

Appreciative inquiry into aspects of the Basotho culture to develop innovative fashion

by

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Dissertation submitted in fulfilment of the requirements of the degree of Master of Applied Arts: Fashion in the Faculty of Arts and Design at the Durban University of Technology

I declare that this dissertation is my own work and has not been submitted for any other degree or examination at any other institution.

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Abstract

The purpose of this study was to revive Basotho fashion by using appreciative inquiry to probe aspects of Basotho culture at a deeper level than that of the stereotypical Basotho motifs previously used, namely, the Seshoeshoe fabric, the Seanamarena blanket and the Mokorotlo hat. Instead, the aspects of Basotho culture involved were Litsoejane (women initiates), Litema (motifs/geometric patterns) and Balisana (shepherds), which were used as design probes to create a fashion collection showcasing examples of the innovative fashion items arising from the project. This study was framed by theories of Decolonisation and Afrofuturism in order to assist students to transform Basotho fashion by stretching, re-imagining and re-creating a renewed cultural fashion identity in the context of Lesotho.

The research was exploratory and participatory in that the design process was a collaboration between the researcher/lecturer and a group of fashion students registered at Limkokwing University of Creative Technology, Lesotho Campus, in the Faculty of Design Innovation. The research was qualitative in nature and was approached through the mode of Participatory Action Research (PAR) and the 5-D Cycle of Appreciative Inquiry (AI). The 5-D Cycle was adapted further to guide the development of the participatory project by categorising it into three phases of PAR. Phase 1 focused on the inquiry, whereby the researcher/lecturer inquired about background knowledge of students on aspects of the selected three design probes and shared information gathered with students. Phase 2 focused on the development of the project, namely, design, pattern drafting and garment construction. Phase 3 was based on the presentation of the outcome of the project and was rounded off by showcasing the collection and final reflection on the entire process.

Participants comprised two community elders who were indigenously knowledgeable and a group of Fashion students. The community elders, who were keepers of Basotho tradition and cultural knowledge, were questioned through structured interviews, while students were questioned through semi-

structured focus groups. The garments created by the students were then showcased to the Limkokwing community. The value of the research is thought to lie in decolonising the Fashion curriculum by using motifs gleaned from the cultural heritage of the Basotho people to arrive at an innovative cultural fashion identity.

Declaration

I, Ntebohelong Lepheana, hereby declare that this research dissertation is my own work and that all sources I have used or quoted have been indicated and acknowledged by means of references.

I hereby certify that this report has not been submitted for a degree at any other university or institution.

—
Ntebohelong Lepheana

Date: 4 April 2024

Preface

My name is Ntebohelong Lepheana. I am from Maseru, Lesotho, and from 2008 I have been a lecturer at Limkokwing University of Creative Technology, Lesotho Campus. The title of my research is: “Appreciative inquiry into aspects of the Basotho culture to develop innovative fashion”. The research is based on three aspects of the culture of Basotho, namely: Litsoejane (women initiates), Litema (motifs/geometric patterns/ mural paintings) and Balisana (shepherds). I selected these aspects based on their longevity; they are seemingly unchanged and are not explored much as sources of inspiration in relation to Basotho fashion. Basotho are more usually identified through the use of better-known cultural artefacts such as Seshoeshoe fabric, Seanamarena blanket and the Mokorotlo hat, shown in Figure (i).



Seshoeshoe fabric



Seanamarena blanket



Mokorotlo hat

Figure (i): Better-known Basotho cultural artefacts

However, I felt that there is more that the Basotho culture can offer as a source of inspiration for fashion. Litsoejane, Seanamarena and Mokorotlo are used in this study as design probes to transform Basotho fashion positively by stretching, re-imagining and re-creating a renewed cultural fashion identity by framing the study with theories of decolonising and Afrofuturism.

Conventions used

The referencing style used is the DUT Harvard style as found in the Referencing guide: DUT Harvard referencing style (Mitha, Naidoo and Thomas 2017).

Pseudonyms have been used for all participants.

Translation involved translating audio to text from a native language to the target language (Siregar, Sinar, Saragih and Lubis 2018: 81). The interviews with the community elders were held in Sesotho and recorded as audios. The audios were later played to fully understand the elders' responses, the meanings, phrases, exclamations as well as short songs. They were carefully transcribed from Sesotho to English by ensuring that the responses were accurately converted into text.

Dedication

My parents for their support and love:

My father, especially, for working hard to nurse my mother. I could not help you as much as I would have loved to, owing to my study.

I would like to dedicate this to my mother, who was a teacher and loved education. She has set an example of hard work, endurance and shaped our future. As your children we would not be where we are, were it not for your vision. My study journey has not been so easy because of your ill health, whether nursing you or from you being away from me. You were not able to read and appreciate my writing, which is understandable, as dementia has robbed you of yourself, and me of my mother. You are much loved.

