultural schemas, give people a cultural symbolic identity, whichis the gift that their ancestors socially constructed to be celebrated or performed in their remembrance. Research participants further alluded that if this cultural rite is not performed ittriggers the anger of their ancestors and the spirit of the person wonders around and could causemore death in the family, however, when this custom has been carried out successfully (appreciating the goat that was slaughtered when the family was preparing for the burial ceremony), ancestors communicate with them through dreams. The study also revealed that ancestors communicate even before the body and spirit of the dead person is laid in his or her new home, they said, if the candle that has been put next to the coffin lights up, that signals that the spirit is at peace. Narratives of the respondents further revealed that the community of eNqabeni that used *Ihlahlalomlahlankosi*, recognizes the grave as a ‘new house or home’ for the dead person. Other themes that emerged from data collection revealed that patriarchy, as well as the religion (Christianity), has contributed to the social construct of gender assigned leadership roles, which this community embraces as indigenous knowledge. Such gender assigned leadership roles to exclude women from leading the spirit of the dead person to the grave,

as this hegemonic patriarchy believes that women were not born to lead or to be the heads of households. While this gender exclusion was concern, several advocacy calls were made to recognize the agency of women in all aspects of life, it was interesting to note that other people in the community recognize women as capable and echoed that they should be trusted with this leadership role, given the fact that most households are female headed households.

This study thus contributes that some trees are not alien trees or form part of vegetation but they have a customary significance; that some cultural customs are not dependent on the level of affluency but on accessing trees that naturally grow on mountains, hence it is important to conserve nature from harmful environmental hazards because if *Ihlahlalomlahlankosi* becomes extinct, this would anger their ancestors or propel them to deviate from celebrating their customs, which makes them culturally unique from other existing cultures in Pietermaritzburg, South Africa or in Southern Africa. In conclusion, cultural insights into the use of this leaf or tree branch contribute to the existing body of literature.

Key words: *Umlahlankosi*, indigenous knowledge, social construct, customs, cultural symbolic identity.

Chapter One:

Introduction, problem statement and the outline of the study

1.1. Introduction:

The science of anthropological studies, from the times of hunter-gathers till today, has to do with studying human societies across space and time, paying attention to their customs, cultures and other humanistic issues which confirms their identity. Anthropology is known as the study of humankind. Studying humankind involves studying strategies that people, communities, cultures, societies, and families learn and share as members of their social groups. Anthropologists take interest in the diverse ways that people in different environments take pride in their cultures, hence, anthropological research is usually focused on social groups and material objects such as tools, clothes, houses and non-material creations such as beliefs, customs, rituals, practices, and other schemas. This research was approved to anthropologically study the customary significance of using *Ihlahlalomhlakosi* in death processes within the eNqabeni Community. The content of this chapter thus includes the research background, problem statement, relevance of the study within the context of anthropology as an academic discipline, rationale for the study, research objections and questions, conceptualization of key concepts, brief outlines of theoretical frameworks and methodology, introducing the outline of the chapters to follow, and a conclusion.

1.2. Research Background:

As alluded in the introduction, studying societies, death related rituals and customs in anthropology is not out of scope. In fact, the study of death, rituals and customs in anthropology is one that is a long and interesting topic. Das and Han (2016) and Desjarlais (2016) state that death, rituals, and customs have been topically the study of traditional myths. Anthropologists

such as James Frazer and Johan Bachonfen undertook longitudinal ethnographic studies attempting to interpret the rites, customs, and signs of prehistoric morgue practices from different families, societies, and cultures. Hertz, another anthropologist that specialized in understanding death, rituals, and customs is listed amongst the first cultural anthropologists that examined thorough ethnographic accounts of burial rituals and practices in Borneo and Indonesia. Such early studies gave precedence into the phenomenon in anthropology, hence studying death, rituals, and customs is within the anthropological scope. Malinowski and Tylor are amongst prominent anthropologists to

agree in their ethnographic findings, that different societies are shaped by different cultural, ritual, or customary patterns, hence cultural anthropology became an important field amongst other fields in anthropology. From the views of these two ancestors in anthropology, anthropology seeks to elucidate how and why people, cultures, and families are either similar or different and further acknowledge the diversity of humankind. Kottak (2012:67) further states that anthropologists do not study the primitiveness of societies, but they take interest in learning their customs, and indigenous survival patterns, which includes how dead people are laid to rest and the narratives attached to that process. It was as early as 1900 where cultural anthropologists, through their ethnographic research, discovered that death, and the processes attached to them, were unique from cultures to culture. Simple societies are also known as industrialized and non-industrialized cultures/societies/communities. It became clear that culture, rituals, as well as customs, refer to peoples learned and shared behaviours and beliefs. It became recognized that in all cultures, as soon as an individual passes away, family, helpers, and fellow citizens join in an organized and decorative way, that does not imply primitiveness but their valued symbolic identities, a treasure of indigenous knowledge. Indigenous knowledge implied the teaching that is coined by people who lived and passed on, whose wisdom is recognized as cultural guidance that future generations are to preserve and pass from one generation to the next. Anthropological research thus gives immense insight, which is known as cultural relativism, into different ways and modes of life in each society, in order to understand the logic or the thinking behind these modes of life in order to understand the rationale and justification behind human activities and behaviour, which is called cultural guidance or cultural guide. In the context of death, cultural guidance regulates the handling and disposal of the body and proposes a period of bereavement for close relatives. This study took interest in the significance of *Ihlahlalomlankosi*. This leaf or tree branch is used when there has been death in a family and there are beliefs that believers attach to it.

Evan-Pritchard is one of the first anthropologists to have an ethnographic interest in studying what death, customs, and other cultural schemas mean from the views of societies. The first community that was studied was the Nuer. Research findings from this study confirmed that death dates to the beginning of creation (Holy Bible), and since then death has become a fact of life. The Nuer community was observed to be following culturally specific customs, which have a trace of indigenous knowledge which they owned as their symbolic identity. Cultural Anthropologists view death as part of our lives and gives meaning to our existence hence, they take interest in understanding the fundamental significance of customs in managing the social fabric of the society, learning the roots of belief systems, and other cultural practices that are symbolic. Accepting that death is a variable that

has cultural meaning, has processes that gives a symbolic identity, Shao (2019) vows that “death should not be seen as an enemy to be conquered, but rather as a friend on one’s life journey and should remind us of our human vulnerability and what is still needed to be done in this lifetime, who have not fulfilled their dreams or who have unresolved issues who are the most reluctant to die. Death is a fact of life.” At some point in our lives, we will experience the loss of a loved one through death. Death rituals, like much of human behaviour, is an expression of cultural blueprints, attitudes, values, and ideas passed down by parents, which an individual acquires as a fellow of society.

Mokhutso (2019) Stated that “death is a universal human experience,” he further states that death is not a spiritual or cultural occurrence, it is a human occurrence that affects all living creatures, including human beings. The accumulation of information around culture, rituals, and customs is categorized as indigenous knowledge. Indigenous knowledge is an integral part of human culture, which is transmitted vocally through generations. People “are familiar with indigenous practices and technologies and they can understand, handle, and maintain them better than the western and technologies” (Asuquo, 2011), that is why this thesis wants to understand the cultural significance of using *Ihlahlalomlankosi*, in that it is indigenous knowledge that the research aims to detect and preserve it if it exists.

Bruchac (2014) agrees “that indigenous knowledge is a body of knowledge built up by a group of people through generations of living in close contact with nature. Such knowledge evolves in the local environment”. He further states that this type of knowledge provides the basics for local decision making about day-to-day activities of the society. Each culture has its own indigenous knowledge that is passed on from generation to generation. The culture gives a society an identity as well as a socialization path. It is against the backdrop of this introduction that this ethnographic study was qualitatively conducted to study the customary significance of using *Ihlahlalomlankosi* in death processes within the eNqabeni Community. The researcher observed the customary use of *Ihlahlalomlankosi*, which is also known as (*Ziziphus mucronate*), or the buffalo thorn tree, which this community has recognized when observing customs that guides death processes. This study recognized people from eNqabeni as indigenous knowledge keepers, as they are still practicing this custom and have contributed immensely to this nuanced cultural anthropological inquiry. The plant list (2016:89) lists the Buffalo thorn is a species of tree in the family ‘Rhamnaceae’ as is native to Southern Africa. It is a fast growing deciduous, drought, and frost resistance tree, which is commonly still used today. Asuquo (2011) “adds that the ritualistic symbolism used during death ceremonies are rooted in traditional religions, which have existed since immemorial times”. Different societies

have been observed performing different customs and rituals over time, others have evolved overtime, and others have remained constant. “Customs vary between different cultures and evolve over time, though many core behaviours remain constant,” stated Berg (2012). This study was intended to understand the customary use of a leaf called *Ihlahlalomlahlankosi* in the process of leading a dead person from the scene of death to the grave. Berkes (2012) and Smith (2012) further explain that indigenous societies, also known as rural societies or villages, keep indigenous knowledge, which is believed to be an essential element of a long-term lifeways, the blueprint of how life is to be lived and passed from one generation to the next. This traditional knowledge is characterized as sophisticated philosophies and practical measures that are intended to preserve cultural heritage and protect ancestral teachings and lifeways. This knowledge can also inform every day and ritual activities, in both public and inprivate venues.

African/cultural anthropologists had previously documented that death is a universal, natural, persistent, inescapable, unavoidable, and undeniable fact of life. According to Eyetsemitan andGire (2003:56), “the traditional African belief system is also referred to as ancestor worship and is based on an understanding that the life course is cyclical and not linear. Based on this system of belief, those who are dead are alive in a different world and can reincarnate (and return to this world) in new births”. Furthermore, it is an African cultural belief that to be in the world of the dead confers supernatural powers over those in the world of the living, such as the ability to bless or to curse, and to give life or to take life among others. That is why whena person died the family must perform rituals such the use of *Umlahlankosi*. This helps the family to know that the spirit of the dead is in the right place. With the belief that the goal of life is to become an ancestor after death, a person is given a proper burial after death, as failureto do this may result in the individual becoming a wandering ghost, unable to live properly after death and constituting a danger to those who are still alive. Lending credence to the African concept of death. Dancy and Davis in Ekore and Abass (2016) Assert that “death indicates the physical separation of the individual from other humans”. Funeral rites and ceremonies serve to draw attention to this permanent separation, and attention is paid to the funeral rites to avoid undue offense to the deceased. Kwigomba (2013) asserts that traditional death rituals are not documented, hence future generations cannot seek reference. Therefore, there is an imperative need to record these rituals because they are performed or practiced for a significant purpose, they either heal or strengthen the connection between an individual and spiritual powers.

Turner (2011) asserts “that the African culture has at least four major rites of passage: rituals of birth, puberty or initiation, marriage, and death”. These rituals, developed by each society to varying levels, are always characterized by the surface structure (what is seen) and the deepstructure (the meaning of what is seen). There are meanings attached to all the rituals that are performed and there is an indigenous trace of what their recognition is. The plant list (2016) states that, historically, the Zulus planted a wild ox thistle on the grave of a late chief as a token of where the chief was buried, consequently the Zulu name *Umlahlankosi*, signifies ‘that which buries the chief’. Indeed, even today, a branch from the buffalo thorns is utilized to recover the soul of a deceased individual from where the individual died. Lee and Vaughan (2008), Asuquo (2011), as well as Davies (2002) cited in Kwigomba (2013) “affirm that death, as a soul changing experience, requires the exhibition of services and a solid adherence of social worth”. Customary social orders do not consider passing to be an end, yet as a change of the spirit from physical to the otherworldly world. Rituals are performed up until the carcass, in its final resting place, is accompanied to the graveyard, where it is covered. This is on the grounds that death includes a change of the physical into the otherworldly. For some African people, not playing out the memorial service rituals for a situation of death, resembles losing one's personality.

De Grave (2018) indicated in his research that death and funeral rites are the last rites of passage in a person's life and the process should be carried out with great care and attention that will enable the deceased to enter the world of ancestors. Throughout the years, death has been held at an extremely higher regard than any other custom in many social orders. This is on the grounds that death implies a partition of friends and family. Death is the last soul changing experience and it speaks as the last period of a person's life cycle. Death is grieved by all social orders and comprises of a few services that are done by the living family and individuals who were near the perished. To ensure a protected area of a dead individual, there are customs that need to be performed by offering everything to one side for their advancement into the universe of spirits. This cycle is followed until the last internment administration rite(s) are viewed. In past assessments, it has been documented that the end, in African religions, is one of the last impermanent periods of life requiring section customs, and this additionally sets aside a long exertion to complete the proclaimed. Bruchac (2012) further “states that death must be disengaged from the living and must make as smooth of a change to the following lives as conceivable, on the grounds that the excursion to the universe of the dead has numerous interferences”. On the off chance that the right memorial service customs are not watched, the expired may return to inconvenience the living family member. These rites include the use of *Ihlahlalomlahlankosi*, which helps leading the spirit of the dead from the death place to the place of

rest. From my literature survey there is no study that has been written about the use of *Ihlahlalomlankosi* in the death rites in the previous studies. This study further questioned why this leaf is carried by men only, hence it was important to document this emic perspective from the viewpoint of the users of *Ihlahlalomlankosi* instead of generalizing outside perspectives of indigenous knowledge that could be within this community. Another critical contribution of this study was to collect and preserve indigenous knowledge so that the future generation will be able to get information that they need.

1.3. Problem Statement:

The research problem was motivated by the researcher's observations on the customary use of *Ihlahlalomlankosi* in death rites. As argued by Bonvillain (2010) anthropologists or cultural anthropologists conduct research that is largely induced by cultural patterns or any significant change that seem to be threatening the preservation of indigenous knowledge. Anthropologists or cultural anthropologists try to get information from many angles to see the whole picture, or what informs that which has been observed as a phenomenon or a subject in order to get a holistic view (Bonvillain, 2010:23), known as Nqabeni community. The ultimate contribution of this study was also the identification of the literature's dearth such studies, which will deprive future generations from knowing the role of this leaf or tree branch in death proceedings or rituals in this community.

The intended study will further see to understand why this tree branch is handled by men and not women. Also, what happens if the house is a female headed household and further probe, why it is not discarded anyhow? The times are changing, and it seems that families are more female headed and elderly people who understand this process better, are dying with the information that should be shared to the upcoming generation. It is never like in the past where there was time for storytelling, in our day the youth do not take note of our culture, rather they are always busy on their cell phones, on video games, or whatever is trending on internet. Even the elderly that we are left with, do not find time to teach us about the important of our culture importantly the processes of using *Umlahlankosi* in death processes. This thesis aims to gather information from people of eNqabeni and document it for the future generation to be able to access it through internet. Information like this is sometimes needed, only to find that there is none, and in every household, there is always at least one person who is interested in the culture.

1.4. Relevance of the study in anthropology:

Cultural anthropology is "the study of human societies, their convictions, rehearses, values, thoughts, innovations, economies, and different spaces of social and intellectual association" This field

depends fundamentally on cultural understanding as well as indigenous knowledge being increased through direct insight, or a member's perception inside living populaces of people, as stated by Creanza (2017:12). Kottat (2012) asserted that anthropology as a subject and a field is prepared to do completely looking at any human related circumstance and encounters in their common space. This study falls within the scope of cultural anthropology, and as the researcher has realized, there is not a high number of studies carried out in anthropology which seeks to learn the customary ways of societies. Nichols (2011) and Kotak(2012) state that cultural or social anthropology refers to the cultural research on the social life of people, ethnic groups and societies. The researcher's argument is that if anthropology is the study of humankind, and the structural and functional composition of societies and households, such studies need to be carried out because they focus on recording how cultures perform differently in death rites during the period of death and why there is a trace of gender of inequality in the process of such customs.

Furthermore, in the context of civilizations seeming to be replacing cultural practices, it is imperative to defend cultural customs by embarking on studies like this so that future generations will know how other African cultures observed the death processes of their parents and relatives, as well as for future generations to be socialized into the customs, should they wish to continue. Berg (2012:34) "agrees that little attention has been paid to the history of death practices in Africa". He further asserts "that traditional death rituals are not documented, hence future generations cannot make future reference". Importantly, he states that such rituals should not be categorized as barbaric or backward. Ekore and Lanre (2016:35) state that studies on death rituals, mourning practices and customs are important to be carried out because African societies are varied because of the existence of so many religious and cultural practices. Smith (2012:175) states "that research that is centered around indigenous knowledge decolonizes the hegemonic/primitive/prejudice thinking that western countries hold about African villages or rural communities". She states that indigenous knowledge needs to be preserved and should be passed from one generation to the next and allow other cultures to learn from each other. Studies like these in Africa, symbolize identities of rural villages and are imperative because customs are performed or practiced for a significant purpose, they either heal or strengthen the connection between individuals and spiritual powers. Edward Burnet Taylor, who is a prominent cultural anthropologist, once argued that it is important to recognize that villages are unique and symbolically perform rituals and customs that define who they are. It is our ethnographic task as anthropologists, to provide or help the society conserve their indigenous knowledge. The execution of studies like this is supported by Bruchac (2014:5). Bruchac (2014:5) avows that history will question the contribution of cultural anthropologists if their ethnographic niche does not pay enough

attention on documenting cultural customs that could diminish or culturally/historically erode, because of changing times. Cultural anthropologists specialize in localized knowledge that contains crucial information that can explain specific customs and rituals that are celebrated by families, communities, or cultures.

1.5. Rationale and the Significance of the Study:

Cultural anthropologists have ethnographically concluded that cultures around the world have preserved distinctive understandings of their customs, rituals, or any other cultural schemas. This indigenous knowledge is rooted in their cultural experiences, as well as their symbolic identity. This study places an importance of culture in our generation. The researcher has observed that many of the current generation is forgetting about their culture. While most of those who grow up in urban areas, question every cultural custom that is related to death. The study is prompted to understand why *Umlahlankosi*, a branch of tree, seems to be segregating males and females, as the researcher has observed that woman do not lead that process of death and do not touch *Umlahlankosi*. Also, to find out what happens if the house is a female headed household.

This study is interested in responding to the noted literature gap, with the hope that it will inform many of its use and will guide households that are currently being led by children, ‘child-headed households’. The researcher also believes that one needs to document how African societies coordinate the death process of their loved ones until their graves. Koenig and Marshall (2014:155) agree “that Africans do not consider death as a philosophical notion but merely a natural event that needs to be accompanied with proper rites, not to disturb the gods, deities or death ancestors” This generated data combines the narration of traditions, with other activities, symbols, and customs that ritually engage with ancestral beings or other creatures.

1.6. Research Objectives:

Cultural anthropologists conduct ethnographic research with probes and collect nuanced and detailed descriptions of indigenous communities and cultures in relation to their symbolic customs, rituals, and other cultural schemas. Islam and Samsundin (2020: 321) state that research cannot be conducted aimlessly. Hence, it must have minimum key objectives and questions. The following qualitative objectives and questions were ethically approved, and they read as follows:

- 1.6.1. To understand the customary use of *Ihlahlalomlahlankosi* in all death rites in the eNqabeni area.
- 1.6.2. To discover why only men in all death rites carry this leaf.
- 1.6.3. To trace the indigenous use of *Ihlahlalomlahlankosi* within the eNqabeni area.

- 1.6.4. To understand how the eNqabeni community pass on knowledge from generation to generation.
- 1.6.5. To justify what happens if this leaf gets carried by women or the social constructs that exists which prohibit the leaf to be touched by women.
- 1.6.6. To understand why this leaf is put inside the grave instead of being thrown in a bush or elsewhere in the yard.

1.7. Research Questions:

- 1.7.1. What is the customary use of *Ihlahlalomlankosi* in all death rites in the eNqabeni community area?
- 1.7.2. Why is it only men in all death rites carry this leaf?
- 1.7.3. What is the indigenous significance of this leaf within the eNqabeni society?
- 1.7.4. How is the indigenous knowledge of this leaf passed from generation to generation by people of eNqabeni?
- 1.7.5. What happens when women carry this leaf and what are the social constructs that exist which prohibit women from touching or handing it?
- 1.7.6. Why is this leaf put inside the grave instead of being disposed in a bush or elsewhere in the yard?

1.8. Delimitation for the Study:

Theofanidis and Fountouki (2019:156) assert that delimitations, in both qualitative and quantitative research are, the limitations consciously set by the researchers themselves. These delimitations are concerned with the definitions that the researcher decides to set as the boundaries or limits of their research so that the study's aim and objectives do not become impossible to achieve. Understanding that there is vast literature on the ethno-botanical usage of plants, leaves, and tree branches that cultures use for specific rituals and customs. This study was only focused on the customary significance of *Ihlahlalomlankosi* in the death proceedings. Qualitative research designs, as well as thematic analysis, was deemed befitting the study instead of quantitative research. The selection of theoretical framework was rationally considered by the narration of knowledge and the social construction of knowledge that exist amongst the studied population. Another delimitation was the research site being the community of eNqabeni, which will be introduced below, rather than other communities in KwaZulu-Natal. Ethnography, in the study, meant data collection, which only involved conducting in-depth interviews, not conducting participatory observations which most people could assume was another method of data collection.

1.9. Research Site:

The research site was the KwaNxamalala location in a small community called ENqabeni, where the ethnographic data collection, under strict COVID-19 regulations, was conducted. This research site is a rural community (ward3) in Pietermaritzburg under the uMsunduzi Local Municipality in the Province of KwaZulu-Natal, South Africa, in Africa. This rural community is still rooted or tied up in traditional customs and the researcher has observed that this leaf or tree branch is used by most families, especially when death has occurred in the family.

1.10. Definition of key concepts:

- 1.10.1. **Umlahlankosi** – *Umlahlankosi* is found on a tree named *Ihlahlalomhlankosi*, also known as *Ziziphus Mucronata* (Latin word), the buffalo thorn. The tree is utilised to convey the soul of the dead in the Zulu culture, taken from The Plant List (2016).
- 1.10.2. **Indigenous knowledge** - Indigenous information is a kind of data kept in a culture or society. It is generally called data, society data, people's data, traditional knowledge, or standard, asserted by Briggs (2013).
- 1.10.3. **Culture** - Culture is the thoughts, customs, and social conduct of a specific people or society, expressed by Johnson (2016).
- 1.10.4. **Esigodini** - *Esigodini* means village or a designated ward.
- 1.10.5. **Customs** - A custom is defined as a cultural idea that describes regular behavior that is considered characteristics of life in social system, asserted by Crossman (2019).
- 1.10.6. **Symbolic identity** - Symbolic identity is a nostalgic allegiance to love for and take pride in a cultural tradition that can be incorporated into a person's everyday behavior; as such, symbolic ethnic identity usually is composed of images from mass communication, stated by Gonzalez (2020).
- 1.10.7. **Ethnography** - Ethnography is a descriptive study of a human society or the process of making such. In anthropology, ethnography is a method of data collection which is based almost entirely on fieldwork and requires the complete immersion of the anthropologist in the culture and everyday life of people who are the subject of the study, asserted by Caulfield (2020).
- 1.10.8. **Cultural identity** – Cultural identity is the identity belonging to a group. It is part of a person's self-conception and is related to nationality, ethnicity, religion, social class, generation, locality, or any kind of social group that has its own distinct culture, stated by Blume (2013:).

1.10.9. Cultural relativity – Cultural relativity is the knowledge that a person's beliefs and practices should be understood based on that person's own culture, stated by Seungbae (2014). Proponents of cultural relativism also tends to argue that the norms and values of one culture should not be evaluated using the norms and values of another. Cultural relativity also asks us to understand other cultures based on their own understanding and try not to be judgmental of them.

1.11. Brief Introduction of the Theoretical Framework as well as Methodology:

This research is embedded in two theoretical framework theories, namely, social constructionism and the indigenous knowledge system. Both theoretical lenses find relevance in the study because they blend with the perspectives of cultural anthropology being the scope of this study; supporting the qualitative gathering of emic perspectives from the subjects, who are key research participants in the study, as the researcher intended to learn about the customary significance of *Ihlahlalomlahlankosi* in their death processes. Social constructionism, as well as the IKS, allows researchers in anthropology to understand the depth of why people, as individuals or members of cultures, behave the way they do. They learn from the reality that has been historically owned or classified as indigenous knowledge of a culture. These theoretical frameworks enable the researcher to document the epistemology of the phenomenon, without making claims which are unwarranted. Social constructionism (Michel de Montaigne, the proponent of this theory) asserts that all human knowledge is rooted from what is socially constructed, the knowledge of customs and traditions that is passed from one generation to the next. This theory recognizes that people are members of cultures and that cultures socialize people and shape the way they think and behave. Indigenous knowledge (Sillitoe, the proponent of this theory) asserts that societies have one kind of information generated, treasured, and celebrated and kept within that specific culture or society. It is otherwise called nearby information, society information, individuals' information, conventional intelligence, or customary science. It is recognized as a set of experiences and rituals generated by people living in those places. Briggs (2013:15) asserts that indigenous knowledge is both documented and vocally transmitted, imitated and demonstrated. The United Nations' Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples, adopted by the General Assembly on September 13, 2007, recognizes indigenous ownership and validates traditional customs and practices.

Article 11.1 shows that indigenous people and societies have the right to practice and revitalize their cultural traditions and customs. This includes the right to maintain, protect, and develop the past, present, and future preservation of knowledge.

Article 31.1. states that indigenous people and societies have the right to maintain, control, protect, and develop their cultural heritage, traditional knowledge, and traditional cultural expressions. They also have the right to maintain, control, protect, and develop their intellectual property over such traditions, cultural schemas, customs, traditional knowledge, as well as their symbolic traditional cultural expressions.

The study will be undertaken in anthropology hence, a qualitative research design remains a fitting method of inquiry in this proposed study. This design best fit the proposed study because the research is focussed on learning or documenting the customary significance of using *Ihlahlalomhlakosi* in death processes, within the eNqabeni Community, South Africa. Siverman (2012) agrees that qualitative research is in-depth research that seeks to understand why people do what they do in attempt to understand cultures and performed customs. In anthropology, qualitative research is used to capture people's narratives in relation to an experience that they have experienced in their life. Furthermore, Creswell (2014:17) asserts that the hallmark of anthropology is the exploration of the complexity and nuances of human interactivity and culture. As a research discipline, anthropologists employ qualitative research methods to study human behavior as well as cultural issues/themes. Qualitative research sets anthropology apart from other disciplines.

1.12. Structure of a Dissertation:

Chapter 1: This chapter delineated the background and contextualizes the present study.

Chapter 2: This chapter reflects on existing literature arguments, which are within the scope of the research.

Chapter 3: This chapter discusses the theoretical frameworks that guided this study.

Chapter 4: This chapter elucidates the research design that the study employed.

Chapter 5: This chapter presents the data analyzed and interpreted. The presented data will be analysed by using themes.

Chapter 6: Detailed analysis of research findings.

Chapter 7: This chapter includes the limitations of the study together with recommendations and future research that branches from the present study and concluding remarks.

1.13. Chapter Summary:

This chapter has depicted the introduction of the thesis and discussed the background of the study, as well as the problem statement. It further gave the research site, which is eNqabeni the

rural area found in Pietermaritzburg, which is still rooted with cultural practice. It also gave us background on the study and the reason for choosing the topic. Death is part of our lives yet there is still a lot that we do not know as the future generation and it may happen before we ever get the chance to learn more about it. This research part gives us a better background of death and Zulu cultural practices. This section is giving the cultural background of death. Lastly, it provides research questions and objectives for the thesis. The following chapter will focus on the literature review of the study.

Chapter Two:

Literature Review

2.1. Introduction:

Cohen (1971:1), in the book called 'Death Ritual: Anthropological' asserts that "when a person dies, family, friends, and neighbours respond in structured, patterned way". A cultural guide regulates the handling and disposal of the body and proposes a period of bereavement for close relatives. Death rituals, like much of human behaviour, is an expression of a cultural blueprint, of attitudes, of values, and of ideas passed down by parents, which an individual acquires as a fellow of society. Marouda (2019: 12) states that the human corpse seems to have inherent value and by this it is possible to explain that it never has been treated as a piece of flesh, it serves as a point of departure for unfolding certain customary behaviours towards it, the so-called funeral and burial customs. It is important to point out that burial customs have existed since the dawn of humans' presence on earth, and they have been preserved until today. Such customs have multiple recipients: they are addressed, not only to the surviving relatives in the form of a consolation or a reminiscence, but also in the world in which is supposed to be the next stage in the course of life. The chapter is divided into five thematic areas. Namely, introduction, contribution of the study by other scholars in relation to death processes; literature review of different rituals in different ethnic groups. The chapter is organized in such a way that the reader can understand the next following sub-topic.

The accumulation of information around culture, rituals and customs remains, or is categorized, as indigenous knowledge. Indigenous knowledge is an integral part of human culture, which is transmitted vocally through generations. People are familiar with indigenous practices and technology and they can understand, handle, and maintain them better than the Westerners can (Asuquo, 2011). The content of this chapter discusses how other societies/cultures have performed rituals or applied indigenous schemas in the process of burying/laying their family members. The delimitation of this chapter is focused on the interpretation of death and recognized death processes by various cultures/societies. It will not focus on the use of other tree branches that could perhaps be used by other cultures/societies. The scope will be limited in the discussion of *Ihlahlalomlankosi* only as discussed in the previous chapter. Further studies can continue to explore other trees.

2.2. Contributions of Scholars to the Study concerning Death Processes:

Anthropologists have argued that the culture of people, or of cultures/societies, is what marks them out distinctively from other human societies in the family of humanity. Perspectives of cultural anthropologists aver that a comprehensive study of culture in all its dimensions and recognizes the indigenous socialization of people in various culture's and further implores how other cultures practice similar or distinctive ritual processes, which teaches how other cultures symbolically practice or perform their rituals. In the field of anthropology, well-known scholars have presented vastly different definitions of rituals. In anthropology, rituals are actions with international symbolic meaning, undertaken for a specific cultural purpose, such as a rite of passage from childhood, and may reinforce broader community social bonds, as in weddings. On the side Cohen's (2006) definition of rituals states that ritual is behaviour that is religious in action. It is personal and private behaviour, as much as it is social. A sick patient praying for strength to endure pain and the soldier praying for protection while undergoing bombardment, exemplifies solitary ritual. Rituals may involve sacred or secular symbols. It is stereotyped communication, which reduces anxiety, prepares the organism to act, and (in social rituals) coordinate the preparation for acting among several organisms (Hertz:236). Death rituals begin when a person stops breathing or is otherwise identified as dead. Treatment of the disposal of the remains, and the behaviour of close kin and others, during a specific period of mourning, are spelled out by society.

The body may be washed, anointed, shaved, painted, or perfumed. It is left naked or dressed, covered with a shroud, and sometimes adorned with jewelry. The mouth, nose, private parts, urethra, and rectum may be blocked up, perhaps to prevent evil spirits from invading the body. This study deals with African cultural rituals that are done when there is a passing of an individual. The culture of a people is what marks them out distinctively from other human societies in the family of humanity. The full study of culture, in all its vastness and dimensions, belongs to the discipline known as anthropology, which studies human beings and takes time to examine their characteristics and their relationships to their environments. Culture, as it is usually understood, entails a totality of traits and characteristics that are peculiar to a group of people, to the extent that it marks them out from other people or societies. These peculiar traits go on to include the people's language, dressing, music, work, arts, religion, dancing, and so on. It also goes on to include a people's social norms, taboos, and values. Values are to be understood as beliefs that are held about what is right and wrong and what is important in life.

Looking at the literature review in relation to death, the use of *Umlahlankosi* and death processes is important. Gire (2014) states that, culture is the blend of convictions, values, practices, conventions, and customs that individuals from a social gathering share. Each culture has its own ceremonies that impact the declaration of anguish. Doing these practices offers a feeling of steadiness and security. Ceremonies can likewise help individuals who are passing on and carry solace to the friends and family who are getting ready for their misfortune. This writing survey will give data from various social foundations among the African and Western populace.

2.3. Culture and the Meaning of Death:

Mokhutso (2019) mentions that human beings were expected to live and enjoy a normal life until death to old age and many African families believed that an early death was not a normal occurrence. Anything that interfered with the natural course of life and brought about illness or premature death, was believed to be by sorcery or evil spirits. The factor of culture undertakes a basic function on how individuals see and manage death, dying, and mourning. Each culture is exceptional and holds extraordinary and true convictions and customs. Each culture has its own allowance of faith-based expectations that portray how the world functions and individuals' roles in the world. Cancer.net (2018) states, in their discoveries, that in social orders, wherein a great many people share a similar religion with strict convictions, shape the way of life. Each culture has its own convictions about the significance of and what occurs in the afterlife. This illuminates how individuals in those societies approach death. For instance, individuals may discover passing more tolerable if they have faith in an eternal life. In certain societies, individuals accept that the soul of somebody, who has passed on straightforwardly, impacts the living relatives. The relatives are consoled by the conviction that their cherished one is looking after them. All in all, convictions about the importance of death assists individuals with figuring it out and adapting to its secrets. While Macmillan Encyclopaedia of Death and Dying (2009) expresses that in the religions of Africa, life doesn't end with death, yet proceeds in another domain. The ideas of 'life' and 'passing' are not fundamentally unrelated, and there are no reasonable partitioning lines between them. Human life is a unique cycle, including the expansion, or lessening the intensity or 'life power' of the 'living' and 'dying', and there are various degrees of life and death.

2.4. The African Concept of Death:

Mokhutso (2019:23) states that African people regard death and illness with serious trepidation. African epistemology views death as a "transition from the visible to the invisible ontology, where the spirit, the essence of the person is not destroyed but moves to live in the spirit ancestors' realm

dead'. Therefore, "for African people, for that transition to fully take place, rituals are of high importance, and to Africans this is a process that is taken very seriously for that transition to take place asserted". Mokhutso (2019) defines rituals in the following manner:

A ritual is a link established between present moment and original reality. The word ritual refers to symbolic action, which focus a certain kind of power through the use of natural signs and symbols. Rituals range from single gestures such as bowing or shaking hands, to elaborate ceremonial dramas, such as the coronation of the traditional chief, modern chief etc. ... Ritual is symbolic in the most profound sense, for it brings together the mind, the body and the emotions and at the same time, binds us to a community of shared values.

According to the African worldview, "death stands between the world of human beings and the world of the spirits, between the visible and the invisible. It is no wonder, therefore, that rituals connected with death are actually elaborate," (Mbiti 1971:26). Kyalo (2013:35) further define what these rituals mean, or are, in African cosmology in the following manner:

"Rituals are symbolic, routine, and repetitive activities and actions through which we make connections with what we consider to be the most valuable dimension of life. They are often associated with a significant events or places in our individual and communal lives. Rituals set aside specific times and places and provide us opportunity to ponder their meaning and to connect emotionally".

In each culture, death is related with ceremonies and customs to help individuals with the lamenting cycle. "Passing, although a feared occasion, is seen as the start of an individual's more profound relationship with the entirety of creation, the supplementing of life and the start of the correspondence between the noticeable and the imperceptible universes," expressed by Sara (2015). The objective of life is to turn into an ancestor in the afterlife. Accordingly, every individual who passes on must be given a 'right' memorial service, upheld by various strict functions. On the off chance that this isn't done, the dead individual may turn into a meandering apparition, unfit to 'live' appropriately after death and hence a risk to the individuals who stay alive. Mesorah (2003) concurs with Sara (2015), that it very well may be contended that 'legitimate' death ceremonies are more an assurance of insurance for the living, rather than to make sure a protected entry for the withering. There is vacillation about mentalities towards the ongoing dead, which vary among affection and regard, from one viewpoint, and fear and gloom on the other, especially because it is accepted that the dead have control over the living. Khawunji and Khawanji (2019) bring up that "numerous African people

groups have a custom of eliminating a dead body through an opening in the mass of a house, and not through the entryway.” They further express that the explanation behind this is, by all accounts, that this will make it troublesome (or even inconceivable) for the dead individual to recollect the route back to the living, as the opening in the divider is quickly shut. In some cases, the body is taken out feet first, emblematically pointing ceaselessly from the previous spot of the living arrangement. Numerous others go to considerable lengths to guarantee that the dead are effectively ready for re-visitation of their homes, and a few people are even buried under, or close to, their homes.

Gorman and MacIntosh (2017) asserted “that many people believe that death is the loss of a soul, or souls. Although there is recognition of the difference between the physical person that is buried and the nonphysical person who lives on, this must not be confused with a Western dualism that separates physical from spiritual”. they further state that “when a person dies, there is not some part of that person that lives on it is the whole person who continues to live in the spirit world, receiving a new body identical to the earthly body, but with enhanced powers to move about as an ancestor. The death of children is regarded as a particularly grievous evil event, and many peoples give special names to their children to try to ward off the reoccurrence of untimely death”. The Kenyan scholar, John Mbiti, writes that a belief in the continuation of life after death, for African peoples, does not constitute a hope for a future and better life. To live here and now is the most important concern of African religious activities and beliefs. Even life in the hereafter is conceived as materialistic in physical terms. There is neither paradise to be hoped for, nor hell to be feared in the hereafter (Mbiti, 1969:4-5 in Encyclopaedia (2009)). Radzilani (2010) in Makhotso (2019:66) states “that the deceased person is in between the living and the dead, and therefore it is only after the performance of rituals that the dead can join the ancestral world”. This then shows how critically important bereavement rituals are to African people. Biwul (1978:3) adds to this discourse by sharing that “Africans bury the dead according to their cultural traditional rituals”. Therefore, rituals have a huge significance to African people because “ritual actions enable us to maintain continuity with significant persons and events from the past. Rituals help us individually and communally to make sense of life’s transition, providing some structure to ease movement from the familiar to the unknown” (Kyalo 2013:35-36). Tshoba (2014:10) also states that rituals are very helpful; she hereby refers specifically to bereavement rituals, and states that most cultures have prescribed bereavement and mourning rituals to facilitate adjustment of the bereaved.

2.5. Death from the Western Perspective:

Rosenblatt and Nkosi (2007:67-88) talk about various points of view concerning the Western comprehension of loss. For a Euro-American expert, there are standard methods of supporting dispossessed individuals that are as much socially inserted. These points of view are the main method of managing anguish is through talking (Rosenblatt and Nkosi 2007:67-88). Westerners talk about the dead, about their feelings. "Death customs, including commendations and ceremonial groans, highlight and make the real factors that individuals will examine when discussing passing". Lamenting is an individual movement. Rosenblatt and Nkosi (2007:67- 88) express that "many Westerners consider lamenting as an individual activity, and quite a bit of pain treatment is independently engaged". Grieving is individual and is not really shared as it would be in the African point of view (Radzilani, 2010:3). In the Western culture, there is some type of an unexpected progress among grieving and happiness. Grieving isn't organized like it would be, in the situation of the African people, where one might be relied upon to grieve for an entire year, or months, contingent upon the sexual orientation and relationship with the perished (Rosenblatt and Nkosi, 2007:67-88). In African society if the husband died the wife is expected to mourn for a period of one year before she took off the black or navy clothes that represents grieve. If it the wife that is dead the husband is expected to mourn for six months before taking off the black or navy clots that wear on his left arm. Should it be a mother who lose the child or the child loose a mother then they are both expected to mourn for the period of one month.

2.6. The African Concept of the Afterlife:

The Africans appear to have a typical idea of life, passing and from this point forward, which impacts their lives and character enormously. Asuqou (2011) states that essentially all African societies have confidence in a solitary incomparable being, the maker of the earth. Even though the dead are accepted to be, in some way or another, closer to the incomparable being than the living. The first condition of euphoria, in the far-off past, is communicated in creation of fantasies and isn't re-established in the hereafter. The detachment between the preeminent being and mankind, stays unavoidable and common in the spot of the withdrew, even though the dead can rest there and be protected. Ekore and Lanre-Abass (2016) states that in the event that an individual is a wizard, a killer, a cheat, one who has broken the network code or restrictions, or one who has had an unnatural passing, or an ill-advised entombment, at that point such an individual might be bound to discipline in the life following death as a meandering phantom, and might be beaten and ousted by the precursors or even exposed to a time of torment, as per the earnestness of their wrongdoings, much like the Catholic idea of limbo. The idea of resurrection is found among numerous cultures. Sandra (2014) states that

resurrection alludes to the spirit of a dead individual being renewed in the body of another. There is a cosy connection among birth and passing. African convictions about resurrection vary from those of Asian religions (particularly Hinduism) in a few significant ways. Hinduism is 'world-revoking', imagining a pattern of resurrection, in a universe of misery and fantasy. from which individuals wish to get away from simply by incredible exertion and there is an arrangement of remunerations and disciplines whereby one is renewed into a sequential station throughout everyday life, from whence the standing framework emerged declared by Stevenson (1985). He further expresses that these thoughts that see rebirth as something to be dreaded, need African religions. All things considered, Africans are 'world-attesting', and welcome rebirth. The world is a light, warm, and living spot to which the dead are simply so happy to even think about returning from the dimness and fridity of the grave. The dead's re-visitation of their networks, aside from those tragic ones recently referenced, have are no restrictions set to the quantity of potential resurrections, a precursor might be resurrected more than everyone in turn.

The Macmillan Encyclopaedia of Death and Dying (2009:66) notice, in their examination, that some African myths state that the quantity of spirits and bodies are restricted. It is significant for Africans to find which ancestor is reborn in a youngster, for this is an explanation behind profound gratefulness. The Macmillan Encyclopaedia of Death and Dying (2009) further adds that the fate of a community is fulfilled through both. While the advanced Igo of Nigeria, in any event, when sticking to the Christianity religion, have protected numerous highlights of the Igo customary religion. The trust in rebirth is, by all accounts, especially solid. The Igo accepts that rebirth ordinarily happens inside similar immediate or more distant family expressed by Stevenson (1985). They attempt to recognize the resurrected predecessor by methods of skin colorations, explanations a kid makes when they get ready to talk, a conduct likeness between the youngster and the expired individual of whom is the assumed rebirth. Prophets are, as often as possible, counselled to make or affirm distinguishing proof of rebirth.

2.7. Burial and Mourning Customs:

Death, in African religions, is one of the last transitional phases of life requiring entry rituals, and this also sets requires a large amount of effort to finish. The dead must be "withdrawing" from the living, to make as smooth a progress to the following life as conceivable, on the grounds that the excursion to the universe of the dead has numerous interferences. If the right memorial service ceremonies are not done, the dead may return to inconveniencethe living family members. Kamsel and Biwul (2014) stated that normally a creature is murdered as a custom, even though this

additionally fills the reasonable need for giving food to the numerous visitors. Individual possessions are regularly covered with the perished to aid the excursion. Different customs follow the burial service itself. Some slaughter a bull at the entombment to go with the dead. Others kill another creature at some point after the memorial service (a quarter of a year to two years and considerably longer, is the period noticed). Jindra and Noret (2011) in their examination, notice that the Nguni, in southern Africa, call the killing of the bull "the returning bull," in light of the fact that the monster goes with the dead back home to their family and empowers the dead to go about as an ensuring progenitor. They further clarify that the "home bringing" ritual is a typical African service. Only when a dead individual's enduring family members have gone and there is nobody left to recollect the person in question, can the individual be said to have truly "died." At that point, the dead passes into the "memorial park" of time, losing singularity and getting one of the unknown multitude of immortals.

In Hinduism, the cycle of entombment and grieving is different to that of the African culture. Khawunja and Khawanja (2019) states that during this *aninut* (grieving) period, the family should be disregarded and permitted the full articulation of melancholy. Sympathy calls or visits ought not be made during this time. Further noted that after the internment period, a nearby family member, close to neighbour, or companion, readies the main feast for the grievers, the *se'udat havra'ah* (dinner of sympathy). This dinner customarily comprises of eggs (an image of life) and bread. Ademiluka (2009) states that the supper is for the family only, not for guests. After this time, sympathy calls are allowed. Antiquated traditions are adjusted in numerous South African metropolitan burial services. At the point, when somebody has passed on in a house, all the windows are spread with debris, all photos in the house pivoted and all mirrors and TVs and some other intelligent items, are covered. Also, the beds are eliminated from the deceased's room, and the dispossessed ladies sit on the floor, ordinarily on a sleeping cushion. During the time, before the burial service, normally from seven to thirteen days, visits are paid by individuals in the network to comfort the deprived family.

The day preceding the burial service, the body is taken back before nightfall and set in the room. A night vigil, at that point, happens frequently, going on until the morning. Customarily, the burial service happens in the early morning (frequently before dawn) and not late in the early evening, as it is accepted that magicians move around in the evenings searching for cadavers to use for their malevolent purposes. Since magicians are sleeping in the early morning, this is a decent and ideal opportunity to cover the dead. In some networks, youngsters and unmarried grown-ups are not permitted to go to the memorial service. During the entombment itself, the close group of the perished

is relied upon to remain together on one side of the grave at an assigned spot. They are prohibited from talking or taking any vocal part in the memorial service. It is standard to put the dead's very own property, including eating utensils, strolling sticks, covers, and other valuable things, in the grave. After the burial service, individuals are welcomed to the dead's home for the memorial service supper. Numerous individuals follow a purifying custom at the door of the house, where everybody must wash off the residue of the burial ground, prior to going into the house. Sometimes, bits of cut aloe are set in the water, and this water is accepted to eliminate misfortune. Holy places that utilize "blessed water", sprinkle individuals to purify them from contamination presently.