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I would like to thank the following people for assisting and supporting me:

- My supervisor, Professor Deirdre Denise Pratt, for guidance, support, bravery and kind words of wisdom and care. You made my study to be a smooth journey. You picked me up when I felt hopeless, not to forget your beautiful sense of humour.
- My co-supervisor, Mrs Sunthra Moodley. I deeply appreciated your guidance and support, for being a to-go-to person when I was studying online the entire time. You have been amazing.
- The elders of the community who are key informants. You shared the information that build up this body of work. It is a delicate information but you shared it in such a way that it did not compromise your integrity.
- My former Supervisor, Dr Khaya Mchunu. Thank you for starting a journey with me and for shaping my study when I didn't know where I was heading.
- Limkokwing University of Creative Technology, Lesotho, for understanding that I am an employee and a student. For assisting and supporting me in so many ways. Thank you.
- I thank Limkokwing University fashion students, with whom I worked together as participants in the research project. I thank you deeply.
- My colleagues, who have been so helpful, supportive, and understanding.
- Lastly my family, for support, love and sympathy.

Definition of key terms

Design probes

They are a collection of artefacts or objects which can be used as source of inspiration for art or design related study. Design probes are meant to intrigue the mind of research participants by seeking answers to analytical research questions in order to come up with creative solutions (Mattelmaki 2006: 40).

Decolonisation

Decolonisation is a process of dismantling the effects of colonialism on the previously colonised nation(s) (Ashcroft, Griffiths and Tiffin 2007: 56).

Afrofuturism

Afrofuturism is described as the integration of black culture, heritage and history with technology, fantasy and futurism. It is also understood as recognition and learning from leading black artists, musicians, film producers, fashion designers, historians, writers, scholars, to name but a few of those involved in postcolonial studies (Womack 2013: 9).

Culture

Culture refers to the systematic way that a society or a nation carry out daily activities. Such a society is governed under similar structures and shares similar values, societal norms and beliefs. Furthermore, culture refers to similar attitudes and ideas that a society has been socialised into (Inglis 2005: 3).

Fashion education

Fashion education is important in shaping the mindsets of the students and helps them to deal with a set of issues within fashion in a constructive and systematic manner. Fashion education empowers students with knowledge and necessary skills to keep abreast with latest trends, to play a vital role in a society as future fashion designers, to make informed decisions regarding the industry that they are to practice in, and to contribute meaningfully to the socio-economy of their societies (Agarwal 2021: 145).

Glossary of Sesotho terms

Ba hlatsoa: The time when they wash garments that they wore during the time when they were released.

Ba kena: A term used to when the initiates enter or start the process of the actual initiation.

Bale: Female initiates in the second stage of initiation.

Balisana: Shepherds.

Banana: Girls.

Ba nts'oa motse: When the newlyweds move out of the parents' house.

Ho fiela lebala: To sweep the exterior floor.

Ho kalla: Stick fighting.

Ho lila: To smudge.

Ho phara: To apply the smudging paste on traditional walls of a house.

Ho qacha: The stage when male and female gather wood daily for cooking purposes.

Ho tebuka: To walk slowly in a sequence following a set rhythm.

Ho tsoa or ho theoha thabeng: Coming out. The time when the initiates are released to their families.

Katiba ea kuoane: Hat made of fur from a wild animal.

Khatampi: The area where women quarry get a type of soils used for colouring the smudged walls.

Khoaling/khotla: A house where men who are about to be initiated lodge.

Koma: Deep secret.

Koto: A stick with a head.

Lebollo: Initiation.

Lefito: A big blanket knot.

Leifo: Cooking space.

Lekhoakhoa: A reed fencing.

Lekoetje: A smudging soil.

Lekoko: Animal skin/hide.

Lelapa: Family.

Lelingoana: A feast which is held the night before the initiates leave for the training at the mountains.

Lema: To plough.

Leqapha: The embellished front skirt worn over ts'eea.

Legatha: A roughly built house.

Lesaka: Kraal.

Lesira: A reed face veil.

Letsoku: Red ochre.

Lifatla: Leather shoes made from softened cow hide.

Likholokoane: A three-tier layer of bands/hoops made of straw.

Litema: Motifs/geometric patterns.

Litepo: Spider web.

Lithebe: Shields.

Lithoko: Initiates' poems.

Litsoejane: Female initiates during the last stage of the initiation.

Makoloane: Male initiates.

Lekoloane: One male initiate.

Maleta thojane: People who stay the whole night watching over something.

Mampoli: Boss or leader of Balisana

Mathisa: Maidens who are not initiated.

Mekorotlo and mangae: Initiates' songs.

Mesomi: Strong black rubber rings.

Mesuo: Instructors of male initiates.

Mohlehlo: A hard fat layering the inside a belly of a sheep or goat.

Mohlomo: Thatching grass/Hyparrhenia hirta.

Mokhahla: A blanket made of soft cow hide.

Mokhorro: A Hut/Rondavel.

Mokorotlo: A cone-shaped and loop-topped hat made of Moseha grass.

Molamu: A stick, often used by men.

Molisana: The herdboys.

Monna ke nku ha a lle: A man does not cry, but is resilient and tough when subjected or faced with a painful or trying situation.

Mophato: A house for male and female initiates. It is built far from the village.

Moriri: Hair.

Mose oa Khomo: A skirt made of softened cowhide.

Moseha: A grass (*Merxmuellera macowanii*)

Moseme: Reed carpet.