2.8. The Impact of Death Across Cultures:

Culture is vital aspect of our identity, our values, norms, and beliefs and it encompasses every facet of our life. Death is emotional, and it seems that different societies develop their own beliefs, values, ceremonies, and rituals, regarding death and its process. Magubane (1998:1) states that passing is a universal human experience. Passing is certifiably not a strict or social event; it is an event that influences every single living animal, including people. Biwul (1978:1) states that death is a typical human wonder, going about as "the implacable enemy of man," that is, of all people. Radzilani (2010:1) further expresses that passing is a normal and irreversible piece of life, death is one of the perspectives that seems to negatively affect the lives of relatives and close family members. The reaction to death, notwithstanding, is diverse because of various strict and social practices. Entombment, then again, is the demonstration or cycle of discarding a body. This may fluctuate from culture-to-culture and from one strict or philosophy to the next (Biwul 1978:1). Stephen (2014:263) in Brown (2017) additionally confirms that each network on the planet reacts to death and misfortune exceptionally. Memorial service customs and functions change across various societies around the world. Subsequently, Biwul (1978:1) shows how demise impacts distinctive racial and ethnic gatherings over the globe:

Death comes to its victims without notice when it is time; it gives neither option of choice nor opportunity for negotiation. It is a perfect timekeeper as it neither wastes nor loses time. Death is a close friend and an active participant in every human community, yet no one ever gets used to it. The way in which living humans react to its effects makes death a mystery that defies overfamiliarity. Its effects, most times, can be electrifying as reactions to its occurrence are always irresistible and irreversible, and sometimes emotionally demoralizing, and psychologically and economically incapacitating (Biwul, 1978:1).

2.8.1.1. Death from the Christian Perspective:

Keating (2002:2) in Potonick (2017) defines “death from a theological perspective as the time that the person’s body is separated from their soul (the immaterial part of humans)”. Keating (2002:5) in Potonick (2017) further states that death from the Christian perspective is not the end of life:

“Death is a transfer from one state of being to another” as discussed by (Heb. 9:27). Views of Keating (2002: 5) assert that “every human being will one day be resurrected from the dead and will be judged according to their deeds and their relationship with God through Jesus Christ”.

The theology of death in the Christian perspective is embedded in the life, death, and resurrection of Jesus Christ. This theology is embedded in scripture passages such as 1 John 3:2: “Beloved, we are God’s children now, and what we will be, has not yet appeared; but we know that when he appears, we shall be like him, because we shall see him as he is”. This simply means that those who live their lives in Christ will one day rise again with him. McGrath (2001:404) states that to Christian believers,

The resurrection of Jesus serves an additional function within Christian theology. It establishes and undergirds the Christian hope. This has both soteriological and eschatological implications... At the eschatological level, it gives both foundation and substance to the Christian hope of eternal life (McGrath, 2001:404).

In Christianity death is not the end of life but, must also qualify that there is another death which is equivalent to the end of life after the 2nd coming of Christ for those deemed as sinners.

2.8.1.2. Literature Review of Different Rituals of Different Ethnic Groups in South Africa:

Tshoba (2014:23), expounding on deprivation ceremonies, centered around the Ndebele individuals in South Africa, and gives a review of other ethnic gatherings in South Africa. The shared characteristic that Tshoba (2014:23) finds, is that all ethnic gatherings in South Africa "urge the deprived to save the association between the dead and the living." Besides, the ethnic gatherings vary in their deprivation ceremonies, and yet there are shared characteristics as well. With the end goal of this examination, the analyst in the accompanying segment of this exploration features the way that mourning ceremonies are an African wonder, as well as the attention on various ethnic gatherings in South Africa, just as different parts of the continent.

2.8.1.2.1. People from Botswana in South Africa:

According to Tshoba (2014:26), “Batswana is an ethnic group that institutes the western group of the Sotho people of South Africa and Botswana.” About three million Tswana people reside in

the North-West province of South Africa. Tshoba (2014:26) citing Setiloane and Yawa 2010) states that during bereavement or on the day of bereavement, “traditional Tswana peopleslaughter an ox named ‘*mogoga*’ at sunrise. The meat of the ox is consumed without salt. This is to indicate that there is no pleasure in consuming the meat as the family is in mourning”. During the period of mourning, grievors are required to put on a grass necklace and shave their hair. The mourning does not exceed a year, and at the end of this mourning period, the uncle (or *malome* in Setswana) leads a cleansing ceremony (Tshoba 2014:26). The cleansing ritual includes cleansing herbs that are applied to the mourners and the uncle oversees this process. This process also includes “giving the mourners new clothing items, food and drink”(Tshoba 2014:26 citing Yawa 2010).

2.8.1.2.2. Zulu People in South Africa:

According to Tshoba (2014:25), Zulu people are mainly located in the KwaZulu-Natal province in South Africa, although others are found in other provinces of South Africa as well. Tshoba (2014:25 citing Ritcher 2015) states that “the amaZulu tend to focus on the rituals that form part of the burial process in order to deal with the death of a loved one, hence the focus is less on dealing with the emotional aspects”. Tshoba (2014:25 citing Yawa 2010) states that the Zulu people focus on the rituals to avoid being consumed emotionally. The rituals direct their attention elsewhere than on the deep emotions that accompany death, especially that of a loved one. Furthermore, Tshoba (2014:25 citing Yawa 2010) states that “among the rituals that the Zulu people observe, is that of washing their hands after burial as to avoid transferring the pollution of death around”. Thereafter, a meal will be offered to those community members who have come to support the bereaved family. After the burial it is also expected that the loved ones of the deceased shave their hair, which might be all the hair or a fraction of their hair. Tshoba (2014:25) states that after this hair-shaving ritual, the hair is burned together with the clothing of the deceased. The reason for this is “to purify the mourners from the contamination of death” (Tshoba 2014:25 citing Yawa 2010). During the bereavement process, the widow of the deceased is not permitted to travel outside her home for a certain period. The reason for this is so that the widow does not spread the misfortunes associated with death (Tshoba 2014:25 citing Yawa 2010). Towards the end of the mourning period, as specified by the family, another cleansing ritual is conducted to purify the bereaved and the possessions of the deceased. This is also when the widow is given cleansing herbs to purify herself (Tshoba 2014:26 citing Yawa 2010).

2.8.1.2.3. Pedi People in South Africa:

Hendriks (2014:81) states that “the Pedi public are those called the Northern Sotho individuals. They are basically found in the Limpopo region in South Africa”. Hendrik (2014:83) further expresses that when passing happens, the widow or single man is eliminated from general society into disengagement, as endorsed by the ceremonies of de-pollution. “Passing should be contained from spreading to others, including creatures, by disconnecting the widow or single man ceremonially,” (Kgatla 2014:84). Kgatla (2014:85) adds that “ideally a male creature is butchered for the burial service.” Baloyi and Makobe-Rabothata (2013:236) express that if the expired was a married man, the widow of the perished is prohibited from showing up homegrown later than dusk, to visit neighbors, or to go to households and network capacities. Through the time of grieving, the widow wears dark garments that “represent the foreboding shadow [of] demise which is related with misfortune and agony,” (Baloyi and MakobeRabothata 2013:236). Baloyi and Makobe-Rabothata (2013:237) further express that if the spouse passes, the single man is prohibited from having a personal illicit relationship until a predefined period, which is typically a half year to one year, contingent upon the family. The single man is likewise banished from showing up later than expected (Baloyi and Makobe-Rabothata 2013:237).

2.8.1.2.4. Venda People in South Africa:

Radzilani (2010:68) describes the way that howling, as a public affirmation of passing, is carried out by the Venda people. “When playing out the customs, dispossessed individuals show the public that they are lamenting, and they require this to be recognized”. (Radzilani 2010:68). Radzilani (2010:72) further expresses that during the mourning time frame, the widow of the perished is viewed as messy because of her relationship with the expired, subsequently a purging custom must be directed to filter her. “The suggestion is that when the spouse passes on, the wife gets grimy. Refinement, hence, permits the survivor to turn out to be perfect and carry on with an ordinary life”(Radzilani 2010:72). These ceremonies are performed by a customary doctor who is regularly welcomed a day later the memorial service. Aborampar Radzilani (2010:73) assert that:

“the belief that peoples and their environment are contaminated by death seems to be informed by a religious-cultural heritage that constructs death as something that dirties people, who then need cleansing to return them to the previous state they occupied before the occurrence of death”.

2.8.1.2.5. Tsonga People in South Africa:

Vernon (2017:25) states that “ancestors play an integral part in the lives of the Vatsonga people. This is symbolised by the way their dead are treated and the rituals and rites which go with it. When death occurs, there are several rituals and rites which are performed. These rituals are symbolic gestures in the sense that they do not actually represent the actions which are performed but have a hidden significant meaning which is only communicated through performance or action without any form of proper explanation”. In African culture, ritual is a very sensitive issue, as it is part of who people are, part of their pride as African people. According to Khosa (2014:1), VaTsonga people “see death as a way for life here on earth to end and to begin eternal life. The dead person is believed that he or she will be joined with their ancestors. To the Tsonga people, when a person’s life ends here on earth, it is believed that rituals must be done so the ancestors can welcome a new member to the ancestral tribe. Failure to do so means the spirit of that person will fly around the house and there will be no peace in the family. Widows therefore need to submit to rituals and adhere to the range of strict prescriptions for the duration of the mourning period”.

2.8.1.2.6. Xhosa People in South Africa:

Tshoba (2014:24) characterises the amaXhosa as a feature of the Nguni ethnic gathering, who are generally situated in the Eastern Cape area of South Africa. In the Xhosa culture, the dispossessed are relied upon to go through loss ceremonies throughout the year of grieving. Some of the ceremonies that the dispossessed must perform, as per Tshoba (2014:24), is to shave off their hair, which represents that they are grieving their adored one. Among the ceremonies that are performed by the Xhosa public is a thing that they call *umkhapho* ("to go with"), which is a custom "done to accompany (*ukukhapha*) the withdrew to the spot of their ancestors," (Tshoba 2014:24 referring to Yawa 2010). Tshoba (2014:24 referring to Yawa (2010) states that the motivation behind the *umkhapho* custom is to keep up an association between the withdrew and the living, so the left can return later. Tshoba (2014:24) further expresses that the grieving time of the Xhosa public reaches a conclusion when the custom called *umbuyiso* is finished. Tshoba (2014:24) characterizes *umbuyiso* as "restoring the soul of the perished back home. This cycle may happen a year after the perished has passed on". Their memorial service ceremonies commend the singular's association with their family and their familial home. In the Xhosa custom, friends and family are taken back to the spot of their introduction to the world to be covered. To guarantee that the soul doesn't meander around in the hereafter, a family senior will converse with the body before the memorial service as a feature of a

practice called 'Thetha'. This is done because at the hour of a new passing, the soul is yet viewed as held inside the body, and thusly it should be talked through the most common way of entering life following death. Simultaneously, relatives will talk with past precursors to assist the new soul with finishing its excursion to the great beyond by (lane, 2014).

2.8.1.2.7. Ndebele People in South Africa:

According to Tshoba (2014:16-17), the Ndebele people belong to the Nguni ethnic group in South Africa, which makes up two-thirds of South Africa's black population. In her research, Tshoba (2014:39) was mainly interested in the ritual of hairshaving. The hair shaving ritual is practiced among the Ndebele people of South Africa, and Tshoba (2014) does not dwell much on the other bereavement rituals of the Ndebele people. The point Tshoba (2014) makes is that the Ndebele people have several rituals that they practice during bereavement, of which hair shaving is a commonality.

2.8.1.3. 2.1 Different Burial Around the World

2.8.1.3.1. 2.4.1 The Tibetan Sky Burial



Picture by Julia Brown 2017

The old act of Tibetan sky entombments sees the cadaver of a perished set on a high top, to be eaten by vultures and different winged creatures of prey expressed by Huygen (2014). He further expresses that it may sound grim to unfamiliar ears, however it is both practical and fills a representative need, speaking to the fleetingness of life for adherents of the Buddhist confidence. Additionally, the carcass is close to a disposed shell; the spirit has just proceeded onward toward resurrection. Curiously, it is viewed as a decent sign if the whole body is burned-through, as Tibetan custom holds, even vultures unfussy as they wouldn't eat the body of an individual who submitted insidious deeds. While other nations rehearse the endocannibalism, where for certain societies, the most ideal approach to respect the dead, is by eating them. Alluded to as 'endocannibalism' by heavy anthropologists (it is stated by anthropologist who have been in the department for so long), these 'galas of the dead' are an approach to manufacture a lasting association between the living and the late expired, Huygen(2014). It is, likewise, a soothing method to communicate the hating and dread related with death and it is a terrible outcome. A few anthropologists have proposed that endocannibalism is something the dead would have anticipated from the living, a last offer of altruism to the clan and family. Even though not, at this point, or at any rate that we are aware of, societies

who practiced endocannibalism, incorporated the Melanesians of Papua New Guinea and the Wari individuals of Brazil?

2.8.1.3.2. A Journey of a Body in Indonesia



Picture by Julia Brown 2017

In the highland's countries of South Sulawesi in Indonesia live the Torajans, who are eminent for their expanded funerals. Grave (2018) states that individuals of Torajans accept that passing is not an unexpected cycle however more a progressive excursion. The body remains with the family after what others would call demise, yet Torajans see it as a type of infection, and they keep on thinking about it and converse with their adored one. He likewise specifies that the burial service is colossal and can happen weeks or months after the fact, to permit the family to raise the fundamental assets and assemble everybody. Simply after the memorial service, the individual's spirit thought to proceed onward to eternity. In addition, the preserved body is then positioned in a stone grave or cavern, or their casket is dangled from a precipice. Like clockwork, in a custom called *ma'nene* held in August, they are uncovered, cleaned and re-dressed.

2.8.1.3.3. The Chopstick and DNA-Japan



Picture by Julia B 2017

Kenney (2000) asserted that family members use chopsticks to pick up the bones of their loved ones after cremation and place them in an urn. The bones from feet go in first and head last. This is one of numerous phases, following a wake around the open casket, the giving of a Buddhist name to the deceased, and a burial. He further states that the Japanese have family graves with space for several urns. The burial industry is a big business in Japan, and a variety of services are now offered, including having your loved one's DNA extracted and incorporated into a keepsake, such as a necklace.

2.8.1.3.4. Fantasy Coffins-Ghana

Picture by Julia B 2017



Ruddock (2006) describes that individuals in the Accra area make beautiful coffins that are additionally viewed as showstoppers. These started with the Ga public, who accept that life carries on somewhere else after death, similarly, it did previously. Thus, the coffins are made to mean something the individual adored or that represents their life, for example, a fish or a bean stew pepper, and to show the individual's situation to other people, the memorial service itself is a major, day-long dedicatory gathering. All these demise customs show that each culture sees passing in various methods of these social accept assistance them to interface with their dead families.

2.9. Literature on Ihlahlalomlahlankosi:

The study focuses on the use of *Ihlahlalomlahlankosi* in the death rites in the Enqabeni community. The previous studies have focussed on the scientific, rather than cultural, uses of Umlahlankosi. The scope of this work's analysis, in this thesis, is limited to the description of *lahlalomlahlankosi* also known as the “*Ziziphus*/buffalo/deciduous” leaf or tree branch; the general/medicine use of Umlahlankosi, as well as the cultural use of *Umlahlankosi*/*Ziziphus*. The following is the literature based on the tree called *Umlahlankosi* tree/leaf.

2.9.1. Description of Ihlahlalomlahlankosi “Ziziphus/ Buffalo/Deciduous” Leaf or Tree Branch:

This study is about a leaf called '*Ihlahlalomlahlankosi*', found in a tree called *Umlahlankosi* which is *Ziziphus Mucronata* (Latin word), known as the buffalo thorn. The buffalo thorn is a type of tree in the family Rhamnaceae, local to Southern Africa referred to by The Plant List (2016). This is a deciduous tree, which can grow up to 17 meters tall. It is a quickly developing, dry season and ice obstruction deciduous tree. The bark is unpleasant and is dull dark brown, in tone. The blossoms are brilliant green in shading, found in thick packs among the leaves. Blossoms can be found from October to April, with natural products being found from February to August. The thistles are found two-by-two on the branches, one thistle being forthright with one snared. The blossoms pull in heaps of supplements; they, likewise, draw in flying creatures, which eat the bigger red berries it produces. The tree has wholesome employments. The leaves are palatable and can be cooked into spinach. The seeds can be simmered and ground as a substitute for espresso. Moreover, its natural products are not delectable, however, a kind of lager can be produced using them. The Ovambo public use it to distil ombiki, a conventional alcohol. The leaves and natural products are additionally an important wellspring of scavenge for domesticated animals, as declared by (King, 2018).



Image by ME Mnguni (2006)

The image of the tree called Umlahlankosi, where the leaf called *Ihlahlalomlahlankosi*, is taken from. Most societies or cultures in South Africa know this tree, but the use of its branches or leaves differ from society to society, village to village, and families to families. Other chapters of this thesis will delineate the use of leaves or branches from the viewpoint of the Nqabane Community, where the study was conducted.

2.9.2. The General/Medicine use of Umlahlankosi:

Nichols (2011) stated that indigenous knowledge, especially in the African setting, has consistently emphasized the importance of character and customs to African social orders. The ascent of westernization ordered the utilization of conventional plants, either for customs or for clinical use, without any logical investigation. The review of writing gave a sign that the Buffalo tree's, '*Ihlahlalomlahlankosi*'. leaves are utilized for customs as well as an ethnomedical plant. The leaves are edible and can be cooked into delectable spinach; the natural product is additionally healthy, however does not taste pleasant. The leaves can be utilized as a love potion, either by being bitten, or put into dishes. During the Anglo-Boer war, the stones were simmered and grounded as a substitute for espresso. A brew can be produced using this organic product. The Ovambo public call the product of the Buffalo thistle, *eenghekete*, and it is utilized to distil Ombiko, their customary alcohol. The Buffalo thorn additionally has restorative properties, a concentrate of roots is given as a painkiller and a tea made of the bark leaves is used for chest discomfort. A decoction of the glutinous roots is regularly regulated as painkiller for a wide range of agonies such as looseness of the bowels. Mokgolodi (2011) expressed that a creation of the bark and leaves is utilized for respiratory sickness, for example, ulcers, wounds, skin illnesses, eye infections, bronchitis, and other septic growths on the skin. Glues of the root and leaves can be applied to treat bubbles, swollen organs, wounds, and bruises. Steam showers from the bark are utilized to refine and improve composition. In East Africa, pulls are utilized for treating snake bites. Moreover, in China, it has been utilized for contraception. A fluid leaf concentrate of *Ziziphus* spinach may have hostile to nociceptive properties in rodents, with a quieting the impact on the focal sensory system. The water-concentrate of the bark of *Ziziphus* is utilized to oversee stomach problems in North Kenya. Additionally, debris from the consumed leaves is blended in with salt and applied to the throat to mitigate tonsillitis. A fomentation of leaves absorbed in bubbling water is utilized on the chest to treat pneumonia. The root is, likewise, utilized as mouth wash and swish in parts of Angola and Namibia.

2.9.3. The Cultural use of Umlahlankosi/Ziziphus:

The study is about the customary significance of using *Ihlahlalomlahlankosi* in death processes, within the eNqabeni Community, South Africa. Africa has many beliefs attached to this tree. Gavin (2012) states that Zulus and Swati individuals utilize the Umlahlankosi for the burial site. It was once

stated that when a Zulu king died, the tree was planted on his grave as an update or image of where the king lies. Thus, the name, *Umlahlankosi* (that which covers the king). A branch from the tree was used to pull in and convey the soul of the deceased from the spot of death to the new resting place. At the point when a stock proprietor passed on and was covered by rituals, inside the cattle or goat kraal, a few branches were set on the grave, so the animals snacked on leaves and twigs, thus comprehended that their owner had died. Africans drag a branch around the town to shield it from detestable spirits, as it is accepted to ward abhorrent souls off. Wood from this tree is utilized for lumber, cart making, and fence posts as it yields a yellow, fine-grained, weighty wood, which contains tanning matters. The flexibility of the shoots makes it appropriate for bows and whip sticks. Some African clans utilise the prickly branches to make kraals or fences. This raises a conviction that it shields their domesticated animals from lions and different hunters.

2.9.4. Ecological Importance of Umlahlankosi

SANBI (no date) states that even though the product of *Ziziphus Mucronata* cannot be considered exceptionally delicious, the tree itself assumes a significant job biologically. They further state that the leaves and natural products are sought after by winged creatures of numerous species, wild creatures, and homegrown wild stock. Giraffes are known to be particularly enamoured with the leaves of this tree. Impala frequently feed on the dead leaves lying under the tree. Its unnoticeable, green to yellow blossoms produce bountiful nectar and frequently yield a decent nectar.



This picture shows us the nectar that is produced by the tree called Umlahlankosi.

Kwigomba (2013) asserts that traditional death rituals are not documented, hence future generations cannot make future reference to them. Therefore, there is an imperative need to record these rituals because they are performed or practiced for a significant purpose, they either heal or strengthen the connection between individual and spiritual powers. This study is

proposed to respond to this noted literature gap, with the hope that it will inform many of its use and will guide households that are currently being led by children, “child-headed households”. The researcher also believe that one needs to document how African societies coordinate death process of their loved ones until their placed in their graves. Koenig and Marshall (2014) agree that “Africans do not consider death as a philosophical notion but merely a natural event that needs to be accompanied with proper rites, not to disturb the gods, deities or death ancestors.”

According to Averill (1968) every society holds a certain beliefs and customs concerning the appropriate behaviour that is to be displayed upon the death of a significant loved one, which individuals follows. It appears that societies and cultures prescribe and define the situation in which such behaviour should be shown. Mourning, as well as ceremony rituals are diverse in each society. Potocnik (2017) states that “the cultural aspect of the response to death, is shaped by the beliefs and customs each society possesses”. Lisa (2016) states that “in the past, individuals in South Africa have been misdiagnosed as psychotic and have been institutionalized due to a lack of knowledge and understanding of cultural beliefs and values”. It appears that beliefs and perceptions become psychotic only when they are at variance with the prevailing cultural norms.

This study places an importance of culture in our generation. The researcher has observed that any of the current generation is forgetting about our culture. While most of those who grow up in urban areas question every cultural custom that are related to death. The study is prompted to understand why *Umlahlankosi*, a branch of a tree, that seems to be segregating males and females because the researcher has observed that females do not lead that process of death and do not touch *Umlahlankosi*. Also, what would happen if the house is female headed household?

2.10. Culture Summary:

Death is part of our daily life; therefore, it is important that one understands the process and the stages of death. So that should it happen that if elderly people die. Those who are left behind will be able to give them a proper sending to their final resting place, so that their spirit will be in peace. This chapter was exploring different death rites around Africa and other cultures around the world. Data analysis will discuss how *Ihlahlalomlahlankosi* is used as part of burial processes, where the study was conducted. The following chapter will discuss theoretical frameworks that anchored the study.

Chapter Three:

Theoretical Frameworks

3.1. Introduction

Anthropological theories are used to explain human culture. This chapter is a review of a presentation of theories that were found to be relevant to this study. The theoretical framework is the blueprint for the entire dissertation inquiry. It serves as the guide in which to build and support your study and provides the structure to define how you will philosophically, epistemologically, methodologically, and analytically approach the dissertation. Eisenhart defines a theoretical framework as “a structure that guides research by relying on a formal theory, constructed by using an established, coherent explanation of certain phenomena and relationships,” (1991:205 in Osanloo 2014).

3.2. Discussing Theories Broadly:

Kawulich (2009) states that “[a] theory may be viewed as a system which orders concepts in a way that produces understanding or insights”. Suter (2017) notes that “the purpose of the theoretical part of a dissertation, or project – and the purpose of good theory is precisely to give a sense of order to the empirical section, so that the two parts need to be inextricably linked”. Furthermore, Suter (2017) states that “theories are nets cast to catch what we call ‘the world’: to rationalize, to explain, and to master it”. Suter (2017) further states that “without theory, or at least some form of classificatory system, it would be extremely difficult to know which data and facts to collect in the first place”.

This thesis was embedded on two theoretical frameworks, namely social constructionism theory and indigenous knowledge theory. The social constructivism is concerned about how social phenomena develop in a social context. The constructivist’s view speculates that there is no objective reality, but rather the observer constructs and maintains reality and each person structures their own perception of reality. It has been one of the most central theories within the ethical and radical realm, throughout the history of the modern west. Based on Owen (1992), social constructionism is an expansion instigated by Marx and Mannheim, and its attractions on the works of Meads and Parsons Haralambos (1985). From a social constructionist viewpoint,

Owen (1992) maintains that, the consent of our consciousness and the mode of relating we have to others, is taught by our culture and society: all the metaphysical qualities we take for granted are learnt from others around us. A social construct is the meaning, notion, or connotation placed on an object or event by society with respect to how they view.

3.3. Link the Theoretical Framework to the Problem Statement:

The study's dialogue about the customary significance of using *Ihlahlalomlahlankosi* in death processes within the Enqabeni community. This study is shaped by two theories, namely social constructionism and indigenous knowledge system. Both these theoretical lenses find relevance in the study because they put the subject as centre of research. The researcher gets the opportunity to learn from the indigenous knowledge system of the social construction of the world from the viewpoint of the subject. The researcher gets to know the reality that exists from the world of the researched. Social constructionism, or the social construction of reality, as well as the narrative theory, describe that a great deal of human life exists as social, cultural, as well as interpersonal influences (Anshu, 2008). According to Turner *et al.* (2000:01) "man is produced by society and society is produced by man". Including our knowledge of what is 'real' and what is socially constructed (Antonio 2008). It is believed that "people are born into a society and culture with pre-existing norms and predefined patterns of behaviour and what is 'real' is socially transmitted from generation to generation and is reinforced by social sanctions". The researcher used the social constructionism theory, for this work, because it appears that the information that people possess is not something that exists in their heads. It is rather the communication they had with others. Social constructionists believe that the understanding of a person's world is well-ordered, and that the world is encompassed of a series of separated events and group of people who engage in distinct actions in an order.

"People then behave according to the social conventions that are based on that knowledge," stated by Appel (2011:66). By employing a social constructionist approach, the researcher intends to engage with participants who have been constructed as users of *Ihlahlalomlahlankosi* and have hope to reconstruct a reality of using this branch of tree in death rites especially in female headed households. Since social constructionists believe that there are many truths and facts that are interpretations which emerge against the backdrop of socially shared understanding," Appel (2011). Cultural groups may differ radically in their views about death and the use of *Ihlahlalomlahlankosi*. It is from a social constructionist framework that the researcher, in current study, could start to understand the relationship that exists between the

members of the eNqabeni community and the cultural use of *Ihlahlalomlahlankosi*. Kala (2004) asserted that social constructionists are concerned about stories that “honour and respect the voices of the community, naturally in all people and how these stories can be respected in specific organisations. It is the notion that social constructionist can encourage and help people to become their own authors and in doing so escape the dominating influences of oppressive domains of knowledge” Kala (2004:15).

Briggs (2013) asserts that the Indigenous Knowledge Theory is both documented and vocally transmitted, imitated, and demonstrated. It is the wisdom of ancestors that are preserved and passed from generation to generation, as a rule by listening in on others' conversations and social customs. “It has been the reason for farming, food arrangement and protection, medicalcare, instruction, culture, and the broad scope of different exercises that continue a general public and its condition in numerous pieces of the world for a long time,” asserted by Mwinzi(2015). The reason for choosing this theory is that the scope of this proposed study is within cultural anthropology. Secondly, the study focusses on indigenous knowledge, which describes the significance of the use of *Ihlahlalomlahlankosi*. The main objective of the study is to understand the effective use of *Ihlahlalomlahlankosi* in death processes that exist. Secondly, as a student who wants to contribute to the cultural anthropology literature, the researcher wantsthis thesis to preserve this information so that the rise of western cultures does not result in these indigenous rituals to be lost. Since most of the indigenous knowledge is not written down or shared with the society, most of the indigenous knowledge disappears due to the intrusion of foreign technologies and development concepts that promise short-term gains or solutions to problems, without being capable of sustaining them. This theory will help the researcher understand the reason why a male, rather than a female, should hold *Ihlahlalomlahlankosi*. Is this gender-based balance the cause of indigenous knowledge? The eNqabeni community is an ‘indigenous knowledge’ rooted community. This theory helps the study with the importance of saving/sharing the indigenous knowledge that is related to the significance of *Ihlahlalomlahlankosi* in death processes. This theory is also relevant to the qualitative research design, which this study has employed. In anthropological research, where the collection of experience, of usage, and of narratives depicting the origin of knowledge, this theory is important to locate meaning and understanding of how ideas and attitudes have developed overtime. As the aim of this research is to discover the meaning and understanding of how *Ihlahlalomlahlankosi* is used and how there has been a segregation between genders because of it.

3.4. The Alignment of Theoretical Frameworks to the Research Methodology of the Study:

As argued by cultural anthropologists, cultural knowledge is socially constructed and it gives a culture, family, as well as a community, as a symbolic identity from which relativity is gained. From the views of cultural anthropologists, indigenous knowledge builds cultural relativity from members of communities, societies, cultures, and families. This cultural knowledge is learned, owned, and passed on from generation to generation. It, through the socially constructed indigenous knowledge that communities, societies, cultures, and families, has become unique from others, in terms of how they behave, celebrate, or perform customs, rituals, and other cultural schemas without being judged as uncivilized, detrimentally or categorized as backward. This socially constructed indigenous knowledge, connects them with their ancestors, who are known to be founders of such knowledge, hence why preserving this kind of knowledge becomes so important. Therefore, this study is about getting knowledge about the cultural significance of using *Ihlahlalomlahlankosi* from people living at eNqabeni. While on the other hand, social constructionism, as well as the IKS, allowed researchers in anthropology to understand the depth of why people, as individuals or members of cultures, have used *Ihlahlalomlahlankosi* during their death processes. They learn from the reality that has been historically owned or classified as indigenous knowledge of a culture. Social constructionism places great emphasis on everyday interactions between people. The social constructionist research, in practice, sees the “interview as an arena within which particular linguistic patterns (typical phrases, metaphors, arguments, stories) can come to the fore,” Terre Blanche and Durrheim (2002). Thus, the researcher, in the current study, used the interviewing arena to encourage participants to tell their stories about the use of *Ihlahlalomlahlankosi*. Hart 1995 cited in Appeal (2011:34) states that “we live with each other in a world of conversational narratives, and we understand ourselves and each through changing stories and self-descriptions”. Indigenous knowledge is one kind of information kept in a specific culture or society. It is otherwise called nearby information, society information, individuals' information, conventional intelligence, or customary science. It is recognized as a set of experiences and rituals generated by people living in those places. That is the reason why the study is undertaken in anthropology, hence a qualitative research design remains a fitting method of inquiry in this proposed study. This design best fits the proposed study because the research is focused on learning or documenting the customary significance of using *Ihlahlalomlahlakosi* in death processes within the eNqabeni Community, South Africa. The qualitative data, that will be discussed in the data analysis chapter, will benefit or allow other cultures to learn the customary

significance of *Ihlahlalomlahlankosi* from the view of eNqabani community. This knowledge will allow other cultures, societies, communities, and families recognize and appreciate cultural diversity and accept as well as respect their rituals, customs, and social schemas without questioning them, benefiting from the content and logic attached to their customs, rituals, and schema process.

3.5. The Relevance of Theoretical Frameworks in Data Analysis:

For this research, the researcher has chosen to employ a thematic analysis. The researcher has chosen this form of analysis as there is currently no other research in the literature exploring the customary significance of using *Ihlahlalomlahlankosi* in death processes within the eNqabeni community, South Africa. Therefore, the research was probing and then wanted to obtain rich information from the phenomenon of the study. Thematic analysis is an ideal method to collect and analyses rich data as it is exploratory and can be used to structure the data while putting research participants at the centre of the social construction of knowledge or representations of roots of indigenous knowledge. Thematic analysis draws largely on socially constructed epistemologies, which are within the scope of the studied phenomenon, Mwinzi (2015). Since social constructionism places great emphasis on everyday interactions between people, thematic analysis makes data analysis and interpretation easy, in terms of categorizing data analyses. in themes. By doing so, the constructionism theory helped the researcher generate themes from responses ‘emic perspectives’ of research participants in relation to *Ihlahlalomlahlankosi* in death rites. This theory helped the research because it allowed the researcher, as a principal investigator, to analyses data from the views of the research participants and this limited the possibilities data tempering or biasness. As the Indigenous Knowledge Theory pointed out, culturally based knowledge is passed on by generation to generation. It was easy for the researcher to identify and category’s themes, as guided by the steps or stages that are involved in thematic analysis. Therefore, categorizing them according to indigenous belief systems was one of the important parts because it shows the different belief systems that people perform when there is a deceased person in their household. The reason for choosing these theories was that the scope of this proposed study within cultural anthropology. Secondly, the study focused on indigenous knowledge, which showed the significance of the use of *Ihlahlalomlahlankosi*. The main objective of the study was to indigenously understand the effective use of *Ihlahlalomlahlankosi* in death processes exist. Secondly, as a student who wants to contribute to the cultural anthropology literature, I want this thesis to preserve this information that could be possible to be misplaced by the rise of western cultures. Since most of the indigenous knowledge is not written down or shared with the society,

most of the indigenous knowledge disappears due to the intrusion of foreign technologies and development concepts that promise short-term gains or solutions to problems without being capable of sustaining them. This theory helped me understand the reason why a male rather than a female should hold *Ihlahlalomlahlankosi*. Is this gender base balance the cause of indigenous knowledge? Alternatively, another reason for that. The eNqabeni community is an indigenous knowledge rooted community. These theories will help the study with the importance of saving/sharing the indigenous knowledge that is related to the significance use of *Ihlahlalomlahlankosi* in death processes. This theory was also relevant to the qualitative research design which this study has employed.

3.6. Chapter Summary:

This chapter discussed two important theories, namely social contraction and the indigenous knowledge system. These theories contribute immensely since culturally, information is socially constructed, sometimes not even written down but verbally passed down from generation to generation through storytelling. This thesis is then celebrated as a written contribution that future generations will refer to. The next chapter deals with research methodology.

Chapter Four:

Research Methodology

4.1. Introduction:

As indicated in chapter one, anthropology is science on its own. It is a science that has its own nature of research. Research designs in anthropology, crack deep into the everyday lives of communities, families, societies, as well as cultures. Research in anthropology employs or is imbedded in scientific methods that confirm the credibility, as well as the validity of collected and analysed data and research findings. Researchers in anthropology are able to study complex systems, their compositions, and many other different, but interrelated, elements. This ability is called a holistic approach, which is the symbolic identity of anthropological research. The ability to conduct a holistic approach is accepting that there is no detail too small, any societal pattern is an anthropological interest or inquiry. This rule of thumb, in anthropological research, positions anthropologists to immerse their research to study the uniqueness of rituals, customs, and other cultural schemas that other cultures, communities, families, and societies hold dear as their own cultural identity as well, as their own indigenous knowledge.

This chapter describes the research journey that the principal investigator undertook in the study, while endeavoured to study the customary significance of using *Ihlahlalomhlankosi* in death processes within the eNqabeni community. Marouda (2019:12) states that human beings are not born as ready genetic packages that just unfold the information engraved in them during their lives, hence qualitative research recognizes that people are the source/ repository of cultural knowledge.

4.2. Outline of the Chapter:

The composition of this chapter consists of the following, defined research, explaining the research design used for the study, the research paradigm, the relevance of qualitative in regard to the research problem statement, the relevance of qualitative research in anthropology, and the significance of research methodology to anthropology. Section four describes the methods of data analysis; section five discusses of some ethical considerations used to protect the rights of the participants; section six discusses the data collection experience; section seven discusses the limitations that were faced during the research, the ethical considerations and the final section summarizes and concludes the chapter.

4.3. Defining Research:

Most scholars have attempted to define what research is, what remains common from the existing literature that defines what research is, or what could be the reason that scholars define it as a process of collecting and analysing both qualitative and quantitative data. This data, also known as information, is intended to increase our critical understanding of the subject or phenomenon that has the interest of scholars/researchers, or a phenomenon that has interested the community at large. Research is also defined as a human activity based on an intellectual investigation aimed at discovering and interpreting subjective and objective knowledge from different aspects of the world. Research can be scientific or non-scientific. Research is, thus, an original contribution to the existing repository of knowledge with intentions of expanding or advancing what is already known. One of the basic definitions of research is that it is an organized and systematic way of finding answers to questions (Creswell, 2017). Islam and Samsudin (2020:321) asserts that “research is the primary enterprise of knowledge construction. The researcher with his or her participants is engaged in producing knowledge.” In the presence of more than twenty-eight (28) objectives of the research that Islam and Samsudin (2020: 321) listed in their publication, the researcher in this study noted one, which states that the objective of research is to clearly understand the observed phenomenon and explain its logic and reason for happening. This research objective translated what this study intended to achieve as it wanted to write about the significance of using *Ihlahlalomlahlankosi* in death processes of the eNqabeni community. The analysis chapter will depict narratives where research participants will be detailing insights into the usage of *Ihlahlalomlahlankosi*, which translates the social construction of knowledge, while recognizing the roots of indigenous knowledge.

4.4. Research Design for the Study:

A research design is the “procedure for collecting, analyzing, interpreting and reporting data in research studies” (Cresswell and Clark 2007). It is the plan for connecting the conceptual research problem with the relevant empirical research. The study undertaken in anthropology, hence why a qualitative research design remains a fitting method of inquiry in this study. This design best fits the study because the research focusses on learning or documenting the customary significance of using *Ihlahlalomlahlankosi* in death processes within the eNqabeni Community, South Africa. Silverman (2012) agrees that qualitative research is in-depth research that seeks to understand why people do what they do in attempt to understand culture and performed customs.

In anthropology, qualitative research is used to capture people's narratives, in relation to an experience that they have experienced in their life. Furthermore, Creswell (2014) asserted that the hallmark of anthropology is the exploration of the complexity and nuances of human interactivity and culture. As a research discipline, anthropologists employ qualitative research methods to study human behaviour, as well as cultural issues/themes. The use of this research design is advantageous, according to Peersam (2014), because it allows the researcher to meet with the subjects and to be able to collect narratives in relation to the desired data, and to also employ the narrative method.

4.5. Research Paradigm:

Research paradigm is a “set of common beliefs and agreements shared between scientists. about how problems should be understood and addressed,” started by Eyetsemitan and Gira (2003). The ontology of this study is that the cultural rite of using *Ihlahlalomhlankosi* is a rite that is performed in order to ensure that the spirits of the death are laid to rest, as well as the body. The researcher's epistemology is that through data collection, the researcher found personal relation to the study because, even in the researcher's house, this rite is performed and therefore, it was easier to make reference, when the participants made examples. The researcher found relation to the study because the reality of the research is if a dead person's spirit is not collected, that person does not find peace meaning that he/she does not rest peacefully, and that soul becomes a ghost. This qualitative research comprises of receiving information that gives a verbal expression of the participates and it provides more detail. It can be used to analyses people's attitudes and emotions towards a topic, and it allows the participants to expand in their answers.

4.5.1. The epistemological and ontological reasoning/ position in the study:

The ontological position of this study is that reality is internal to the knower (what appears in their consciousness). Neubauer (2019) states that lived experience is an interpretative process situated in an individual's life. As for this research, the knowledge gained is from the individuals' perspectives and the experiences of what they have seen in their lifetime, when there is death in their family. The epistemology gives recognition to the foundation of knowledge which in this study was the knowledge of the use of *ihlahlalomahlankosi* from the viewpoint of people of eNqabeni. Therefore, the researcher was able to not be biased and understand the views of the participants, without expecting them to address the use of *Ihlahlalomhlankosi* outside their indigenous/ societal/cultural knowledge.

4.6. The Relevance of Qualitative Research in the Problem Statement:

Qualitative research methods allow anthropologists to explore in more detail by asking the 'why's' and 'how' questions, in their research. Such questions assist anthropologists to uncover unexpected insights, which can be collected directly from research participants, over time and from diverse perspectives. Therefore, qualitative research helped the researcher to ask the questions such as why the tree branch is only handled by men and not women, and to further ask about the indigenous significance of using the branch of *Umlahlankosi* in death rites within eNqabeni community, as well as to ask why it is put inside the grave instead of being disposed like common litter after use. The relevance of qualitative research, in the problem statement, is that qualitative research allows research to be able to have engagement with the participants and as a principal investigator, the researcher was able to get every emotion of the participants during interviews.

4.7. The Relevance of Qualitative Research in Anthropology:

Nichols (2011) and Kotak (2012) state cultural or social anthropology refers to the cultural research on the social life of people, ethnic groups, and societies. In anthropology, qualitative research is used to capture people's narratives, in relation to an experience that they have experienced in their life. Furthermore, Creswell (2014) asserts that the hallmark of anthropology is the exploration of the complexity and nuances of human interactivity and culture. As a research discipline, anthropologists employ qualitative research methods to study human behaviour, as well as cultural issues/themes. Qualitative research sets anthropology apart from other disciplines. Qualitative research methods allow anthropologists to explore in depth by asking the why's and how questions in their research. Such questions assist anthropologists to uncover unexpected insights which can be collected directly from research participants, more of, over time and from diverse perspectives. His study is anthropological, and it seeks to ask the participants to discuss the customary use of *Ihlahlalomlahlankosi* in death rites, and further questions what would happen if the house is a female headed household and does it therefore mean that the custom will not be done or there is a way to appease the ancestors to accept the rite that if performed by a female. Thus, the strength of qualitative research is its ability to provide information about the human side of an issue that is often contradictory behaviours, beliefs, opinions, emotions and relationships of individuals, which is what anthropology deals with, for example, anthropology ask questions such as why members of the society of eNqabeni perform rituals using *Ihlahlalomlahlankosi*. In this manner, anthropology is interested

in finding information about why people's behaviour, beliefs, and opinions are shaped in the manner that they are shaped.

The methods used in the research is very important because it is the way that shapes how data will be collected. Since this is an anthropology study, anthropologists use qualitative research methods in order to get qualitative data. In anthropology, qualitative research is used to capture people narratives, in relation to an experience that they have experienced in their life. Furthermore, Creswell (2014:2) assert that "the hallmark of anthropology is the exploration of the complexity and nuances of human interactivity and culture". As a research discipline, anthropologists employ qualitative research methods to study humanist as well as cultural issues/themes. Qualitative research set anthropology apart from other disciplines. Qualitative research methods allow anthropologists to explore in depth by asking the whys and how questions in their research. Such questions assist anthropologists to uncover unexpected insights which can be collected directly from research participants, in situ, over time and from diverse perspectives. The use of this research design is advantageous, according to Busetto (2020), because it allows the researcher to meet with the subjects and to be able to collect narratives in relation to the desired data, and to also employ the narrative method.

4.8. Sampling Technique:

Anthropologist's study and analyses societies and probe human behaviour to find patterns, truths and meanings attached to such objects. By so doing, anthropologists are known to be collecting emic perspectives, 'insider perspectives', on the studied phenomenon. This means that the anthropologists, or research in anthropology, recognizes that people are holders, or authors, of the desired data. The researcher then gives recognition and value to what the sampled population knows, thinks, believes, views, takes note of how they explain, understand, and interpret the world around them, the logic, and the rationale for their beliefs, as well as their practises or behaviour in a particular context. Hamed (2016) asserts that 'sampling technique' is the name or other identification of specific process by which the entities of sample have been selected, and it is a crucial component of all societal investigations. Sampling is a method that is used by researchers to minimize the population into small section size that they wish to study. As a researcher is impossible to study the whole community as the researcher might find so many challenges, such

as time, data collection, and data management. In agreement, Busetto (2020) asserted that in a qualitative research sample selection has a profound effect on the ultimate quality of research.

4.8.1. Sampling Technique Employed:

There are two types of sampling methods namely, probability sampling and non-probability sampling. This study is guided by non-probability sampling, where participants are selected from the population in a non-random manner. Non-probability sampling has three methods of participant selection, including, purposive sampling, quota sampling, and snowball sampling. In this study, purposive sampling was used to select the participants. This study used both purposive sampling and snowball sampling and these two-sampling methods work together to produce the qualitative data. Purposive sampling requires a researcher to have prior knowledge about the purpose of the study so that they can properly choose and approach eligible participants.

In this study, snowball sampling was used when the wanted sample characteristics are rare; indigenous knowledge keepers are rare because most knowledge keepers are old males within the eNqabeni community, and the community now does not have many of those people as they have passed away. Snowball sampling requires a researcher to identify a participant that meets the standards of the study. For this study, the choice of participants involved was within a rural community based in Pietermaritzburg, KZN, the city of choice. As the principal investigator, the researcher purposively aimed to recruit between 20 to 30 research participants. The reason for this age group was to see if our youth has any information or knowledge regards to *ihlahlalomlahlankosi*. Due to unforeseen COVID-19 related circumstances, the researcher was only able to get 20. This sampling is not statistically calculated nor is it gender specific, but it is deemed relevant because it will offer a nuanced understanding that is linked to the topic under investigation. The study is targeting research participants that are between 18 to 60 plus years of age. The use of the snowball method was applied because the researcher. As the principal investigator, and a member of the eNqabeni society, it was easy for participants to recommend someone. Snowballsampling also requires the researcher to identify someone that meets the criteria for inclusion in the study. The snowball sampling was used to identify five more females, who are said to be the key knowledge holders about the use of *Ihlahlalomlahlankosi*. The researcher chose the eNqabeni community for two reason: firstly; because the community is culturally rooted and secondly; because it also has female headed households, which is relevant

to the study, as it is interested to know about what happens if the household is a female headed one, who take part in the process of using *Ihlahlalomlahlankosi*.