Motebong: Cattle post.

Motloenya: A mohawk haircut.

Ngoale: Singular for Bale.

Ngoana e motona ke kabeloa manong: A male child is food for the vultures. This proverb suggests means speaks to masculinity, and the toughness of the journey of life that a male child is likely to encounter.

Ntlo: A house.

Phepha: White ochre.

Pilo: Black oil.

Qiloane: A mountain in Lesotho which inspired the design of Mokorotlo hat.

Seanamarena: Basotho traditional blanket with Litema geometric designs.

Sefahleho: The face.

Sefalo: A tool used for scraping.

Selia-lia: A game played by maidens and young men.

Sentloujane: A reed fence made of straw.

Senyepa: A beaded belt.

Seobi: A front skirt made of goat or sheep skin. It is worn by Bale.

Seotloana: A curved reed fence.

Seshoeshoe: A woven cotton fabric with Litema geometric prints, known as Basotho traditional fabric.

Setea: a skirt made of softened cow hide.

Setupu: The exterior porch.

Tema: A pattern.

Thapo: Traditional regalia worn during the mourning period.

Thethana: Fringed skirt.

Tjale: A fringed lighter and smaller blanket.

Ts'ee: A cotton loin cloth worn as short pants.

Tsikilana: *Gazania krebsiana* plant.

Tsoejane: A female initiate.

Editor's letter

EDITOR'S CERTIFICATE



18 October 2023

This to certify that the master's dissertation, "Appreciative inquiry into aspects of the Basotho culture to develop innovative fashion", by Ms Nteboheleng Lepheana, has been proof-read and edited.

Proof-reading and editing covered language, style and structure, as well as typographical and text-formatting errors. Any areas where the meaning was not clear or was mis-communicated were also noted, with revisions recommended.

Academic Coaching and Editing Services hereby affirms that, if the revisions and corrections are carried out as recommended, the dissertation is ready for examination submission, subject to any further requirements made by the University where Ms Lepheana is registered.

C. Bestbier
Administrative
Assistant

Turnitin originality report

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Chapter 1: Introduction

1.1 Introduction

Chapter 1 first looks at the context of the research, and then goes on to discuss the positionality of the researcher as both investigator and educator-participant, as well as her role in furthering fashion design in Lesotho. After the research problem is defined, the aim of the research and the objectives framed to achieve this aim are presented. The main themes of the research are then identified as decolonisation, Afrofuturism, and creative and innovative problem solving, with the significance of each to this study being briefly discussed. The influence of culture on fashion is then shown to be a driving factor in this research project, in terms of basing fashion on indigenous cultures rather than the Western influences which have dominated until now. The manner in which researcher/lecturer collaborated in the design project is then described. After a definition of key terms, the potential value of the research is suggested, before the chapter concludes with an overview of subsequent chapters.

1.2 Context of the research

The study explored the uncommon and less explored aspects of Basotho culture against the backdrop of the commonly known and used cultural norms which have shaped Basotho fashion over the years. As a fashion lecturer, it had come to my realisation that fashion students rely on the use of Seshoeshoe fabric, Seanamarena blanket and Mokorotlo hat as sources of inspiration when creating culturally inspired designs. Therefore, the goal of this study was to explore other cultural alternatives which have existed as traditional practices of the Basotho nation. Reasonably, Basotho are recognised by the Seshoeshoe fabric and Seanamarena blanket as their traditional and ethnic attires since they were introduced to the king of the Basotho nation, King Moshoeshoe 1 by the European traders (Pheto-Moeti 2005: 2 and Mokorosi 2017: 37). The Mokorotlo hat is a “cone-shaped and loop-topped hat made of Moseha grass (*Danthonia Macownia*)” that takes its inspiration from the peak of Qiloane mountain, a place where the royals of Moshoeshoe 1 resided (Mokorosi 2017: 37). As a whole,

Basotho share customs, value systems, vernacular language, beliefs and visual artefacts, which are often embedded in form, shape and design on traditional homestead, mostly the Mokhorro (Hut/Rondavel).

Lesotho was colonised by the British from 1868 and later it gained independence on the 4th of October 1966 (Mokorosi 2017: 52). It is for this reason that the Basotho nation had their culture, beliefs and norms diffused and incorporated with the British culture. Matsela (1979: 1) emphasises that the “suppressed cultures, such as those of colonised societies, lose vitality and are only capable of reflecting the dominant culture which suppressed them”. The cultural diffusion and syncretism influenced and had an impact on Basotho dress and grooming, architecture and other various cultural designs. However, some festivities like women initiation seemed to have stood the test of time. In interviewing some Basotho youths, Rosenberg (2007: 7) notes that the youths identify more with the “Western items to help shape their identity”. In defining culture, Serrat (2008: 1) states that in its broadest sense, it is the “totality of a society’s distinctive ideas, beliefs, values, and knowledge” and that culture is “exhibited in the ways humans interpret the environments they reside in”. Whereas Matsela (1979: 1) defines culture as the way in which a ‘society of human beings identifies itself as distinct from other human societies’ and their ability to communicate with itself and with other cultures. These definitions are incorporated in this study.