The rationale of this sampling technique is that participants have been conditioned to understand customary processes, secondly, they have been affected by the custom that is being studied, thirdly, that they are the village members of eNqabeni, which is the research site. This sample is accepted in anthropology, as most anthropologists have prioritized the study samples, with the hope of entering their intimate world. All the males and females, in the society, had an equal chance of being purposively sampled or recruited through the purposive sampling technique. The reason why the researcher applied this type of sampling, was to ensure that households that practice the custom of using *Ihlahlalomlahlankosi*, were identified for data collection. This sampling technique allowed the researcher to not generalize that all households perform this custom, and that would have meant serious unethical misconduct as a researcher. Etikan et al., (2015) state that the purposive sampling technique, also called judgment sampling, is the deliberate choice of a participant due to the qualities the participant possesses. It is a non-random technique that does not need underlying theories or a set number of participants.

4.8.2. Data Collation and Instruments Used:

This study used qualitative research methods. There are three commonly used qualitative data collection methods: ethnographic, theory grounded and phenomenological. This study used ethnography as data collection method by using in-depth interviews. Ethnography allows the collection of data from human societies and cultures. Ainsworth (2021:65) states that "...ethnographer seek to understand how people live their lives." In this manner, the researcher was able to take note that all death or funeral rites that the researcher attended since they started the project, has the branch of *Ihlahlalomlahlankosi* placed near the coffin. Surnmack (2018:33) states that "qualitative research methods such as in-depth interviews, focus group discussions, and participant observation are increasingly being used in anthropological studies." These methods are becoming very productive in the research space because it gives the participants a chance to share their life stories, history, beliefs, and attitudes toward African culture. In addition, anthropologists Crapanzano (1984) asserted that life histories are data collection strategies that describe an individual's lifetime. The purpose of this study was to gather the belief of the eNqabeni community, in relation to the use of *Ihlahlalomlahlankosi*, in a Zulu death rite. This research used in-depth interviews, while making consideration to the rules of COVID-19. Including social distancing, hand sanitizing, and the wearing of masks. Based on Allen *et al*

(1994) the in-depth interview has involved from anthropology and is compromise between unstructured and semi-structured interviewing techniques. It is more like a conversation rather than an interview in that it requires the skills of probing and following lead. Therefore, in-depth interviews allow the researcher to dig for more information from the participants and find meaning in some of the information that they gave. Through interviews, the researcher was able to build a rapport with the participants. It is important to build a rapport with the participants so that they find easier to communicate, they also get the opportunity to ask why the researcher is interested in the topic and that why the researcher is still fixed in culture, while people are busy with industrialization of the new world. Keegan (2009:14) in Smith (2012) asserted that a “rapport is a prerequisite of good qualitative research”. Building a rapport has a good influence on the quality of the data collected.

Interviews were schedule at time suitable for participants because other participants had commitments such as community commitments, work, and others had personal commitments such as family matters. People, such as *INDUNA*, have community commitments because on Saturdays and Sundays, they must attend community cases. Participants were asked to choose their own place where they would like the interview to take place. All the interviews take place in different locations. Each interview was about an hour. For the participants, interviews allowed them to share their cultural knowledge, ideas and attitudes related to death. Before the interview, each participant gave their permission to be recoded. All the interviews were conducted in the participants’ preferable language which was isiZulu. And participants had a copy of interview questions.

4.8.3. The Relevance of the research methods to the Problem Statement and Theoretical Framework:

This study asked the customary significance of using *Ihlahlalomlahlakosi* in death processes within the eNqabeni Community, South Africa. The data was collected through interviews, which is the best method in an anthropological study since the study is cultural and it is of an ethnographic nature. Ethnography is defined “as a type of qualitative research that involves immersing one’s-self in a community or organization, to observe their behaviour and interactions, up close”, stated by Wilkison (2021:3). The study aimed to understand why it is so important to use this branch of the tree in death rites. Therefore, interviews are crucial because they help the researcher to gain that knowledge first-hand. This study used two theories, namely Social Constructionism Theory and Indigenous Knowledge System Theory. Social

constructionism is interested in subject of what anthropology call 'culture.' Further want to know how knowledge that is regarding our culture, is contracted and understood. It is the wisdom of ancestors that is preserved and passed from generation to generation, by listening in on others' conversations and social customs. The researcher gets the opportunity to learn from the indigenous knowledge system and the social construction of the world, from the viewpoint of the subject. The researcher gets to know the reality that exists from the world of the researched, through interviews.

4.9. Data Collection Plan:

The study was conducted in 20 days, and during that the researcher had to wait for the availability of the participants, as mentioned above. Through the process of observation, it was not easy due to the COVID-19 regulations and everyone was frustrated because people were forced to change the way they bury their loved ones. Also, the use of *Ihlahlalomlahlankosi*, in death rites, is supposed to be carried by men and with the researcher being female, it was impossible for the researcher to get a chance to observe.

4.9.1. Data Handling and Filtering:

"Data filtering is the process of choosing a smaller part of data set and using it for viewing or analysis," stated Facer (2021:12). During data analysis, only the relevant answer was documented, because the study focused on documenting the qualitative data. According to there are seven steps involved in thematic data analysis. Namely, the initial steps: transcribing, reading, and familiarization. Before the researcher proceeds with analysing qualitative data, the researcher must be ready with the transcription. This refers to the translating data from the participants language into English, for example, in this study, participants were responding in isiZulu and the researcher had to translate from isiZulu to the English language. It a very demanding process which takes a lot of time because the researcher must make sure that the translation corresponds with the participant's words. Before coding and identifying the themes, the researcher must familiarize him/herself with the data that is collected. In that way, the researcher gets an idea about the patterns and relationships that the data has. The second step is to move on to coding. Coding refers to identifying all the relevant pieces of data within the whole data set, to answer the research topic. According to Braun and Clarke (2013:66) "a code is a word or brief phrase that captures the essence of why you think a particular bit of data maybe useful". There are two types of coding, latent code, and semantic code. Semantic codes are the codes that emerge during the interviews, while latent codes are codes that develop through the

theoretical lens of the study. Thirdly, identifying patterns (codes to theme) Braun and Clarke (2013:52) states that “a pattern-based analysis allows the researcher to identify salient features of the data, which are meaningful in answering the research questions”. Fourthly, searching, reviewing and finalizing the themes. Braun and Clarke (2006:82) state that a theme “captures something important about the data in relation to the research question and represents some level of patterns responses or meaning within the data set”. These authors further state that the theme is a central organizing concept which is a collection of codes and is thus a collection of ideas or a aspect that can be recorded under specific theme Braun and Clarke (2013:224). Finally, developing analysis. This stage is where the researcher now presents the data, combining it with the relevant literature reviews and theories on the study in the later chapter. This helps to develop a new theoretical relationship and its contribution to existing knowledge.

4.10. Methods of Data Analysis and the Relevance to Research the Research Methodology and Paradigm:

Data analysis involves a collation of methods and procedures whereby the data has been collected is converted to create meaning about the people and situation being investigated, stated by Smith (2012). According to Kawulich (2004) data analysis as the process a researcher uses to reduce data to a story and its interpretation. Thematic analysis was employed as the method of presenting and analysing data in the wording of the thesis. Thematic analysing “is a method of analysing qualitative data. It usually applied to set of text, such as interview transcript” asserted by Caulfield (2019) The employment of thematic analysis is within the scope qualitative research, which is the research design for this study and mostly adopted in anthropological studies. This method is relevant because the research was qualitative, and data was collected through interviews.

4.11. Ethical Consideration

Islam and Samsudin (2020:322) avow that research ethics provide guidelines for the responsible conduct of research to ensure that the research is credible and rigorously conducted without harming research participants, without the researcher being harmed and without misrepresenting the originality of the data. Arif (2018) further states that ethics has to do with “behaviour that is considered right or wrong”. In research, ethical considerations are important because they help to control the alteration between suitable and intolerable behaviour, as stated by Arafin and Roshaid (2017). Morals refer to the right principles while doing research. Researchers have an ethical

duty to safeguard rights, as well the dignity of all research participants. Justice refers to the fair selection of participants. Damtew and Bereket (2018), in their research, stated that the idea gives guidelines on how rational goals and not enrolment, in either a special or powerless populace, ought to figure out which individuals from which networks should meet the consideration criteria to take part in research, to share the dangers and advantages of the research most fairly. Corbin and Strauss (2014) stated that qualitative research methods are applied to get to know perceptions, beliefs, and feelings of people. Even when the researcher has the strong bond with the participants, the researcher and the research still need to respect and safeguard their interest. Islam and Samsudin (2020:334) assert that “unethical research is poison in the research resources”. Arifin (2018:30) cautioned that in a qualitative study, “ethical considerations have a particular resonance due to the in- depth nature of the study process. The concern of ethical issues becomes more salient when conducting face to face interviews with vulnerable group of participants”. Research participants may potentially become stressed while expressing their feelings during the interview session. Aluwihare-Samaranayake (2012:76) “qualitative research is used to explore and capture persons’ subjective experiences, meanings and voices. This research method can result in ethical challenges for participants and researchers; hence researchers are to pay strict ethical consideration through their research processes”. Arifin (2018) declared that the violation of human rights, in the name of empirical or non-empirical research, has been noted among the darkest events in history, hence ethical considerations are to be a rule of thumb in all research processes.

This study observed the following ethical considerations:

1. **Approval of the study:** This study was firstly presented to the culture cluster of UKZN’s School of Social Science for approval. The researcher was granted ethical clearance by Humanities and Social Science Research Ethics Committee. On the 21 of February 2021. Protocol reference number HSSREC/00002238/2020. The letter also stated that research data should be securely stored in the discipline/department for period of five years. For gate keepers, a letter was written by my supervisor Dr Zondi which was taken to Induna. That letter asked for the permission to do a research in the community. The gatekeeper’s letter was approved by the Induna on 07 May 2021. The letter granted the permission for a study to take place.
2. **Recruitment process of participants:** Community members of the eNqabeni community volunteered to participate in this study. The researcher explained the

objectives and questions of the research. Their participation was not forced, coerced, or gathered by falsely luring them. The researcher honestly explained that they are doing this study in order to complete requirements of a master's degree in Anthropology, which was a field not many people knew. The researcher further explained that the study does not intent to invade their cultural privacy, but the researcher was purely interested in learning about rituals, customs, and other cultural schemas of families, societies, and communities as the researcher aspires to become a recognized cultural anthropologist. The researcher then disclosed the ethical clearance, which was issued by the University of KwaZulu-Natal ethics committee.

3. **Informed consent:** Participants were asked to sign a consent form before data collation. These forms were worded in English and in IsiZulu, since the study was based in rural area, and with elderly people who might not understand English, it was therefore, the researcher's duty to read the consent forms and make sure that everyone understood every piece of information it had. Nijhawana (2013) asserts that a consent form ensures the transparency and openness of research processes. The consent form gave detailed information and intention of the study, which included how the rights of research participants would be safeguarded throughout the research process. It is through the informed consent that research participants were informed of their rights to withdraw as and when they feel the need to do so.
4. **Confidentiality and anonymity:** During data analysis, the original names of the participants were not mentioned. All the names used were changed to protect the identity of the original owner. Confidentiality, as well as anonymity was observed, even during data presentation and analysis as asserted by Surmiac (2018). According to Nijhawana (2013), confidentiality means that that all data instruments should be kept private or stored in a way that participant's responses are not exposed to any sort of danger.
5. **Beneficence to avoid harm:** Damtew and Bereket (2018) helped to make sure that the researcher's study tried to avoid the harm of the participants. Should it happen, it would not be because it was the intention of the researcher but rather a mistake. The researcher's participants never wanted any breaks, they said that they are okay. This includes changing their names.
6. **Storage of data collection instruments:** Since this study was conducted during COVID-19, the supervisor approved that the researcher could keep all data collection.

instruments in the researcher's home but emphasized that no one should have access to such instruments. The trust that the supervisor had in the researcher, as well as their family, implied a couple of things, it taught ethical considerations, like confidentiality and respect as they knew that the latter should not have access to these documents. This trust also taught the researcher to be truthful because the researcher needed to adhere to this trust. The data collection instruments were kept in a secure location where only the researcher had access to.

7. **Respect and objectivity:** The researcher avoided, or minimized, bias, or self-deception, by detaching themselves from the study. The researcher did not want to temper with ethical considerations outlined in the ethical clearance letter. The researcher respected research participants by not imposing data collection times on their daily schedules. The researcher asked them to provide times from which the researcher was able to create a data collection schedule. The researcher ensured that the narratives of research participants were not tempered with.
8. **Dissemination of research findings:** Research participants were informed during the recruitment phase that the final thesis will remain the property of the University of KwaZulu-Natal, hence if they want to have access to any copies, they will have to follow provisional outlines in the Intellectual Property Clause of UKZN or else be in contact with the researcher's supervisor, or library, in order to get a copy.

4.12. Data Collection Experience:

Kabir (2016: 222) asserts that "data collection/ethnographic is both exciting and interesting. Researchers carry multifaceted responsibilities. They must conduct recruit research participants, guard against ethical clearance diversion, ensure that she or he redirect the concentration or the focus of research of research participants into the study, probe for clarity, keep and protect field notes. This makes the entire journey thorny but mostly memorable". The researcher's journey was threatened by the COVID-19 pandemic, which led to more deaths, even where the study was conducted and lockdown restrictions that were introduced in the country. I think that the study could have benefited from elder people from the community whose lives were claimed by the COVID-19 because they were reservoirs of cultural knowledge. This experience made the researcher anxious, as they did not know if the data collection was going to be possible at all. The recruitment of participants felt almost impossible because the researcher had the responsibility to protect themselves and those who voluntarily consented to be in the study.

COVID-19 also robbed me as a research to physically meet my supervisor for supervision support. Overall, I as researcher realized that anthropological researcher builds so much resilience in a person. While the researcher's supervisor was a just a call away, the researcher had to trust themselves exhibit a good show of character before the research participants. Ethnography took most of the researcher's time and their life was immersed in the data collection journey. Other challenged had to do with the rescheduling of times because research participants had other familial responsibilities, which the researcher had to accommodate. The researcher had to apply all probing techniques that they had studied in an Anthropology module called "Research plus Special Topic." The process of going back and forth for clarity on socially constructed indigenous terms that emerged from data analysis, made the researcher realize that data saturation is when research participants have exhausted all the explanations of a particular phenomenon, theme, or variable that needed an in-depth understanding.

Doing ethnographic research during the advent of COVID-19 was not easy all because the government had regulated the movement of people and required to adherence of all social distance protocols. These unprecedented times brought changes in the data collection plan that the researcher had in mind. The initial plan was to collect data as from the month of March 2021 to April 2021, however, because of COVID-19, it ended up starting with data collection in April 2021 and the last set of data was only collected in May 2021. The rapid spread of COVID-19, in the community where the research was to be conducted, inflicted fear into the researcher, as well as the research participants. The researcher experienced challenges when looking for participants, for example, the researcher had to go to one house more than three times to find the participants. Participants were welcoming and were also keen to suggest other people that were able to participate in the research. The researcher also had an experience where one of the participants was very interested in why the researcher had chosen this kind of topic, rather than doing a research based on what is new and trending, since the researcher is a young individual. I took the responsibility to teach community members about what anthropology is a subject and as research practice. I therefore included in my teaching of what anthropology is by alluding to research methods in anthropology. This method of data collection also inspired other research participants to voice that they would like their children to specialize in anthropology, in this regard, this study proved that is an interesting subject, as well as what makes human beings cultural.

4.13. Limitations of the Study:

When conducting the research, the researcher had to always bear in mind the possibility of limitations. When conducting interviews, participants were responding in isiZulu, therefore, when translating it to English, there was a possibility that will be information lost in the process of translation. The process of translation contributed a lot of time in conducting the research.

4.14. Validity:

In every research that is conducted, it is important to note the three aspects of research namely: validity, reliability, and generalization. Leung (2021) asserted that validity in qualitative research means the “appropriateness” of the tools, processes, and data. In assessing validity of qualitative research, the challenges can start from the ontology and epistemology of the issue being studied. Choice of methodology must enable detection of findings or phenomena, in the appropriate context, for it to be valid, with due regard to cultural and contextual variables. For sampling procedures and methods, it must be distinctive between systematic, purposeful, or theoretical (adaptive) sampling. For this study, the validity of data collected is strong because the responses were the perspectives of the people who are currently practicing the rites of *Ihlahlalomlahlankosi* in death rites, in their homes. Methods used to collect the data was reliable, which makes data valid.

4.15. Reliability:

Leung (2012) further state that reliability in the research refers to exact replicability of the processes and the results. In qualitative research with diverse paradigms, such definition of reliability is challenging and epistemologically counter-intuitive. Hence, the essence of reliability for qualitative research lies with consistency. As data was extracted from the original sources, researchers must verify their accuracy in terms of form and context with constant comparison. The principal investigator did not sample people who do not recognize this ritual; hence the narratives of the participants are valid, and they are qualitative data, and participants share the same understanding of the cultural use of *Ihlahlalomlahlankosi* in death rites.

4.16. Generalization:

Leung (2021) states that generalization is common in most qualitative research studies, if not all, are meant to study a specific issue or phenomenon in certain population or ethnic group, of a focused locality in a context, hence generalization of qualitative research findings is usually not an expected attribute. A paradigm approach to assessing generalizability for qualitative studies

is to adopt same criteria for validity. That is, use of systematic sampling, triangulation, and constant comparison. The generalization of the study is limited to the community of eNqabeni.

4.17. Concluding Remarks:

This chapter discussed the immersion of qualitative research methods in research, which is the design that anthropologists have implored when studying cultures and when wanting to learn from their cultural patterns and practices. The ethical considerations discussed in this chapter will guide the credibility and the reliability of research findings that this thesis delineate in last chapter.

Chapter Five:

Data Presentation

5.1. Introduction:

This data was analysed through thematic analysis, which is a method for systematically identifying, organizing, and offering insight into, patterns of meaning (themes) across a dataset, stated by Braun and Clarke (2012). Thematic analysis allows the researcher to make sense of collected data, and shared beliefs, emanating from meaning and experiences that people shared in a society, in relation to the phenomenon or the subject area. Thematic analysis helps anthropologists to recognize every theme that emerges while conducting or collecting data.

These themes are within the scope of the research title ‘The customary significance of using *Ihlahlalomlahlankosi* in death processes within eNqabeni community, South Africa: An Anthropology inquiry ‘. The main objectives of this study were to understand the customary use of *Ihlahlalomlahlankos*’ in all death rites in the Nqabeni area; to discover why only men, in all death rites, carry this leaf; to trace the indigenous use of *Ihlahlalomlahlankosi* within the eNqabeni area; to understand how the eNqabeni community passes on knowledge from generation to generation; to justify what happens if it gets carried by women or if there are social contracts that exists, which prohibit it to be touched by women and lastly to understand why this leaf is put inside the grave instead of being thrown in a bush or elsewhere in the yard.

This chapter depicts the texture of the qualitative data that was collected from various participants for the purpose of this study, in order to establish the indigenous significance of using the branch of *Ihlahlalomlahlankosi* in death rites within the eNqabeni community. This rich data was solicited from 20 research participants living within eNqabeni, which was the research site for the study. In-depth interviews were conducted on twenty (20) research participants. The process of data collection revealed that 19 out of 20 people spoke Zulu and one who spoke Xhosa, who moved to eNqabeni because of a job opportunity in Pietermaritzburg. In this regard, labour migration was recognized as a transition that allows different cultures to settle and share their beliefs. Ten themes were generated from an extensive data familiarizations process. Theme one: Defining *Ihlahlalomlahlankosi* (pp.73); Theme Two: The customary use of *Ihlahlalomlahlankosi* in all death rites (pp.74); Theme three: Importance of practicing this custom (pp.78); Theme Four: Gendered use (pp.81); Theme Five: Social construct (pp.85); Theme Six: Disposing the *Ihlahlalomlahlankosi* leaf (pp.89). Theme Seven:

Knowledge transmission (pp.92); Theme Eight: Uses (pp.95); Theme Nine: Symbolic signs (pp.98) and the last theme; Theme Ten: Industrialization (pp.100).

5.2. Demographics of Participants:

Pseudonyms of research participants	Gender of participation	Age	Nature of the household representing	Ethnic group
Makhanya	Male	<u>77</u>	Male headed household	African
Dlamini	Male	<u>78</u>	Male headed household	African
Sipho	Male	<u>46</u>	Male headed household	African
Zwelikude	Male	<u>46</u>	Male headed household	African
Mishack	Male	<u>25</u>	Male headed household	African
Thabo	Male	<u>27</u>	Female headed household	African
Mlondi	Male	<u>35</u>	Female headed household	African
Zulu	Male	<u>75</u>	Male headed household	African
Andile	Male	<u>29</u>	Child headed household by a female	African
Manqoba	Male	<u>29</u>	Child headed household by a female	African
Nxumalo	Male	<u>48</u>	Male headed household	African
Delani	Male	<u>48</u>	Male headed household	African
Miss Hlombe	Female	<u>65</u>	Female headed household	African
MaMhlongo	Female	<u>79</u>	Female headed household	African
Monde	Female	<u>33</u>	Child headed household by a female	African
Nomusa	Female	<u>46</u>	Female headed household	African
MaShabalala	Female	<u>65</u>	Female headed household	African

MaSokhela	Female	56	Female headed household	African
MaDlamini	Female	68	Female headed household	African
MaMfukeng	Female	65	Female headed household	African

This demographic representation of research findings outlines that eight (8) represented families under the leadership of a male figure, four (4) represented child-headed families who are under the leadership of children, who are now heads of households because their parents are no more and eight (8) represent houses that are female headed household, the father is no more.

Analysing such demographics in this study was critical in the sense that the use of *Ihlahlalomhlankosi* is used in households especially when someone has died. There would have been a data gap if these demographics were not outlined because they represent narratives which would have been thematically presented in this chapter. This portion of data enabled the principal investigator of the study to reflect on the theoretical frameworks, as well as the literature sources. This study used two theoretical frameworks namely social constructionism, which asserts that all knowledge evolves in the space between people in the realm of the common culture and further states that we live with each other in a world of conversational narratives, and we understand our selves and each other through changing stories and self- description. Hart (1995) further states that all other aspects of humanity are created, maintained, and destroyed in our interactions with others through time. The second theory is the Indigenous Knowledge System, which asserts that knowledge limited to a culture or society. It is also known as resident knowledge, traditional knowledge, grassroots knowledge, traditional wisdom, or traditional science. This type of knowledge is generated and transmitted by communities from generation to generation. Transmission of this knowledge could be storytelling, acting, poems, or it could be through demonstrations. Indigenous knowledge system is said to be rooted to a place.

Presentation of generated themes this chapter has ten themes: Theme one Defining *Ihlahlalomhlankosi*; theme two the customary use of *Ihlahlalomhlankosi*; theme three importance of practicing this custom; theme four gendered role; theme five social construct that forbid women in touching the leaf; theme six disposing the *Ihlahlalomhlankosi*(leaf); theme seven knowledge transmission; theme eight “uses”; theme nine symbolic signs and the last theme discuss industrialization.