Despite a good number of Basotho nationals who have studied fashion and textile design and other design-related professions at various universities in Lesotho and internationally, fashion and other design-related fields are still at the developmental stage in Lesotho. These qualified Basotho fashion designers have been following in the footsteps of their predecessors (mostly women and fewer men) who were dressmakers and tailors, by producing products made of Seshoeshoe fabric and Seanamarena blanket. Fashion designers in Lesotho can apply their acquired knowledge and skills to creatively contemporise less explored aspects of Basotho culture and popularise them and perhaps gaining recognition as Basotho fashion designers and upstaging or elevate the fashion field in Lesotho. It is for this reason that in this study I worked with a group of

students to create fashion items by drawing on and using less explored cultural aspects of Basotho as design probes.

The design probes, Litsoejane, Litema and Balisana, were used to create fashion items by myself together with a group of fashion students who played the role of co-designers and research participants. By design probes I imply “an approach of design used for understanding human phenomena and exploring design opportunities”, it is a technique for collecting ideas among a group of people involved in a design process where their thoughts and ideas in design are used to support creativity in the process (Mattelmäki 2006: 40). This study, therefore, appreciates these aspects of Basotho culture as design probes, which I argue are less explored, even though they have existed for centuries in the nation, in exception of Litema, which is a dying craft due to adoption of the more contemporary ways applying motifs and patterns (Costa 1990: 12).

1.3 Positionality of the researcher

Clothing is a basic human need, and therefore, fashion emerges from clothing as a form of human identity, as well as an identity of societies and communities through various cultural backgrounds. As such, the education system has the responsibility of addressing fashion needs for the development of individual fashion designers and contributing towards the socio-economic systems of Lesotho. The ever-changing nature of fashion requires creative minds while the education system needs to prepare its students to contribute successfully to the field of fashion. Therefore, education in the context of fashion is “a future-making activity and fashion students in the educational system today will be among the fashion system’s most powerful actors in the near future” (Rissanen 2017: 533). This motivated me to undertake a study that focuses on the three design probes, namely: Litsoejane, Litema and Balisana by sharing the information that I have researched from community elders, who are keepers of tradition and cultural knowledge and the written information on all three probes, in order to create a fashion collection with a group of fashion students.

Since I participated in the study together with students as research participants and co-designers, it was crucial that I positioned myself within the study as researcher/lecturer/co-designer and participant. I grew up in Lesotho and I currently work as a lecturer at Limkokwing University of Creative Technology in the Faculty of Design Innovation. I studied Fashion and Education, and I have worked for fifteen years as a lecturer in the field of fashion. I am also a member of different associations, namely, Lesotho Graphic Designers Association and Friends of Morija Art and Museum. I have been involved in various platforms and dialogues organised by various organisations such as UNESCO, Lesotho Fashion Designers Association, Ministry of Tourism, Environment and Culture, Ministry of Planning, Finance and Industry and Basotho Enterprise Development Corporation (BEDCO) and Alliance Française, Lesotho, to name but the few. These platforms aim to address challenges facing designers and explore ways to elevate the creative industry in Lesotho.

I believe that my experience, expertise and background enabled me to work in participatory ways with a group of students to explore the potential of Basotho cultural forms as design probes that may help to re-new and re-imagine some aspects of fashion in Lesotho to transcend the bounds of Seshoeshoe and Seanamarena as the predominant cultural idioms to express Lesotho's fashion identity. I chose to be a participant in the study in order to work collectively with the students in every step of the project, from beginning to the end, to create what is hoped to be a small aspect of a fashion identity in the context of Lesotho. Therefore, my position and roles as researcher, lecturer and co-designer in the research project were to:

- facilitate the entire project by maintaining the relations among the participants and professionalism to avoid making the project more casual than a normal practical class, while we are guided by the ethics of research.
- undertake a research study and share it with the students as co-designer partners.
- share my expertise gained from my experience with participants while working together.

- assist students in producing the designs, patterns and garments based on the interpreted design probes.
- play the role of the lecturer by briefing participants about the scope of the project, guiding and advising them on the designs, patterns and garment they would produce.
- be responsible for data collection, data analysis and interpretation of the findings.

The students' roles as research participants and co-designers in the project were to:

- participate in focus group interviews.
- participate in class setting for project briefing and information sharing regarding the three selected design probes.
- keep individual journal of activities as they progress.
- take part in the design process from brainstorming about the design probes to producing the finished garments based on the design probes.
- participate and take part in the final stage of the project reflection and evaluation.
- organise and participate in showcasing the designed items.

In order to explore the potential of these selected design probes through a lecturer-student Appreciative Inquiry (AI) process, I chose to use three probes that I argue are less explored in Lesotho as having the potential of renewing aspects of fashion in Lesotho. These design probes were Litsoejane, Litema and Balisana, and they were used to inspire the participatory design process in the following ways.

1.3.1 Litsoejane

The comprehensive knowledge behind the way of dressing and body painting of Litsoejane was used to explore their potential to inspire our intended project.