5.3. Theme one

Defining Ihlahlalomhlankosi.

Ihlahlalomhlankosi was the central theme for the study. This study confirmed that this theme is not a newly emerging theme but a theme worth being understood in a different context. In Chapter two, Mazibuko (2007) explained that *Ihlahlalomhlankosi*, also known as *Ziziphus mucronate*/buffalo, is known in Africa and the use of this leaf is used to perform different rituals. All twenty participants depicted a common understanding of what this leaf is, however, the researcher only cited two participant's narratives because they were narrated by two young males (Sipho and Zwelikude) who defined *Ihlahlalomhlankosi* as follows:

"It is an African tree which grows in the forest (it grows naturally, no one plants it). The ritual or custom tradition attached to it by our ancestors is that when someone has died, elders or whoever has been trusted with the responsibility to lead the family "head of the household" uses the leaf in order to carry the spirit of the people who are no longer alive to the grave" Sipho interviewed in May 2021.

"Isihlahlasonmlahlankosi is a tree that have thorns, it is different from other tree we grew up recognizing it as an indigenous tree that you can't just use ordinarily but when death has entered the homestead, that's when elders will use it to put the spirit or rather to introduce the spirit of the dead people to ancestors of the family" Zwelikude interviewed in June 2021.

"It (is) a tree that grows where there are no houses built near or no people living near that place ..." Nomusa interviewed in July 2021.

The researcher was prompted to probe an extended explanation. Nomusa then explained that there is no household that has this tree branch in their yard, when elders want it, they go to the forest to harvest it for the purposes of leading the spirit of the dead person to his or her grave.

"The buffalo thorn tree is a multipurpose tree of considerable cultural importance in Eastern and Southern Africa, and many beliefs and traditions are attached to it," Mazibuko (2007).

These findings are the narratives of participants, and the data was of a qualitative research structure. The data was obtained through one-on-one interviews with the participants. The researcher observed the body language as interviews of all the participants were being conducted. And one can tell that they were talking about the tree that they know or the tree that they have seen judging from the use of their hands when giving explanation.

5.4. Theme Two

The customary use of *Ihlahlalomlahlankosi* in all death rites.

Crossman (2019) asserted that “custom is defined as a cultural idea that describes a regular, patterned behaviour that is considered characteristics of life in social system”. While Hennessy (2011) mentioned that customs represent shared norms, values, and traditions of a group that are typically defined and guide appropriate and inappropriate attitudes and behaviours. Behaviours, such as shaking hands, bowing, and kissing. Crossman (2019) further states that societal customs often begin out of habits and that customs can persist for generations as newmembers of society learn about existing customs through process of socialization.

Ekore and Abass (2016) “asserted that, according to the African belief system, life does not end with death, but continues in another realm”. They further state that becoming an ancestor after death is a desirable goal of every individual and that is why the is there is this process of using *Ihlahlalomlahlankosi*, it is because it ensures that the spirits are at rest for that person to be a good ancestor. The following is the knowledge of the participants:

“It is used to take the spirit of a man from the place of death to his home. It only works for the death of the man or if you take the spirits from old family site to the new house to show the spirit the new site where the family have relocated. In female it is isihlahlaSomthole or isihlahlaSomgano that is used to carry their spirits to the grave. This means that Umlahlankosi is used in men” Makhanya interviewed May 2021.

Only one of the 20 participants state that this tree is only used solely by men. However, 19 of the 20 participants’ states that “this tree is used by anyone, if that person is dead. What has emerged as a nuanced finding in this study is that there are different types of leaves, *Umlahlankosi* (used to lead the spirit of males to their graves) and *isihlahlasamathole*, also called *isihlahlaSomgano*, (to lead the spirit of women to their graves”. What is apparent is that people of different genders from different families/homesteads follow different customs when

laying males and females in their graves. This means that different households may perform customs differently. We can share one culture but only to find that the method of doing it is not the same. The following is what other participants define the customary use *Ihlahlalolankosi* in death rites.

“I can say that people’s beliefs are not the same some use it the tree to collect the dead body from the place of death while others they transport the spirits from the old house to the new house if they have moved to other place” Zwelikude interviewed in June 2021.

“It is used to connect with the ancestors it is a Zulu culture, that is very important” Nomusainterviewed in July 2021.

“It is a tree that is used to carry the spirits of the dead and it is used by African families. It is used because it is believed that it is the only tree/branch that ancestors are able to get communication from and they are able to stay in the branch and this custom was used by our forefathers and even today it is still ongoing” Nomonde interviewed in June 2021.

“To move the spirit of the death from the death site to home” Andile interviewed in May 2021.

“For my understanding and the way, it was explained by older people is that older people believed that if a person died in a particular place the spirits stay there in that place if he/she was not picked by Umlahlankosi. The important of the tree is that it brings back the spirit of the dead person for example if a person died in the car accident Ihlahlalomlanhlankosi help the deceased family to collect the spirits of the dead from that place to his house so that he will relate to other forefathers. And if the spirit is not collected that spirit does not find peace and became a bad ancestor... uhamba ehlupha abantu” Dlamini interviewed in July 2021.

The researcher then asked Dlamini to explain what he meant by *uhamba ehlupha abantu*, he then explained that:

“the person who was invited back to the family or removed from the accident scene troubles other people and causes other accidents because his or her spirit is

loitering. It is important to protect every by fetching the spirit from the accident scene in order to stop other accidents”.

“From what I known and what I have learnt the use of leaf known as ‘Ihlahlalomhlankosi’ is to collect a person spirit from the place where he/she died to its final resting place. In essence it is used as a tool to lead a spiritual presence to final resting place. Commonly in most of the African cultures. cultures and most families here in Nqabeni use this leaf. I’ve attended both family and community funerals especially those families who believe in ancestors. The use of this leaf is used from day one to the last day where the dead person is laid in his or her grave. What is important to note that is that when the coffin with the dead person is sent home, this leaf plays a big role. The person who is trusted by the family to fetch the body from the hospital mortuary or a private mortuary talks to the leaf inviting the spirit of the dead person to follow them. When they stop in a road intersection or a road, they tell the spirit of that person that they are stopping and when they are moving, they remind the spirit to follow them. If even they cross a river, they tell the spirit of the dead person not to fear the water and cross over because it is a road that led to his or her home. The leaf plays this critical role. When the day of the burial has arrived, the spirit of the dead person is then invited from the family house to the grave, the customary use of this leaf is that it connects the dead person with ancestors “spiritual beings” Thabo interviewed in May 2021.

The narrative cited above depicts the trace of indigenous knowledge, which translates the social construction of knowledge, which enables cultures to narrate their customs from the viewpoint of their culture, rather than of other cultures. What has transpired from the above theme is the alignment of the theoretical framework that this study used, the Social Constructivism and the Narrative Theory, which according to Edward and Sarah (2015), “allows the researcher, in anthropology, to learn from the narrative of the social construction of the world from the viewpoint of the subject”. The researcher has learned the customary usage of the *Ihlahlalomhlankosi* from the viewpoint of people of eNqabeni. Richardson (2016) states the narrative theory recognises the explanation, as well as the language attached to customs and the extent to which such customs have become part of their socialisation as well as their identity. Richardson (2016) further suggests that our identity originates, not from inside the person but from the social realm. The narrative theory allows the subject to provide nuanced insight from

their reflexivity. “Constructivism proposes that everyone mentally constructs the world of experience through cognitive and socio-cultural processes” (Halton, 2011)

5.5. Theme Three:

Importance of Practicing this Custom

Crossman (2019) states that a “custom is defined as cultural idea that describes a regular, patterned behaviour, that behaviour is considered characteristics of life in a social system”. The method most used in each society helps distinguish one culture from another. Over time customs became the laws of social life, and because customs are so important to social harmony, breaking them can theoretically cause an upheaval. Hasa (2017) “asserted that a custom is widely accepted, traditional way of behaving or doing something that is specific to a society, place, or time”. Each society, religion, and community have their own unique customs. Customs are an essential feature of culture. A gesture, behaviour, event, or act turns into a custom when it is continuously practiced. When this is followed for many years and passed down to younger generations, it becomes a tradition. The following is the response from the responders of this research. It is their native response:

“...because if a child is born, he/she needs a family (ancestors) to look after them because when a person is died, he comes back to look after their family members because they are always with you to protect. So, it is important that the spirits of the dead are taken to rest because if you don't their spirits will be moving everywhere, and they will not find peace and their spirit can block the life of the living and make it miserable. That is why Shembe has collected all the spirit of people who died in during apartheid” Makhanya, interviewed in May 2021.

“It is important because it shows that you are a true Zulu. And it also helps the one who is died to relate to ‘amathonga’(ancestors) who are already on the other side” Hlombe, interviewed in June 2021.

“The importance in doing this custom is that as a Zulu man I have to fulfil this duty so that the upcoming generation will do it. And we as Zulu we believe in connecting with our forefathers therefore if we do not do this custom, it means that we are running away from our culture of which it will mean we are changing our originality,” Sipho interviewed in May 2021.

“It is important because it our culture. if a person died, he/she is supposed to be collected where he/she died so that his/her spirit will find peace. As they are collecting the death the

undertaker is supposed to pass via in the place of death and tell that persons that they are taking him/her” Zwelikude, interviewed in June 2021.

“The spirit of the dead, if it is not collected, that spirits become a problem in the family. Sometimes he/she come back on as a bad dream, or a dream to one of the family member telling them that their soul is not an easy and that they should look for them” Nomonde, interviewed in June 2021,

Sibly (1806) states “that ghosts are prominent in the storytelling of various nations”. Ghost stories are ubiquitous across all cultures from oral folktales to works of literature. While ghost stories are often explicitly meant to be scary, they have been written to serve all sort of purposes, from comedy to morality tales. Sibly (1806:44) further states that ghosts often appear in the narratives as sentinels or prophets of things to come. Beliefs in ghosts are found in all cultures around the world, and thus ghost stories may be passed down orally or in written form:

“As Zulu people we believe, and we also have seen things that other culture does not consider as something happening. If a spirit of the dead that spirits is considered ghost then therefore for us it means that that spirits is looking for their ancestors and those spirits most of them are angry because they feel abandoned by their own families and now are wondering around” Mlondi, interviewed in June 2021.

“To avoid roaming spirits of dead people and be able to do ceremonies for them at home” Andile, interviewed in May 2021.

“It is important because if a person dies in that particular place that person is said that his spirit stay there up until he is collected by Ihlahlalomhlankosi. Let me make you an example if a person dies in a car accident that person’s spirits will be there, and it may cause accident in that place because the first person that died and was not collected may be lonely, and he will want other spirits to accommodate him. So that is why you find that there is always an accident in the same place” Dladla, interviewed in July 2021.

“Each and every society has their own customs and customs have ways on giving people away of which must follow. So other things do not need one to have explanation

about it, but it is the way it supposed to be. So, each nation has its own ways of celebrating our culture. it the way of making people to have order because if there is no order. And it's a way of doing things that some people might not understand" Mishark, interviewed July 2021

Culture ties people of a community together, it gives an individual a unique identity, and serves as the founding principles of one's life. It influences their views, their lives, their humour, their hopes, their worries, and their fears. As for culture, it is also important to remember how much we have in common stated, by Axner (2017):

"This custom is important because it connect the dead and the living family members, also that if the ancestors are in the right place, they bring nothing but good luck to those who are living" Manqoba, interviewed in June 2021.

'Dos and Don'ts' when you are carrying *Ihlahlalomlahlankosi*

When collecting the deceased, it is required to praise that person, call him by all his clans titles and call him with his name. The deceased must know that they are being collected and being taken home. The person who is carrying that leaf is not supposed to speak to anyone beside the one who is being collected. If the car that is transporting the deceased has stopped due to traffic regulations the deceased must be told why they have stopped and must be informed when the journey continues. If crossing a river, the deceased must be told so that they will not be left on the bridge. And that person is not supposed to look back where they are coming from when collecting the soul of the dead, you are not supposed to talk because once you talk the soul will be left behind stated by Mhlongo interviewed (July 2021).

5.6. Theme Four:

Gendered Use:

5.6.1. Why do Men, not Women, in all Death Rites, Carry this Leaf?

In chapter two, Henderson (2017) "asserted that African cultures are known to have gendered ascribed roles and responsibilities, which are often linked to the patriarchal roots which promote the recognition, leadership, and the agency of men over women". Learning about the gendered use of this leaf in this study was within the scope of the study. It was important to know how people of each gender are expected to behave, as it is a key part of growing up in any society. In Africa, as elsewhere, men and women have traditionally had different roles in their families and communities. Henderson (2017) further "alluded that most African cultures are still trapped

in gender inequality, which is the social process by which men and women are not treated or recognized equally". The treatment may rise from the distinctions made regarding the cultural norms prevalent in society. Some of these distinctions are empirically grounded, while others appear to be socially contracted. The question that was asked to the participants was: why do men, not women, in all death rites, carry this leaf? The following are the responses of the participants:

"...while most families believe in traditional customs but the basis of everything is the Bible. You remember that God in his Bible said the male is the head of the family in heaven and in earth. Other than what the Bible is saying, our great ancestors and the understand that we gathered when growing up has not revealed or exposed women into the use of this leaf" Makhanya, interviewed in May 2021.

"It is the African rule that a man leads the house, and a woman can never lead the house" Hlombe, interviewed in June 2021.

"In Zulu, a male is the head of the family, and he is also given the go ahead to talk to the dead/ ancestors. The African culture does not allow women to talk to the ancestors even during the death in the female is not supposed to touch Ihlahlalomlahlankosi" Sipho, interviewed in May 2021.

"Men are commonly entrusted with the role of carrying this leaf in death rites as they are recognized as the head of the family. In African cultures women are usually not allowed to perform certain ritual in African cultures since most African cultures do not recognize women as a head of a family" Thabo interviewed in May 2021.

The narratives that have been plotted above indicate that a gender-based society is linked to the Bible, hence women are currently marginalised from performing other customs just because they are women, and that has been a cultural order of most families in Nqabeni. This gendered assignment of roles and responsibilities is confirmed by the UNESCO (2014) report, which states that most women in Africa face many barriers when attempting to access, contribute, and participate equally in theatre, cinema, arts, music, and heritage, which prevents them from developing their full potential and impedes social, inclusive sustainable development, as well as in being part of other family rituals and customs. The report raised a critical contradiction of the patriarchal society that has been set as a condition, versus the reality through which women are paramount in almost every household. The report claims that it is confusing and worrying

that in every society, women are guardians, creators, and consumers of culture, but they still face barriers that prevent them from playing an equal role in the cultural sphere. Looking at the responses made by the participants, it shows that there is a cultural discrimination that prevents women from carrying this leaf, but because this norm was passed on from generation to generation, people of today still consider it is more important that it is carried by a man:

“Even in the past, women have never carried this leaf it the rule that was followed by our forefathers and yet we still following it even the upcoming generation will follow it” Zwelikude interviewed in June 2021.

“It is because female go to menstruation and for that they cannot touch anything related to ‘umsamo’ because when she is in her day it is said that she is in the dark days of her life so for the people who is death it is important that the person leading him/her is clear will not bring any bad luck” Nomusa, interviewed in July 2021.

“It was a custom that it is carried by man because they are respectable (banesithunzi) and a woman cannot go alone to the forest to fetch this leaf” Delani interviewed in June 2021

“I can say most of male have straight ancestral unlike women. women can change their ancestor anytime. Because a female is given a surname by male. So, if you marry you change surname. For female their surname is determined by where she marries and there are lots of things that go through or within females sometimes women might be in menstruation, and you really cannot trust a woman in such. If a woman is on period, she cannot touch anything

related to ‘umsamo’ because in African that person is considered dirty that one of other things that make male to be superior that a female, so that is the reason why women are not considered. So, it is difficult for a female to call upon the ancestor from her maiden family” Dlamini, interviewed in July 2021.

“It is believed that if it is carried by male the dead have light in their path from where the spirits are taken to where it will be laid to rest” Mhlongo interviewed on July 2021.

“This branch is carried by male because there is a hearsay that there are the one who are closely with ancestors” -Manqoba, interviewed June 2021.

There was one participant, from 20 people, that had a different opinion from other, and this shows that in each house they practice culture differently even though it is the same custom. Looking at the following answer by this one participant.

“I can say that for my opinion its women do carry this leaf when there is no male figure in thehouse or when you have only boys who are young to carry this leaf” Dladla, interviewed in July 2021.

This last narrative signals a change in generational thinking, which recognizes the role of women, in the absence of male figures. What this study reveals as a significant finding, is that women can play a critical role in preserving the dearth of cultural indigenous knowledge, in the absence of people. This study is then projecting a change that will be prevalent now that there is a rise of households that are single headed by women, where women will have to lead the process of burying their love ones, talking through the leaf to lead the spirit of thedead person to the grave, or a so called ‘resting place’, for families who will rise to be spiritualbeings, ‘ancestors’.

5.7. Theme Five:

5.7.1. Social Constructs that Forbid Women from Touching the Leaf:

Ssenyonjo (2007) “states that, despite the ratification by African states of several human rights instruments protecting the rights of women in Africa, and the solemn commitment of the African states to eliminate all forms of discrimination and harmful practices against women, women in Africa still continue to experience human right violations”. Most African women are denied the equal enjoyment of their rights, by virtue of the lesser status ascribed to them bytraditions and customs, or as a result of overt or covert discrimination. This theme asks if thereis anything specific that happens if the leaf is carried by a woman, or it is purely because of culture that stops them from doing so. For example, culture as a “system of interrelated values active enough to influence and condition perception, judgement, communication, and behaviour in a given society,” it is a configuration of learned behaviours and results of behaviour, whose components are shared and transmitted by the members of a particular society stated by Ngubane (2012:22). The following is information given by participants whenthere were interviewed:

“...one because women have shade, there are times where women menstruate therefore thereare particular things which she is prohibited to touch even cooking she is not supposed to cook during those days. In our culture we say ‘usebumnyameni’, so she

must finish her days in order to be clean. Now when it comes to ancestors related work that deals with bringing light to the family are not given to women. BUT the granny can hold the leaf but first has to ask permission from the dead through burning 'impepho' and ask the forefathers to be with her since there is no one to burn it in the family because an old lady does not go to menstruation anymore" Makhanya interviewed in May 2021.

"Even though we cannot be sure but if a woman carries this leaf, it means that she is taking the position of being a man. Therefore, it might happen that she is depriving herself a wedding because now the ancestors will see her as a male in the family and see no need to bless her with the wedding" Sipho interviewed in May 2021.

"It overpowers the female because it is believed that females are weak, are not strong as male therefore, how can she talk to the leaf if she is crying because they are emotionally weak, they take everything to heart" Nomonde, interviewed in June 2021.

"It because of the emotional burdens women carries during these times" Andile interviewed May 2021.

"...but the rule states that a male should carry the leaf. But then female sangoma are able to carry the leaf because they deal with ancestors (izidalwa ezingasekho)" Mkhulu Dlamini interviewed July 2021.

"Nothing goes according to plan, for example, that will be disrespecting the ancestors and they might do something bad as the punishment" Delani, interviewed in June 2021.

There were six, of 20, participants that had similar answers. It is important to remember that these answers are the opinions of the participants and not of the researcher. Their responses show that, in African society, people are conforming to the social norm, meaning that increasingly, social norms are being used to encourage social behaviour:

"There is nothing that happens it just a hearsay we grow up knowing and it is still relevant in today's generation" -Nomusa interviewed in July 2021.

"There is nothing that happen it just a custom that it is supposed to be a male who carry it" -Delani, interviewed in June 2021.

Rwafa (2016:18) States that “culture and religion remain sourced of gender inequality and oppression for most women in Africa.” Culture refers to the “learned and ideational aspect of human society”. In its subjectivity, culture carries the illusion of shared concerns and values in the face of real and contentious divisions that exist among gender:

“I cannot really say that there is something that happens but it might happen that particular person get sick and also the fact that how can a women/a girl collect the spirit of the old male in the family is she going to call her father by name since when doing this process you have to call the person you fetching by name so that he will know that the family are there to collect him to his last rest” Zwelikude, interviewed in June 2021

Looking at the responses, it clear that women are being side-lined by their culture, reason being that they are female. Also, the fact that they are not taken seriously as people who can perform this process successfully, but because the previous generations grew up knowing that a women is not supposed to touch the tree, it means that even the upcoming generations will still follow these customs, even though participants stated, very clearly, that they do not know the reason why women do not carry the leaf, and those who were able to answer, still do not know the actual reason, besides the fact that it was a piece of knowledge that was passed on to them by their parents. Such narratives prove that social constructs are a result of interpersonal/cultural teachings and this what the Constructivism Theory and the Narrative Theory recognizes as the basis of cultural knowledge that is passed from one generation to the next.

5.7.2. Challenges Associated with Practicing this Rite in Female Headed Households:

Ngubane (2010) “asserted that throughout much of the continent, patriarchal norms govern society, with the odds stacked against women both in the workplace and at home”. Women in civil society must fight an uphill battle against the cultural norms used to exclude women from the decision-making forums, as well as downplaying their voices. Women’s rights defenders defying or speaking against these norms are challenging the fabric of society itself. As stated by a community activist from Nigeria, our cultural and social beliefs are to be seen, not heard. The patriarchal system, social barriers, and harmful traditional practices, all conspire against women’s human rights defenders. In some African cultures, there are traditional cultural practices, which clearly suppress and discriminate against women and youth. Mangubane identifies these practices, which are prevalent in many African cultures, by pointing out that:

The Tswana society, gender and age distinction have been long being important

maker of status in Tswana society. The former was exhibited in many ways: men and women set apart in social gatherings, and some cases such as Kgotla (council place) were for men only were for men only. Sons were, and in some cases still are, preferred and women who bore only daughters were often despised. Male superiority was reinforced in daily life like for example at meals men and initiated boys sat together and were served first and women ate with children. Legally women were and often still are perpetual minors and are to remain under a male guardian (Mangubane, 1998).

The following are the narratives of the participants, who participated in the research, and the principal investigator has not changed any information:

“It is that if they ask anyone from or within the family to perform this rite, it happens that they might do wrong things, which can lead to that family experience bad luck. And their things may not go accordingly. Sometimes those people can steal ‘amadlozi’” Sipho interviewed in May 2021.

“It is that women cannot go to the grave and lead the dead person, rather she has to ask the relative” Zwelikude, interviewed in June 2021.

“They do not have that many challenges because if someone is dead at home, every relative become available. So, they ask the relative to do the rites or if none is available, they ask the neighbor to perform the rites especially if the neighbor is someone who is trusted” Nomusa, interviewed in July 2021.

“They are not able to do the rites and they have to look for someone who will do it and those who are asked to perform rites might not do it properly” Nomonde, interviewed in June 2021.