1.3.2 Litema

We identified with the ethnic designs of Basotho houses, called Litema, the inspiration behind the design, in its form and shape, how the practice has lived through the ages and served as a source of inspiration for Basotho ethnic attire over the years. The practice is no longer as popular since majority of Basotho use concrete or stone walls as opposed to mud plastered walls (National Teachers Training College 1976: 2). However, the documented Litema were used as part of the design process and source of inspiration.

1.3.3 Balisana

We took note of the dress and grooming of Balisana, the style and the reasons behind their dressing. We further explored how the shepherds' dress and grooming served as a source of inspiration behind a Mosotho artist (Morena Leraba) who was making international strides in the music industry.

1.4 Research problem and aim

This section deals with the research problem and the aim of the research, as well as the research objectives.

1.4.1 Research problem

Seshoeshoe fabric, the Seanamarena blanket and the Mokorotlo hat have been major identifiers of Basotho fashion in the context of Lesotho since they were introduced during the colonial time. Fashion students at Limkokwing University of Creative Technology are not an exception, over the years I have observed students view Basotho fashion as being confined to Seshoeshoe, Seanamarena and Mokorotlo as sources of inspiration. As such, it seems as if there are limited sources of inspiration for culturally inspired fashion, yet the Basotho culture is rich and has more to offer. Litsoejane, Litema and Balisana are selected as design probes for their depth of cultural meanings and how they are linked together by common aspects of culture, namely: the blanket, traditional architecture, ethnic designs and other cultural and common lifestyles of the Basotho. By being informed about Basotho culture through knowledge gleaned

from Basotho elders and focusing on the selected design probes, students were provided with the opportunity to reflect on the depth of Basotho culture as sources of inspiration from this project and the other similar projects that they would undertake while in the process of learning.

To carry out this project, I participated in a design project together with selected fashion students to create fashion items meant to refresh how we might understand and identify Basotho fashion in the context of Lesotho. Fashion education plays an important role of assisting myself as researcher and students as facilitators in understanding the need to decolonise current Basotho fashion and create a re-imagined identity for Basotho. In order to begin a process of creating the fashion collection with students, I started by holding a lecture based on the importance of producing creative concepts and solutions. (See Appendix G: Creative thinking notes, p. 237.)

1.4.2 Aim of the research

The aim of this study was to investigate the use of appreciative inquiry to develop innovative Basotho fashion by probing the following aspects of Basotho culture: Litsoejane (women initiates), Litema (motifs/geometric patterns) and Balisana (shepherds). These aspects used in design probes to create a fashion collection showcasing examples of the innovative fashion items arising from the process.

The study was focused on students as research participants and co-designers with me as researcher. We learned from community elders who are knowledgeable about the culture of Basotho through structured interviews. Then the knowledge acquired information from the elders together with collected information from different readings was used to inform the study about the chosen design probes. Design probes were be subjected to further study to be used as a source of inspiration for a design project in which the students participated.

The project was divided into three phases based on the three cycles of Participatory Action Research framework: Planning, Action and Evaluation and Reflection. The study incorporated Appreciate Inquiry as an additional

framework. However, the focus was on the 5-D Cycle: Definition, Discovery, Dream, Design and Destiny. The project was broken down into 5-D Cycle of Appreciative Inquiry, which was structured as sub-cycles of Participatory Action Research. The project incorporated interviews and practical work with every phase and at the end there was a showcasing of the collection produced to reflect the interpretation of the design probes.

1.4.3 Research objectives

The following objectives were formulated so as to achieve the research aim:

- a) To investigate how the 5-D Cycle of Appreciative Inquiry as applied to chosen design probes could be used by fashion students and their lecturer to produce innovative Basotho fashion designs.
- b) In carrying out the 5-D Cycle of Appreciative Inquiry, to establish:
 - i What indigenous knowledge about Litsoejane (women initiates), Liteima (motifs/geometric patterns) and Balisana (shepherds) Basotho elders could provide for the design probes;
 - ii What typically Basotho fashion elements could be seen to emerge from the process of appreciative inquiry as applied to the design probes;
 - iii The result/s of incorporating these elements into a fashion collection in terms of producing innovative Basotho fashion designs;
 - iv The response of Limkokwing community members to the showcasing of the fashion collection.

It was thought that achieving the above objectives would enable the researcher to draw conclusions about using the 5-D Cycle of Appreciative Inquiry to conceptualise and re-create a re-imagined yet culturally inspired Basotho fashion collection, as well as the implications of this process for using Afrofuturism to decolonise Fashion Education.

1.5 Main themes of the research

The research is informed by decolonial theory and Afrofuturism, as well as guided by the concept of creative and innovative problem solving. The two theories and creative and innovative problem solving are discussed in detail in Chapter 2. In this chapter an overview is given.

1.5.1 Decolonisation

Since Lesotho was colonised by the British from 1833 to 1960, Basotho were introduced and adopted the colonisers' culture and fashion. Oelofsen (2015: 131) defines decolonisation as "the change that colonised countries go through when they become politically independent from their former colonisers". Oelofsen further notes that decolonisation is not entirely about political independence, but it encompasses other structures like institutions and the "way in which former colonial subjects were encouraged to think", resulting in economic and cultural power of the former colonisers. I saw it as of crucial importance, therefore, to engage fashion students at Limkokwing University as participants to re-claim and celebrate Basotho cultural aspects that the colonisers had deemed barbaric.

1.5.2 Afrofuturism

Womack (2013: 9) defines Afrofuturism as:

...an intersection of imagination, technology, the future, and liberation. Both an artistic aesthetic and a framework for critical theory. Afrofuturism combines elements of science fiction, historical fiction, speculative fiction, fantasy, Afrocentricity, and magic realism with non-Western beliefs. In some cases, it's a total re-envisioning of the past and speculation about the future rife with cultural critiques.

Whereas LaFleur (2011) says: "I generally define Afrofuturism as a way of imagining possible futures through a black cultural lens... I see Afrofuturism as a way to encourage experimentation, reimagine identities, and activate liberation."

The two definitions of Afrofuturism speaks to the objectives of the research project that experimented with the three design probes to bring the imagined fashion of Basotho to possible reality. The design process and finished collection

incorporated cultural fantasy and Afrocentricity. The collection presented to Limkokwing community was intended to be creative and innovative as well as demonstrate aspects of Afrofuturism.

1.5.3 Creative and innovative problem solving

It is important to employ concepts of creativity and innovation to solve problems aligned with the 4th industrial revolution. Adams and Hamm (2010: 13) states that “innovation has a lot to do with the creation of new ideas, approaches, or things. It might also involve transforming an idea or invention into a problem-solving device, process, product, or technique. Whereas creative and innovative thinking involves generating original ideas and responses to problems or situations” (Adams and Hamm 2010: 36). The research is not seeking to present the three design probes as purely cultural elements. The aim is to approach the design probes in a creative manner that leads to innovative solutions to decolonise and liberate Basotho fashion.

1.6 Fashion influenced by culture

The study was largely focused on the influence that Basotho culture could have in fashion. As a result, the project incorporated the rich culture and heritage of the Basotho nation in the creation of a collection that the research participants and I developed. Idang (2015: 98) shows that culture:

...entails a totality of traits and characters that are peculiar to a people to the extent that it marks them out from other peoples or societies. These peculiar traits go on to include the people's language, dressing, music, work, arts, religion, dancing and so on.

To indicate the impact that culture has in fashion, Wang, Qin and Harrison (2013: 2) note that “designers who apply national cultural elements and not just simply copy but to transfer these elements into a more creative and sophisticated product have won world famous design awards”. The development of fashion has largely been associated with the West, especially France Italy and America. However, “the origins of fashion are acutely sensitive to the dynamics of historical, cultural and social context” (Alexeyeff and Presterudstuen 2021: 10). Based on the statements above, I argue that any given design product which

incorporates elements of culture has the possibility of success. For this reason, I also saw possibility of a positive outcome from the collection based on the chosen cultural design probes.

1.7 Student/lecturer participatory project

The study was intended to be a participatory project between a group of students and myself as a lecturer and a researcher, and the Limkokwing University granted me permission to work with students on this project. (See Appendix B for Gatekeeper's letter of permission, pp. 183-184.)

The students and I co-designed, while I also took on the role of the observer as the projects unfolded. The "term 'co-design' is an attempt to describe a design approach that actively involves other individuals besides designers in the whole design process to create a design that is truly useful" (Thamrin, Wardani, Sitindjak and Natadjaja 2018: 463). The study was based on Participatory Action Research and 5-D Cycle of Appreciative Inquiry as frameworks. So, instead of the lecturer passing information to students about the chosen design probes and perhaps giving instructions on how to use the information to develop a collection, we worked together as a team, learning from each other and discovering certain issues pertaining to Basotho culture together.

Mannay (2016: 34) indicates that participatory projects offer an opportunity to the creators of data in that they "inevitably draw inferences about their own lives and find new meanings and connections". Thamrin *et al.* (2018: 466) document a co-design and participatory study project for Interior Design between students and lecturers which was implemented and the cultural community of Surabaya city in Indonesia was under study. Surabaya community consists of murals and street artists. "Students were guided by academic and professional experts in arts, interior design and architecture. They were also required to involve the community members throughout the design process through exchanging and complementing feedback, skills and ideas" (Thamrin *et al.* 2018: 464). Among the benefits noted at the end of the project was that students experienced becoming part of the community themselves which allowed them to share the values of the

community and incorporate them in their design. Students learned that linking innovation of mural art with interior elements did become a new source of inspiration for their interior projects (Thamrin *et al.* 2018: 475). This study aims for the similar outcomes through co-designing and participatory nature of the project.

1.8 Definition of key terms

Definitions of some of the key terms used in the dissertation are given below in alphabetical order:

Afrofuturism: Afrofuturism is described as the integration of black culture, heritage and history with technology, fantasy and futurism. It is also understood as recognition and learning from leading black artists, musicians, film producers, fashion designers, historians, writers, scholars, to name but a few of those involved in post colonialism (Womack 2013: 9).