“They are no problem at all, so a female can do the rites because at the end of the day that person has to be collected and placed on his/her last house” Mamhlongo, interviewed in July 2021.

“It is that, that particular female who has done the rites might not have luck when it comes to marriage” Zulu, interviewed in May 2021.

“It is not a challenge at all because in each and every house there is a boy child older than 18 years so that child can perform the rites” Dlamini, interviewed in July 2021.

The above information states that five, out of twenty, participants stated that there are challenges faced by female-headed households, but the rest stated that there are no challenges at all, as long as they are other relatives, neighbours, and male children, the rituals will be performed accordingly. Therefore, women should not carry the burden of wanting to perform this rite. Rather, they should focus on the grieving process and try to find the healing in their lives, since losing a person is very difficult.

5.8. Theme Six:

Disposing the Ihlahlalomlahlankosi Leaf:

5.8.1. Why the Leaf is put Inside the Grave?

Ademiluka (2009:46) asserted “that, burial and funeral customs are the methods and ceremonies used in disposing the bodies of dead people”. People have always had a deep reverence for the dead. The funeral ceremonies that have adopted, have grown out of their views on death and the afterlife. The most common methods of disposing of bodies are interment (burial) and cremation (burning). Other forms of disposition include mummification, bequeathing of the body, direct disposition, cryogenics, and various forms of natural decomposition. Many practices are based upon religious and customary beliefs and may directly affect the deposition. Ekore and Abass (2016) “asserted that, Africans ordinarily do not encourage the contemplation of death or any discussion about their own or their loved one’s deaths”. According to the African belief system, life does not end with death, but continues in another realm. Becoming an ancestor after death is a desirable goal of every individual. They further stated that the traditional African belief system is also referred to as ‘ancestor worship’ and it is based on an understanding that life’s course is cyclical, not linear. Based on this system of belief, those who are dead, are alive in a different world and can be reincarnated (and return to this world) in a new birth. Passing is measured as a service for individuals who perished.

After death, an individual life, in a spirit world, receives a new body, which is identical to the earthly body, but with the capacity to move about as an ancestor. Baloyi (2014) “asserted that death rituals and the mourning practices of Africans are varied because of the existence of so many religious and cultural practices”. Rituals are the representation of cultural performances and rites of passage which mark a person’s life experiences. Properly construed, rituals are an expression of people’s thoughts, emotions, social organizations, and cultural identities. They are therefore regarded as viable scientific methods of connections and dialogue. Baloyi (2008) posits “that rituals are a form of expressions and connections performed by individuals, groups

of people, or communities in communication with the living dead and the supreme beings”. Out of 20 participants, four responders stated that the leaf is not buried, and eleven stated that it should be buried and four state that they do not know why the leaf is buried. The following is the narrative of the participants who said it is not buried:

“The leaf is not buried, reason being, this leaf has the spirit of the dead, so he/she is supposed to live with his/her ancestors. But it placed on the roundovel (emsamo) with the ancestors” Makhanya, interviewed in May 2021.

“At home they don’t put it in the grave, but they keep it emsamo with isicephu and a cloth that is used when they bath the diseased” Andile, interviewed in May 2021. *“It varies across surnames, but according to the custom it is not buried it is placed at umsamo”* Dladla, interviewed in July 2021.

Gire (2014) asserted “that just like other aspects of life and death, funeral and burial rites vary significantly across cultures, and are influenced by each culture’s conceptions of death and dying”. The rituals change the identity of the person from living to dead. That new identity may be as a spirit of an ancestor who remains with the family or a soul that returns to its maker. The belief is that without performing the rituals, the deceased may be unable to proceed to heaven, Pollack (2003:43). Furthermore, the dead are believed to be lonely and may thus be interested in staying connected with the living, yet the survivors are uncertain of what exactly the deceased might want from them, Taylor (1993). The following are the narratives of the responders who stated that the leaf is buried with the deceased:

“It because when a person is collected with this leaf the spirit of that person is attached to the leaf so his soul it said to stay in the leaf. By the time you burry him with it, it is said that he should stay there in the grave till the ceremony of ‘ukubuyiswa’ take place” Siphso, interviewed in May 2021.

“It is not easy to throw away Umlahlankosi in anyway, because if you throw it will mean that you are throwing his/her soul whereas the soul should be reincarnated” Zwelikude, interviewed in June 2021.

“The reason why it is buried with the body it is because the grave is the only place where the soul is said to be safe, therefore it is buried there then after 12 months the family will go and get a new leaf where it will be used for collection of the soul from the grave and be placed in the roundovel, with other forefathers” Zulu, interviewed in May 2021.

“The soul and body should place together up until in the grave because it is believed that if they are not together it is easy for the soul to be taken by other people and make bad deed” Mishack, interviewed in July 2021.

5.9. Theme Seven:

Knowledge Transmission

5.9.1. Way of Passing this Knowledge to the Next Generation

“The way we share traditional knowledge has changed. The importance of maintaining traditional knowledge has not changed,” Hills (2009:6)

Indigenous knowledge is the unique knowledge confined to a culture or society. It is also known as local knowledge, folk knowledge, people’s knowledge, traditional wisdom, or traditional science. Sharing of traditional knowledge among indigenous people was primarily done vocally. Therefore, knowledge of the indigenous language was essential to teaching and learning. Passing on traditional knowledge is dependent on understanding the values and worldviews of indigenous people. This knowledge is generated and transmitted by communities over time to cope with their own environment, Senanayake (2006). Indigenous knowledge is passed from generation to generation, usually by word of mouth and cultural rituals, and has been the basis for education. Indigenous knowledge is practical engagement in everyday life and is constantly reinforced by experience and trial and error. The following are the narratives of the participants:

“As we grow under family, when the child is born, it is reported to the ancestors. As the child grows family do rituals and the child take note of the cultural rules of the house. That is when the child learns. So, everything that happens in the household will groom/ socialize the child in that family. In the past when people were about to die, they were calling all the family members and tell the children to obey culture. Then children get the opportunity to ask questions in relation to culture” Makhanya, interviewed May in 2021.

“According to the Zulu culture by the time there is this ritual in the house. As an older person in the house, I have the responsibility to call all the male children so that they will learn how to go according with this rite. So that should it happen that the old male member of the house died he will leave the upgrowing generation with this kind of knowledge, but it becomes much better if they see the process” Sipho, interviewed in May 2021.

“The knowledge is pass on by taking a child to the forest and show the child that this is Ihlahlalomlakankosi, after you have shown him the tree you then sit down with a child a have a conversation where you tell the child about how this leaf is used and what step are to be followed in that way the child will have knowledge that is passed on orally” Zwelikude interviewed in June 2021.

“Usually, they observe if there is dead in the family. The observation starts as soon the leaf istaken, when the soul is collected from the hospital if he died in the hospital till, they arrive at home. If they become confused, they ask so that they will get better knowledge, but their questions are not directed to the person caring the leaf but rather to other person who is old and who understand the process” Nomonde, interviewed in June 2021.

The narratives revealed observations which allow younger people to understand the process from elders before them, while other research participants noted the significance of vocal teachings, as well as formal learning, which includes recording this information. What is important to note that people of the eNqabeni community, have diverse ways of sharing such custom/ritual knowledge and their narratives depict that this use of *Ihlahlalomhlankosi* will not diminish because generations are exposed in this custom. Ammeida, Song, and Grant (2002) state that culture influences the way knowledge processes develop in organizations, meaning that culture guides the interaction between people. Knowledge sharing is an important mechanism that will turn individual knowledge into group knowledge and give them asymbolic identity, as well as what will be their unique heritage compared to other cultures. The three aspects of knowledge sharing can be distinguished. Firstly, knowledge sharing is a process, and therefore involves a sequence of events, actions, and activities that evolve overtime. Secondly, knowledge sharing asks for at least two parties or roles, played by individualsor groups: the role bringing (offering, showing, teaching) and the role of getting (acquiring, learning) knowledge. Thirdly, knowledge sharing is typified by the characteristics of knowledge that is shared. Culture, for example, plays a role in defining the acceptability of a specific organization’s structure, and in turn, influences knowledge sharing Ammeida, Song, and Grant (2002). The following are the narratives of the responders:

“Through storytelling” Mam Mhlongo, interviewed in July 2021.

“This depends on families, at home no one is taught, but it is something we see when things like these happen” Andile, interviewed in May 2021.

“I myself was my father told me who do one use Umlahlankosi when someone has died in the family” Nxumalo, interviewed in June 2021.

“The upcoming generation grow up knowing that when a person died that person is supposed to be placed with the forefathers. Therefore, I can say that they learn through observation” Dladla, interviewed in July 2021.

By looking at the response made by participants, it shows that, culturally, knowledge is passed on from, or through, storytelling and observations. Understanding sharing, as cultural determined behaviour of individual in the groups, leads to considering knowledge sharing in two dimensions: firstly, the presence of group culture and secondly, the behaviour of individuals as their way to existing culture aspect and their behavioural patterns to maintain or reform those cultures. In-depth interviews got research participants further in narrating other customary significances of this leaf. Their narratives also alluded the ethnomedical usages of this leaf, which described how it also heals people and animals from various sickness/infections and how it is used for cleansing purposes.

5.10. Theme Eight:

Uses:

5.10.1. Other Uses of Umlahlankosi in Zulu Culture:

Gulumian and Arnold (1984) asserts that *Ihlahlalomlahlankosi*, also known as the *Ziziphus Mucronata*, is an important multi-purpose plant species that has been used in African traditional medicine for years, in the treatment of various devastating human and animal infections. Southern Africa is blessed with variety of medicinal plants species, which are used in the treatment and management of various pathogenic infections that threaten human and animal health. The *Ziziphus* species are known to possess various important pharmacological characteristics including antimicrobial, antioxidant, and anti-inflammatory properties, anti-cancer, antiulcer, and sedatives are amongst other important sicknesses that it clears from the human system.

5.10.1.1. Roots:

Maroyi (2011) States that “the roots of *Ihlahlalomlahlankosi/ Ziziphus Mucronata* are boiled with salt and used to wash the mouth, when treating toothache”. The persecuted roots are deep in water overnight to treat gravidity in women, while powered roots are applied directly on open

injuries to grease mending in humans. While soddened roots are also drunk for treating rheumatism, fever, and related” infections. In other South African countries, a decoction of the roots is drunk to treat diarrhoea with blood in the droppings and inordinate coughing until the infections subside. Zwelikude interviewed in June 2021 also agree with Maroyi (2011) with regards to roots of the *ihlahlalomhlankosi*

5.10.1.2. Stem Bark:

The powdered plant material from the *Ziziphus Mucronata* stem bark is applied to wounds. The cooked stem dinghy is drunk to treat sexually transmitted infections. The powered stem dinghy is soaked into cold water and the performing pulp is used as a dressing for injuries in cattle and scapegoats. It's also crushed with addition of little water to treat abdominal pain and diarrhoea in babies.

5.10.1.3. Leaves:

Evid (2014) States that “the ground leaves are soaked into hot water overnight and drunk to cure diarrhoea in cattle and goats.” Leaves are ground, boiled in water and taken three times a day to cure diarrhoea in humans until the infection subsides. The leaves of about 400 gram immersed in 2 liters of hot water and allowed to steep, and the liquid is drunk by adult cases until mild tuberculosis subsides Makhanya interviewed on May 2021 also have the same knowledge of leaves being used to cure diarrhoea in humans.

5.10.1.4. Whole plants:

Warm infusions of the root, bark, and leaves are taken orally as tea, which is also used a medicine for diabetes and decoctions are used typically to treat sores, boils, and swelling, Deutschlandler (2009). The whole plant is immersed in water and the resulting liquid is drunk three times a day to treat arthritis, chest pain, digestive disorders, general body weakness, liver complaints, and other related diseases such as obesity, urinary tract infections, mellitus diabetes skin infections, loss of appetite, fever, anaemia, and insomnia Koeven (2001:71).

The following are the narratives of the participants regarding other cultural uses of *Umlahlankosi*. The following narratives are listed to encourage future researchers to embark in a comparative study, which will study the customary usage of this leaf from the views of two or more communities, in order to draw inferences and other insightful perspectives which this study did not collect.

“Some families and households don’t only use this leaf for burial rites, they use it for fencing the house and others use it for ukubelethela/defense from evil spirit. It is believed that if you use it as a defense of your family, ancestors always have your back. Other households believe that if it is trunks of this tree are used a fence, these households are protected against lightning in summer season” Makhanya, interviewed in May 2021.

“Other family members use it for steaming or to perform ritual cleansing if one has lost his/her life partner, it is a medicine that remove dark clouds/pollutions that hugs over a person” Sipho, interviewed in May 2021.

“Traditional healers use it to ritually cleanse those who are diagnosed to be haunted by a dark cloud, for example, someone who lost a baby or a husband or a family member hence there is a process called ukugeza, “cleansing ceremony” which is performed by traditional healers mixed with other traditional medicine. Traditional healers, both males and females, perform this cleansing ritual in a river and usually before the sun rise. When the person has been cleansed, the clothes that he or she was wearing before the clearing ceremony are disposed in the river and is asked not to look back in order to avoid being followed by that black cloud after being cleansed in the river” Zwelikude, interviewed in June 2021.

“Other individuals use this leaf or tree branch to cleanse themselves when they suspect that they have bad luck/ pollution” Nomusa and Nomonde, interviewed in July and June 2021.

“Most households in other cultures drink it as isiphungo, instructions are the person should drink a tablespoon who was in the family premises when the dead body arrived” Mamhlongo, interviewed in July 2021.

“When you do not know your surname, you collect Umlahlankosi and umgano you mix it together. then through dream you will see a man who will tell you what your surname” Mlondi, interviewed in June 2021.

All the narratives above confirm that cultures, families, societies, and communities do not see naturally growing plants/trees as weeds or worthless vegetation, they recognize the indigenous knowledge that is attached to them, hence *Ihlahlalomhlankosi* has multiple uses both medically and domestically as argued by research participants. This implies that if this tree would become extinct, because of environmental hazardous/climate change conditions, this community will go

through cultural shock. This shock will be detrimental because if this tree/leaf is no longer growing naturally, the community of eNqabeni will be hampered from performing/observing their customs and this could possibly anger their ancestors. It will also mean that they must stop this ritual, which would result in cultural deficiency, therefore, threatening the survival of indigenous knowledge, which gives people a symbolic cultural identity.

5.11. Theme Nine:

Symbolic Signs:

5.11.1. How do we Know that the Ritual of Collecting the Soul of the Person is Done Properly?

Panagiotic (2011:12) “states that death and funeral rituals in Africa are deeply rooted in the cultural beliefs, traditions, and indigenous religions of the continent”. They are guided by African’s views of existing after death and the power and role of a deceased ancestor. Rituals evolved through the infusion of Christianity, Islam, and modern changes, but traditional themes survive in Africans and among the people of Africa.

According to Macmillan Encyclopaedia of death and dying (2009:66) death rituals in Africa are to ensure that the deceased is properly put to rest so their spirit is at peace and they can take their place among the protective ancestors. Rituals are as much a celebration of the role of the dead as it is mourning their passing. The right burial ensures that the ancestors do not remain to haunt and exert powers over the living, but instead rests in peace and protects the family. This belief comes from a common African concept that life and death are on a continuum of existence, with death seen as just another state of being. In death, the whole person still exists but now inhabits the spirit world and he can be reincarnated into several people. If the deceased is not buried ‘correctly’, or a person lived a life of dishonour, his ghost can remain as part of the world of living and wander around and cause harm. In addition, witches, sorcerers, and underserving may be denied the honour of being part of the community of ancestors, a place highly valued in African beliefs.

“The assurance that the soul is collected the time a deceased is bath in his home after when the body is collected from the mortuary. There is a candle that is always kept lighting as from the day a person dies till, he is buried. So, you ask the spirit to switch off that candle and if its light itself out. That means that the soul/spirit of the dead is collected from the place of death to his house” Makhanya interviewed in May 2021.

“When a person is dead there is a goat that is bought for him it is for ‘ukumphelezela’ when the body comes back from the mortuary and the goat is given the branch to eat piece of it, if the goat eat it means that the soul was collected. But if it refuses it means that the soul was lost in a way, so then you have to go to the Sangoma or any traditional leader and ask where the soul was lost then the Sangoma will show them” Zulu interviewed in May 2021.

“We see through things that happens in the household, for example, if there are people who have been sick for the long time those people heal and it is said that the dead has taken their illness” Hlombe, interviewed in June 2021.

“Usually someone in the family has a dream on him or her sitting with the forefathers eating meat in isithebe therefore it means that his soul has been collected properly and others they even go to confirm to traditional healers if he was collected in the place of death. this will mean that the rite is done properly” Sipho interviewed in May 2021.

“...Yes, but if a soul was not collected in due time the person come as a dream and say that his soul is wandering and he need to be collected and placed in the right place” Zwelikude, interviewed in June 2021.

“They usually bring blessing within their family like giving jobs to those who need it after few months of their family they start showing the signs that they are now with the other family members in heaven” Nomusa, interviewed in July 2021.

“Through dreams, if he comes doing good things it means that he is in the right place, but if he comes fighting and shouting breathing fire it means that they are not in the right place.” - Nomonde, interviewed in June 2021.

“At my home we have things that represent us our people, we don’t leave the burial site until we see it, butterflies are representing us so the butterfly will come through the grave that mean that it is that person who is dead” Andile, interviewed in May 2021.

In this theme most participants state the same thing, to know if the deceased has been taken to the place of rest, there are symbolic signs and dreams that the dead shows that they are in the resting place. This rite is so important to Zulu culture because it allows them to have connection, even though they have died, and they are able to come back and look after the living individuals within their family.

5.12. Theme Ten

Industrialization:

5.12.1. Participants Opinion in Relation to Industrialization and the Process of Death:

Kala (2004:33) states that culture is made up customs, attitudes, and beliefs that are unique to each group of people. Culture can change when contact with other cultures. Cultural change also occurs through diffusion, when contact with other cultures and ideas are transferred. This is occurring more in the world today as communication, travel, and the internet is creating a global society. When analysing the transformation of a culture, different understandings are gained depending on the focus. We have learned that where people live shape how they live. The values, beliefs, behaviours, tools, and other material objects people use, are influenced by their physical environment. However, culture does not remain static. Shifts can occur within cultures as a result of either outside or inside influences.

He further talks about cultural diffusion beside local invention, cultures can also change through cultural diffusion. Cultural diffusion is the spread of ideas, beliefs, and goods from one place to another. When people from one culture interacts with people from another, the aspects of cultures tend to spread from one place to another. Migration also has an impact on cultural industrialization. Migrating people comes from diverse cultural backgrounds, with already formed cultural identities. Migration has contributed to the richness in diversity of cultures, ethnicities, and races. Individuals who migrate, experience multiple stresses that can impact their mental wellbeing, including, loss of cultural norms, religious customs, and social support systems, adjustment to new culture, and changes in identity and concept of self. The following are the response of respondents:

“The thing with industrialization is painful because people are doing as they please, and they do not follow tradition. If a person dies, it is important that people are taken to their forefathers but those who say they do not do this rite because of their churches it simple answer why today we have more car accidents compared to the past, and the answer is because people no longer collect the souls of dead people from the road” Hlombe interviewed in June 2021.

“In the past our forefathers never used a casket for a funeral they used ‘uhlaka’ a person was put on top of it and there were no funeral policies’. And in the past in the funerals

there were no food but today it is a disgrace if there is no food in the funeral. In the past funerals were respected but not in this day “Sipho, interviewed, May 2021.

“I can say that today’s life is more fast compare to the past in the past there were few deaths but now each and every weekend there is a funeral” Zwelikude, interviewed June 2021.

“The way people behave in our day it shows no respect for a dead. In other families they fight over corpse about who is going to bury that person this never happened in the past” Nomonde, interviewed in June 2021.

“People are now more westernized, and they tend to forget about who they are, their identities other believes that ancestors are demons and people who believes in ancestors are the workers of Satan the reason behind this thinking is that those people have changed their identities and adopted what is called western ways of living” Zulu, interviewed in May 2021.

“In the past, children were not allowed to the funeral but together you see them in the burial sites and others you find them in the room that has the corpse” Dlamini, interviewed July 2021.

5.12.2. Problems that will Rise Through the Change of Customary practices:

Sonnenberg (2015:96) show that there are possible features of society that facilitate or impede cultural change. The extent to which society has tight, versus loose, social norms, whether society is ethnically homogeneous, versus heterogeneous, or whether society is relatively isolated versus in frequent contact with other cultures, all may affect the degree to which its culture is stable. One might imagine, for example, that relatively isolated communities would have more stable values and norms over time. One might also posit that tighter societies would be less likely to change, as there is less variability, among their members, in attitudes and behaviours and less tolerance for deviance, Gelfand (2011). On the other hand, such societies might respond quicker to dramatic ecological changes as they are better able to enforce norms and as people may be more likely to change if their leaders adopt new values or practices. One might make similar competing predictions regarding ethnic homogeneity, as in more diverse societies there may be a greater variety of beliefs and practices, making change more likely, but on the other hand, in more diverse societies, the adoption of new attitudes, values, or practices may be more uneven,

leading to slower change for the society. Therefore, challenging possible mediators will be alternative significant upcoming method in the education of social transformation.

“There will be problem, especially since some people bury the wrong people and when they collect their person only the soul that they are able to collect and the body will be buried with other people who may perform rites that the person dead know nothing about for example, the body might be swapped with the Indian body and Indians will create a body while us in Zulu cremation is not our culture. Therefore, the deceased might be angry with his family, and he might do bad things in his family” Makhanya, interviewed in May 2021.

“There are too many problems that will arise, in our culture if a person is dead that person should be bath as soon as he is place in the ancestor room. But not people are not bath meaning that they are buried with the other spirit from the mortuary room” Nomusa, interviewed in July 2021.

“There will be since people are taking short cut. Therefore, in the future people will supposed to correct the all the wrongs from COVID-19. Even though problem will arise, but it can be corrected through the use or consultation of traditional healers” Dlamini, interviewed in July 2021.

5.13. Recommendations from the Respondents:

The following are the recommendations made by the participants, in relation to the importance of creating more research that is based around culture because the youth change the indigenous way of life, even if it means going against what they were taught growing up. There is the need that the current generation has changed the way of life. The importance of keeping traditions going, Sonnenberg (2015) argues that it is important for traditions to be kept going because they represent a critical piece of our culture. They help form the structure and foundation of our families and society. They remind us that we are part of a history that defines our past, shapes who we are today and who we are likely to become. Once we ignore the meaning of our traditions, we are in danger of damaging the underpinning of our identity.”

“I wish that Africans, especially Zulu people, can have schools which will be headed by men with powerful knowledge in relation to our culture, who will teach about culture practice and every boy and girl should be taken to those school during weekends. Reason being that our youth are becoming a serious danger to our society. Most male

now rape 3 years old child the reason behind that is that they were not taught on how to behave as a male.” - Makhanya, interviewed May in 2021.