Culture: Culture refers to a systematic way that the people of a society or a nation carry out daily activities. Such a society is governed under similar structures and shares similar values, societal norms and beliefs. Furthermore, culture refers to similar attitudes and ideas that people in a society have been socialised to (Inglis 2005: 3). This, however, does not mean that people of a society or a nation are wired to behave or to think alike. For instance, Basotho have a distinctive way of doing things as a nation. However, Basotho from one district can carry themselves or communicate in a different manner from Basotho who originate from another district within Lesotho in terms of attitudes and mannerisms, which differs from one place to another.

Decolonisation: Decolonisation is a process of dismantling the effects of colonialism over the previously colonised nation(s) (Ashcroft, Griffiths and Tiffin 2007: 56). In this study decolonisation was used to address the cultural aspects of the Basotho nation, which have not been practised much owing to the influence of colonisation. The cultural aspects were, in a way, re-acquired, re-affirmed and naturalised while participants in the research were investigating ways in which

such aspects of Basotho culture might have a place in a fast-evolving fashion industry in the context of Lesotho.

Design probes: These are a collection of artefacts or a collection of objects which can be used as source of inspiration for art or design related study. Design probes are meant to intrigue the mind of the research participant by seeking answers to analytical research questions with the aim of coming up with creative solutions (Mattelmaki 2006: 40).

Fashion education: Fashion education involved a formalised education meant to educate people about the fundamentals of fashion and textiles for a world of profession. It involves continuous training and empirical research fundamentals to improve the field of study of fashion between academia and the industry, to expand knowledge and skills within fashion sector to meet the needs of the fashion industry (Mendes 2017: 12). Fashion education is important in shaping the mindsets of the students and it helps them to deal with a set of issues within fashion in a constructive and systematic manner. Fashion education empowers students with knowledge and necessary skills to keep abreast with latest trends, to play a vital role in a society as future fashion designers, to make informed decisions regarding the industry that they are to practice in and to contribute meaningfully to socio-economy of their societies (Agarwal 2021: 145). Fashion education is important in shaping the mindsets of the students and it helps them to deal with a set of issues within fashion in a constructive and systematic manner. Fashion education is emphasised since this study is based on students' learning about aspects of Basotho culture. The cultural aspects, which are used as design probes, were used as a source of inspiration for the intended fashion collection produced by myself and the participants.

Traditional education: Traditional initiation schools form part of an informal education system where a young man or a young woman acquires education from leaders in a society, parents, family members and peers, often through word of mouth. The "attitudes, values, skills and knowledge from daily experiences" which assist individuals to function in their society are not found in formal education (Achi 2021: 2). Traditional education plays a major role in the initiation

of Litsoajane, the development of Liteima, and initiation of young men, some of whom would become Balisana.

Initiation: This is the process whereby a person becomes a member of their organisation (or community), often involving special or secret ceremonies (Collins English dictionary 2023). Initiation includes not only learning about the everyday activities and customs of one's community, but also the accepted roles, behaviour, duties and dress of young men and women. The initiates/customs which are the focus of this study are given next:

Balisana: (pl noun, pronounced: *ba-lii-sa-nah*) Balisana are male herders who start off herding domestic animals from as early as age of five years, up until one is an adult male, married or single.

Liteima: (noun, pronounced *di-tee-mah*) Liteima are motifs or geometric patterns which are traditionally applied on the exterior of the traditional house.

Litsoejane: (noun, pronounced *di-tswe-ja-neh*) Litsoejane are female initiates. They are often maidens or young married woman.

1.9 Value of the research

Fashion is evolving and it derives its existence from external factors such as culture, politics, economy, music, film, art and technology, to name but few of the factors. Hence, the need to learn from various cultures for creativity and innovation, as this study focuses on chosen aspects of Basotho culture for similar purposes. This study was meant to benefit young and upcoming fashion designers from the faculty of design (at Limkokwing University, Lesotho Campus) and Small, Micro and Medium Enterprises (SMMEs) in Lesotho, which are operating under the textile and manufacturing industry.

It was anticipated that this project would benefit students (who are viewed as future designers) in giving them a different approach to creating Basotho fashion inspired by the diverse cultural crafts and artefacts. Furthermore, through this

project, it was hoped that students would develop an awareness of other less popular and less explored cultural practices of the Basotho nation that could benefit them in their studies and later as designers. Students are thought to have benefited by learning the importance of drawing inspiration from one's culture when creating a creative and coteremporary fashion collection(s). By involving the students as participants, through the study, I hoped to construct and shape their outlook on culture through practical learning experience while assisting them to appreciate aspects of Basotho culture beyond the chosen probes. Furthermore, the study is aimed to help broaden the mind-set of Basotho fashion students, who are future designers and entrepreneurs, to make available the required skillset in order to contribute to the Basotho's developing fashion industry.