“Yes, such research is needed so that our children will know where they come from because we are slowly losing our Africanity” Siphso, interviewed in May 2021.

“Yes, because it teaches the upcoming generation about the importance of knowing and understanding our culture” Nomusa, interviewed in July 2021.

“Yes, so that it will teach the future generation because this generation is lost. They do as they please in the funerals they no longer have respect over the death” Nomonde interviewed June in 2021.

This research embodied the Social Constructionism Theory, as well as the Indigenous Knowledge theory/narrative theory. The research design is qualitative research. The content of the chapter has confirmed the contribution of theoretical perspectives. Culture is defined as the shared set of (implicit and explicit) values, ideas, concepts, and rules of behaviour that allows a social group to function and perpetuate itself. The content of the chapter also translated, it represents people's experiences, and it allows research participants to be primary narrators of information.

5.14. Chapter Summary:

This chapter was discussing the data findings that was obtained in the study. Findings were demonstrated through the use thematic analysis. The ten (10) themes were generated in the chapter. Findings demonstrate that culture is defined and shared amongst the eNqabeni community. The reason for that is that study's findings show more similarities in the responses made by participants and the fact that this community is culturally based. For them, to succeed in life, you must do good by the ancestors first because they believe that it is where they find their luck. The chapter has confirmed the contribution of theoretical perspectives. Culture is defined as the shared set of (implicit and explicit) values, ideas, concepts, and rules of behaviour that allows a social group to function and perpetuate itself. The content of the chapter also translated, it represents people's experiences, and it allows research participants to be primary narrators of information.

Chapter Six:

Summary, Contribution, Recommendations, and Conclusion

6.1. Introduction:

This chapter intends to sum-ups the thesis, give contributions that the research contributed within the research space and give recommendations on what should be the researchers focus on when they research about *Ihlahlalomlahlankosi* soon. And finally, this chapter gives us the conclusion of the thesis.

6.2. Summary of the study

The aim of this study was to understand the cultural significance of using *Ihlahlalomlahlankosi* in the death processes within the eNqabeni community. Drawing from the Social Constructivism Theory and Indigenous Knowledge Systems Theory, this community is still rooted in observing, celebrating, as well as performing cultural customs, which this study argued that it should be preserved. This study thus contributes to the existing literature hub of African scholarships that recognise the importance of customs and cultures as a cultural symbolic identity of African people and this has nothing to do with being backward, barbaric, or resting western cultures. In view of chapter two of this study, this study reveals Africa is a repository of knowledge about this leaf/tree branch is uses for diverse purposes. This is the credibility that the study gives to indigenous knowledge systems in Africa. This comes vividly in the narratives that confirmed the valuable recognition that *Ihlahlalomlahlankosi* is given by the eNqabeni Community. This community values this tree such that it should be protected against those who may want to destroy it. The qualitative study has provided insight from people of eNqabeni, in relation to customary use of *Ihlahlalomlahlankosi* in death process. The literature of the study asserts that studies about death has always been the centre of attention for most anthropologists, even though they never have the full knowledge of cultural uses of *Ihlahlalomlahlankosi* that Zulu speaking people value and this study has bridged that literature gap.

The content of chapter one and two recognized that death is part of our daily life therefore, it is important that one understands the process and the stages of death. So that, should it happen, if orderly people die, those who are left behind will be able to give them a proper sending to their final resting place so that their spirit will be in peace. This study further celebrates the relevance of the theoretical frameworks that embodied the study. These theoretical lenses enabled the principal investigator to successfully conduct in-depth interviews led in attaining

deeper insight into the understanding of the significance of the *Ihlahlalomlahlankosi*. In these in-depth interviews, research participants demonstrated cultural relativism and their narratives translated their cultural symbolic identity. The researcher got the opportunity to learn from the indigenous knowledge system of the social construction of the world from the viewpoint of the subject, this was in line with the objectives of conducting qualitative research and what is celebrated by anthropologists because of their empirical holistic approach in research is on collecting emic perspectives. The researcher got to know the reality that exists from the world of the researched. According to the results, people of this area still practice the process, they see its importance and they wish that the current generation could be taught about the African ways of doing things. This chapter delineated the epistemology as well as the ontological reasoning of the customary significance of the leaf/tree branch that this study has successfully described, from the views of participants. This proves that people in Africa, with indigenous knowledge, have the cultural science that they have inherited from their ancestors, and they take great pride in embodying such teachings. Oral narratives or story telling festivals should be initiated so that the youth of the community could learn as they demonstrate a faint understanding of this leaf/branch, which is celebrated by elders of the community. This ethnographic exposure contributed to so much of the understanding of cultural patterns that are homogenous to indigenous societies/cultures.

6.3. Contribution of the Study

This study has contributed all themes that have been discussed in data presentation chapter. They each make a new contribution in the existing literature because there has been dearth of qualitative or quantitative studies that looked into the significance of *Ihlahlalomlahlankosi* drawing largely from the scope cultural anthropology. This study achieved the anthropological inquiry it sought to achieve. This study further confirms that:

1. It is through qualitative research methods that one could ascertain the corridors of socially constructed indigenous knowledge, which proved to be heterogenous, rather than homogenous.
2. The Social Constructivism and Indigenous Knowledge Theories contributed immensely to the cultural relativism that people hold dear to and refer to when celebrating or performing customs and rituals. The data that was solicited from the perspectives of these theoretical frameworks validates that culture is learned, shared and becomes one's symbolic identity.

3. Rural communities are not backwards but are sources and a repository of indigenous knowledge. Future researchers in anthropology could gather a lot of data on specific thematic issues that concern our societies.
4. Trees are not alien trees or form part of vegetation, but they have a customary significance, which invites the dead persons spirit from the incident of death, to the grave, where the spirit should be laid, as those who hold indigenous knowledge believe that properly laid spirits will connect with ancestors, while those left unattended will trouble other people and cause more death.
5. The use of *Ihlahlalomhlankosi* has a deep cultural trace, which gives users a symbolic cultural identity. Community members of eNqabeni did not only use the leaf, or the tree branch. to honour the teachings of their ancestors but they need to transfer this cultural knowledge so that their offspring will honour this custom to other family members.
6. The use of this leaf or tree branch, by most members of the eNqabeni communities, confirmed that this community still has cultural ties. This means that ancestral teachings do not seem to be threatened by the rise of western cultures that seem to have exhibited a hegemonic belief over the customs of most African communities.
7. This leaf or tree branch does not have any monetary value, but it does what believers believe it does.
8. Even though the leaf is used to invite or lead the spirit of a dead person to the family, it is required to happen in a specific manner. Data revealed that the spirit is easily interrupted if the person trusted with the responsibility is not disciplined, as they carry the responsibility of communicating with the spirit as they drive from the incident to the hospital bed and then mortuary, all while navigating traffic regulations. If the leading voice is not active, the spirit will not be led properly.
9. The preservation of mountains, where most families get this tree since it is not domestically kept, means that more families would hereditarily access it but if mountains are made available for any spatial developments, this would mean that future generations would not be able to access it. The use of *Ihlahlalomhlankosi* has a gender lens. The branch is used to lead the spirit of men to their graves while *isihlahlaSomthole* or *isihlahlaSomgano* is used to lead the spirit of females to their graves. Data analysis also revealed that there is a patriarchal lens in the execution of leadership roles, as it

transpired that only men could lead the spirit of the dead to their grave and this is done under the banner that says, “the Bible trusted males to be leaders of households,” and that there is a societal way of thinking which inhibits the role of women in this process, just because they were not entrusted by ancestors. Menstruation was also mentioned as a condition that distanced women from assuming such leadership role. This implies that other cultures see the period of menstruation as people that being impure/polluted/dirty. This implies that gender inequality was socially constructed by ancestors, hence it forms part of celebrating or observing cultural rites. Future cultural anthropologists could pursue a research that questions this gendered usage of tree branches/leaves, with the hope of soliciting social constructs, as well as corridors of indigenous knowledge and possibly probe if social gendered roles can be corrected because most households are now led by females as heads.

10. Another interesting point that the study revealed, as the newer generation was questioning the gendered leadership role attached to this tree branch. This thinking implies that the new generation will not see women through hegemonic, patriarchal lens but will value the agency of women in all aspects of life and this includes their role in leading cultural customs.
11. This study significantly noted that graves at eNqabeni are not graves but houses for dead people. This implies that laying someone to rest does not take away humanistic dignity, it is maintained and secured. Linguistic anthropologists could also pursue research establishing the depth of referring a grave as “new home/house”.
12. This study also revealed a disjuncture which has to do with the beliefs of disposing the leaf, other participants said the leaf is not buried but kept in the altar of the family “*emsamu*”, while others believed that the leaf is buried with the rightful person. After a year, when the time for the cleansing ceremony has come, a new leaf will be used to lead the spirit from the grave back to the altar “*umsamo*”. This disjuncture creates a path for further research because the disposal of this leaf is not culturally understood, future generations would be left with reliable indigenous knowledge, which would guide them to observe such cultural/ancestral customs.
13. This study further revealed that ancestors communicate when the leaf/tree branch has been used properly. The candle that is usually lit next to the coffin ignites and burns until it is finished, and it does not cause any damage. Another testing ritual that the family

does, is to feed the goat a few leaves of the tree or the branch, if the goat eats these leaves, the family thanks the ancestors for the work that has been done. The dead person also projects dreams, after a couple of days, of his or her burial to confirm to elders of the family.

6.4. Contribution for Future Research:

The use of *Ihlahlalomhlankosi* has a gender lens. The branch is used to lead the spirit of men to their graves while *isihlahlaSomthole* or *isihlahlaSomgano* is used to lead the spirit of females to their graves. Future cultural anthropologists could in the future pursue research that questions gendered usages of tree branches/leaves with the hope of soliciting social constructs as well as corridors of indigenous knowledge. Future researchers could question what happens if a female spirit is invited to rest in her grave by using *Ihlahlalomhlankosi* and what happens if males are laid to rest by inviting their spirits through *isihlahlaSomthole* or *isihlahlaSomgano*.

This study significantly noted that graves at eNqabeni are not graves but new home/ houses for dead people. This implies that laying someone to rest does not take away humanistic dignity, but the dignity is maintained secured. Linguistic anthropologists could also pursue research establishing the depth of referring a grave as new home/ house.

6.5. Recommendations:

This cultural indigenous knowledge should be integrated in the Anthropology 102 “**CULTURE AND SOCIETY IN AFRICA**” curriculum so that the concluded content could be adequately preserved and circulated from generation to generation. In this, African knowledge will be presented into the African Scholarship which could also be accessed by other nations as well.

6.6. Limitations of the Study:

The rapid spread of Covid-19 during data collection was a critical limitation during data collection. Since this study was a case of one society which is Nqabeni it gathered data from only one community. As a result, the study contains information that is specific for the eNqabeni community. Nevertheless, the result can be generalised to other societies that are culturally operating as Nqabeni society, Pietermaritzburg.

6.7. Chapter Summary:

This study has contributed all themes that have been discussed in data presentation chapter. The use of *Ihlahlalomhlankosi* has a deep cultural trace, which gives users a symbolic cultural identity. Community members of eNqabeni do not only use the leaf or the tree branch to honour

the teachings of their ancestors but they need to transfer this cultural knowledge so that their offspring will honour this custom to other family members. This study significantly noted that graves at eNqabeni are not graves but new homes for dead people.

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Appendix A

Data collection instrument

1. What is the customary use of “ihlahlalomlahlankosi” in all death rites?

2. What is the structure of your family?

3. Why are men entrusted with the responsibility of carrying this leaf in all death rites?

4. What is the permitted age in which men can being to carry or use this leaf?

5. Why women are not allowed to carry leaf in all death rites?

6. What is the indigenous significance of this leaf and how is the usage knowledge passed from generation to generation?

7. What happens when the women carry this leaf or what are social constructs that exist which prohibit women from touching or handing it?

8. Why is this leaf is put inside the grave instead of being disposed in a bush or elsewhere in the yard?

9. Why is it so important to practice this custom?

10. What are challenges associated with practicing this custom specially in household that are female headed?

11. Can the tree be used for other different purpose in Zulu culture beside death rite?

12. How do you know that the customary of taking the deceased from the place of death to home is successfully performed?

13. In future would you recommend that more research should be done with regards to death African practice?

THE END

Ukuqoqwakolwazi/kwemininingwaneyocwaningo

1. Yini ukusetshenziswa kwesiko kwe- “ihlahlalomhlankosi” kuyo yonke imicikilisho yokufa?

2. Uyini umndeni wakho?

3. Kungani amadoda aphathiswe umthwalo wokuphatha lelihlamvu kuyo yonke imicikilisho yokufa?

4. Yimuphi unyaka ovunyelwe lapho abesilisa bengathwala noma basebenziseleliqabunga?

5. Kungani abesifazane bengavunyelwe ukuphatha amaqabunga kuyo yonke imicikilisho yokufa?

6. Yini ukubaluleka kwendabuko yaleliqabunga futhi ulwazi lokusebenzisa ludluliselwa kanjani kusuka kwesinye isizukulwane kwesinye kuya kwesinye?

7. Kwenzekani lapho abesifazane bephethe leli qabunga noma yiziphi izinhloko zomphakathi ezikhona ezivimbela abesifazane ukuthi bangalithinti noma baliphathe?

8. Kungani iqabunga lifakwa ngaphakathi ethuneni esikhundleni sokulahlwa ehlathini noma kwenye indawo egcekeni?

9. Kungani kubaluleke kakhulu ukwenza le nkambiso?

10. Iziphi izinselelo ezihambisana nokwenza lo mkhuba ngokukhethekile emkhayeni ophethwe ngabesifazane?

11. Ngabe umuthi ungasetshenziselwa enye injongo ehlukile emasikweni amaZulu ngaphandle kwesiko lokufa?

12. Wazi kanjani ukuthi isiko lokuthatha umufi endaweni yokufa liye ekhaya lenziwe ngempumelelo?

13. Esikhathini esizayo ungancoma ukuthi kwenziwe ucwaningo olwengeziwe maqondana nokufa komkhuba wase-Afrika?

..... ISIPHETHO.....

Appendix B



Anthropology research project 2020

Researcher: XOLISWA

Student Number: 215041382

Telephone number: 076 33 85040

Email address: 215041382@stu.ukzn.ac.za

Supervisor: DR Lungile Zondi Email

address: zondil4@ukzn.ac.za

Office Telephone number: 0312602538, 0312605289

Dear Respondent,

Information Sheet

I, Xoliswa Makhathini, an Anthropology student, in the School of Social Sciences, University of KwaZulu-Natal, Pietermaritzburg Campus, invite you to participate in my research project entitled: The customary significance of using “ihlahlalomhlankosi” in death processes within eNqabeni community, South Africa:an anthropological enquiry.

The aim of this study is to understand the customary significant use of “ihlahlalomlahlankosi” amongst the Zulu cultural group and the case study is that of Ngabeni where this practice is hugely performed understand and why is umlahlankosi

a branch of tree that seems to be segregating male and female because I have observed that female do not lead that process of death and do not touch umlahlankosi and I want to understand why. Also, what happens if the house is female headed household?

Through your participation I hope to understand [the indigenous use of umlahlankosi amongst the Zulu cultural group at Nqabeni Area]. The result of interview is intended to contribute to cultural practice since in some areas like Loxion they do not practice some cultures when someone is dead. As the African nation there are practices that people turn to disobey but in the long it comes back to affect the future generation. With this study I hope that it will reach people who have less or no knowledge about the cultural use of umlahlankosi and also that this research reaches the families that are female head household and give them clarity on what should they do when someone is dead and the time when they are supposed to do the ritual of umlahlankosi.

Your participation in this project is voluntary. You may refuse to participate or withdraw from the project at any time with no negative consequence. There will be no money gain from participating in this interview. I will maintain confidentiality and anonymity of records identifying you as a participant in this study.

If you have any questions or concerns about participating in this study, please contact me or my lecturer at the numbers and emails listed above.

It should take you about (30 minutes to 40 minutes) hour/s to complete the interview (open-ended question). I hope you will take the time to participate.

Sincerely,

(Xoliswa Makhathini)

Signature of Researcher

Date

Place

Appendix: C



Anthropology research project 2020

Researcher: Xoliswa makhathini

Student Number: 215041382

Telephone number: 076 33 85 040 Email
address: 215041382@stu.ukzn.ac.za

Supervisor: DR Lungile Zondi

Office Telephone number: 0312602538, 0312605289

Email address: zondil4@ukzn.ac.za

CONSENT

I **have been informed about the study entitled** (The customary significance of using “ihlahlalomlahlankosi” in death processes within the eNqabeni community). **By (Xoliswa Makhathini).** I understand the purpose and procedures of the study.

I have been given an opportunity to answer questions about the study and have had answers to my satisfaction. I declare that my participation in this study is entirely voluntary and that I may withdraw at any time without affecting any of the benefits that I usually am entitled to. I have been informed about any that there are no available compensation or medical treatment if injury occurs to me because of study-related procedures.

If I have any further questions/concerns or queries related to the study I understand that I may contact the researcher at (076 33 85 040). If I have any questions or concerns about my rights as a study participant, or if I am concerned about an aspect of the study or the researchers then I may contact: Supervisor: DR Lungile Zondi

Office Telephone number: **+27 31 2605012**

Email address: zondil4@ukzn.ac.za
31 Golf Rd,
Scottsville, Pietermaritzburg,

3201

KwaZulu-Natal, SOUTH AFRICA

HSSREC Research Office contact details: Research office
Tel 031 2608350/4557/3587.

Email: HSSREC@ukzn.ac.za

Additional consent, where applicable

I hereby provide consent to Audio-record my interview / focus group discussion YES
Video-record my interview / focus group discussion NO. Use of my photographs for research purposes YES

Signature of Participant

Date

Place

Signature of Researcher

Date

Place

Signature of Witness
(Where applicable)

Date

Place

Signature of Translator
(Where applicable)

Date

Place

37A Hilltop Road
Hillcrest
KwaZulu-Natal
South Africa
3610
Cell No: 0846668351

25th September 2021

To Whom It May Concern

EDITING OF THESIS

I hereby confirm that I, Barbara Dupont, edited the thesis written by **Xoliswa Makhathini** titled **'The Customary Significance of Using *'Ihlahlalomhlankos'* in Death Processes Within the Enqabeni Community'** and commented on the grammatical anomalies in MS Word Track Changes and review mode by the insertion of comment balloons prior to returning the document to the authors. Corrections were made in respect of grammar, punctuation, spelling, syntax, tense, and language usage as well as to sense and flow. Reference guidelines and additional comments were provided to assist with corrections.

I have been teaching English for the past 12 years and have a Cambridge CELTA diploma in teaching English as a foreign language. I am also employed by the British Council as an official IELTS examiner for Southern Africa. I have been editing academic and other documents for the past five years, regularly editing the research dissertations, articles and theses of the School of Nursing, Environmental Studies and various other schools and disciplines at the University of KwaZulu-Natal and other institutions, as well as editing for publishing firms and private individuals on a contract basis.

I trust that this document will prove acceptable in terms of editing criteria.

Yours faithfully

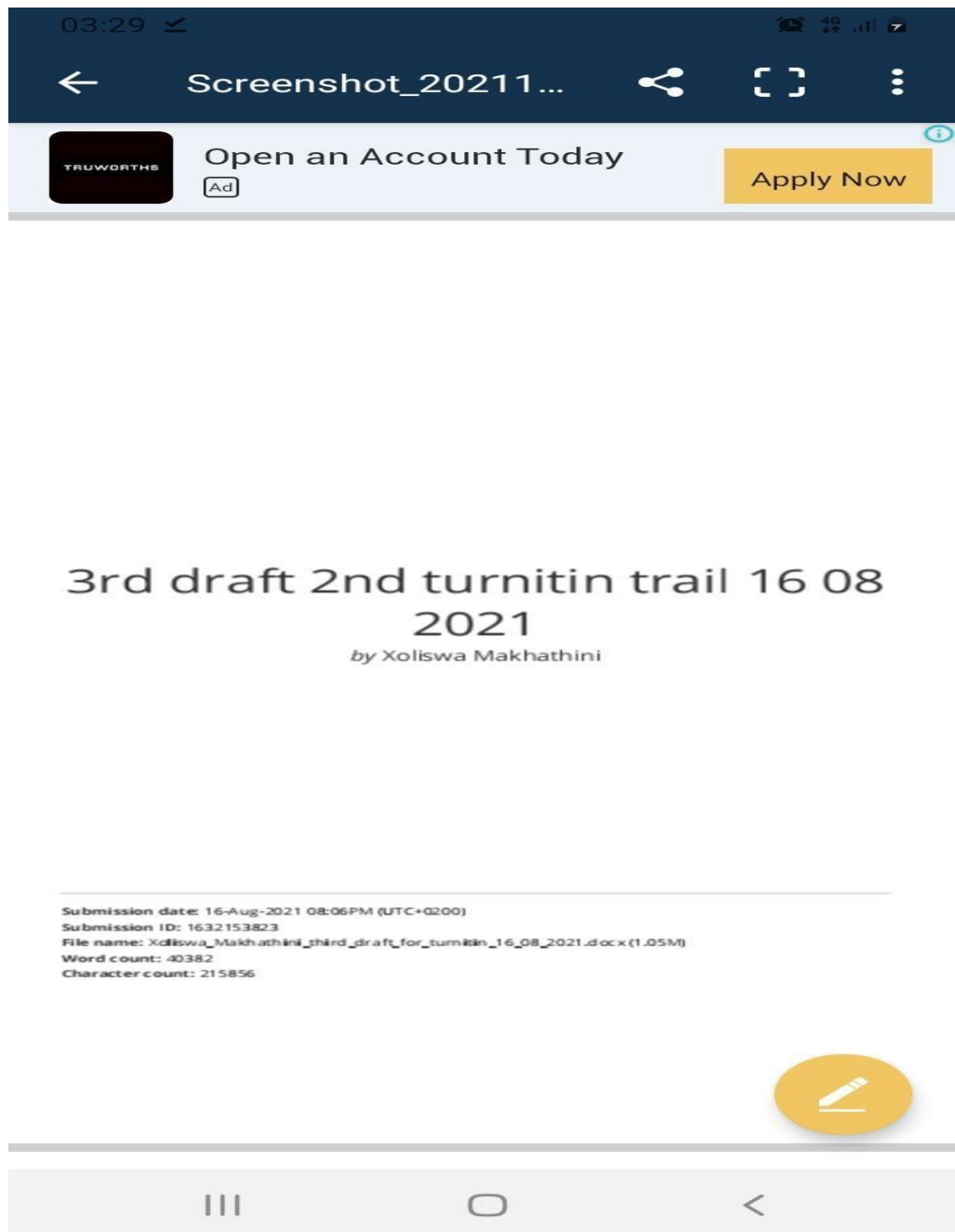


Barbara Dupont

Appendix : D




Appendix:E



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