1.10 Conclusion

To sum up, the research investigated innovative ways of transforming Basotho fashion by engaging the three design probes, namely, dress and grooming of Litsoajane, Litema and dress and grooming of Balisana. The research project sought to transform Basotho fashion with the involvement of participants., and is framed by decolonial theory and Afrofuturism. The subsequent chapters are as follows. Chapter 2 is the Literature review and engages supporting literature with similar themes as three design probes. Chapter 3 is based on methodology and the theoretical frameworks: the research is qualitative in nature, and it is underpinned by Appreciative Inquiry and Participatory Action Research as frameworks. The research project was thus guided by three phases of PAR and use 5-D Cycles of Appreciative Inquiry as sub-cycles of each of the three phases. The findings are analysed in two parts. Chapter 4 deals with the data gathered from community elders, and which was collected through semi-structured interviews. Chapter 5 focuses on data collected from the student/participants. As will be explained in more detail, the interviews were conducted in three stages as per the three phases of PAR and 5-D Cycles of Appreciated Inquiry. Student participants then undertook the design process within each phase and 5-D Cycle which eventually resulted in constructed garments that were showcased to the Limkokwing University community. Chapter 6 deals with the Conclusions and Recommendations of the study.

Chapter 2: Literature review

2.1 Introduction

Chapter 2 first looks at the impact of colonisation on Basotho fashion, which led to the introduction of Western materials into Lesotho. It next discusses decolonial theory as a framework for transformation and goes on to the need to decolonise the education system. Afrofuturism is viewed as having a role to play in decolonisation, in terms of using traditional past African art and culture in present day times as a means to create an invocative and exciting future, as is the intention of this study. Next the relationship between creativity and education is discussed with reference to the role of teachers in the development of creativity and the need for creativity in meeting 21st century demands for skills. Fashion is closely associated with one's identity, and the Basotho motifs used in this study are closely associated with the students' identity as a people of Lesotho. The role of fashion education in transforming Basotho fashion is then discussed. The chapter then moves on to discuss how culture and design are associated and explores the three traditional Basotho design themes chosen for this project, namely, Litsoejane (female initiates), Litema (motifs or geometric patterns) and Balisana (shepherds). The section on culture and design notes that there are strong links between textile design and African culture, as well as commenting on the interwoven nature of the chosen cultural themes. After discussing the nature of traditional education and initiation training, the chapter concludes with the aim and objectives of the study.

2.2 The impact of colonisation on Basotho fashion

This section will first look at the colonisation of Lesotho by the English and next, the impact this had on Basotho fashion.

2.2.1 The colonisation of Lesotho

Lesotho, like the rest of the African continent was also colonised by England, from 1868 to 1966, when it gained its independence. Other African countries were colonised by countries like Belgium, Britain, German and France, to name but the

few (Marumo 2020: 77). Colonialism is the cultural exploitation, locked and rigid hierarchical relationship by the colonisers over the colonised and deep resistant to fair and equitable exchanges in economy and culture (Ashcroft, Griffiths and Tiffin (2007: 40). Such denigration of the indigenous culture was not so apparent as soon as the colonisers set in. According to Claude and Faruqi (2012: 32), in India, for instance, there was a short honeymoon which led to some form of respect for the culture of the ruled. The colonisers' ideologies, lifestyle and evangelical fervour soon gave way to a relentless and pervasive devaluation of the culture of the ruled when the colonisers justified and to impose their own rule. As Marumo (2020: 78) points out:

...the European invaders were successful due to cultural pollution and religious deception put in place in the course of their campaign. The colonisers were able to set Africans against each other, resulting from the introduction of foreign beliefs that most traditional chiefs and rulers bought into.

With the formation of “modern civilisation, common languages, beliefs, and value systems, art, religion, lifestyle, and culture were developed (Marumo 2020: 76). Another important way that the colonisers imposed upon the indigenous people was in the use of their language, especially as used in the educational system that they brought with them. In Lesotho, English is a second language. However, it is the medium of instruction from pre-schools to tertiary level and Sesotho is taught only as an additional subject. In a way, that loss of language is something of great importance because language is beyond just being means of communication, it is a window to one's culture, folklore, parables, proverbs, and to all the stories that the elders relate from one's birth to what one grows up with. If that window of language closes, then one's culture goes to sleep or dies. (Mokotso 2021: 5). This has been the case within Basotho culture in relation to fashion, which has been communicated through the Western culture by means of Seshoeshoe fabric and Seanamarena blanket as being the main cultural identity of Basotho fashion.

Among the challenges brought by colonialism in the education system, Claude and Faruqi (2014: 33) note that colonialised educational system “created in bulk

as part of standard curricula, as part of the aims set for education, passable draftsman, but not policy makers, interpreters of policy but not innovators. It created the ‘cram and vomit’ kind of ethos, the emphasis on exams and of course no independent thinking”. In contemporary South Africa the term “decolonisation” refers to the transformation of space and ideology created by the Anglo-American/Western European onto the one dominated, to resonate with the west for easy access to education (Becker 2019: 5). In a sense decolonised education system, is the one that affords a marginalised curriculum and still rooted from the Western culture, religion, language and lifestyle.

The discussion on decolonisation in this study is seen from the perspective of modernity and contemporariness. Basotho culture has a depth of meaning to it which I believe may have been less explored due to colonisation. Hence the use of the three selected design probes, which are also less explored within Basotho culture. Decolonisation as a theoretical framework will assist the study to become a transformative project in expressing aspects of Basotho culture in designs that re-claim, re-imagine and re-create Basotho fashion. It is hoped that students will benefit from learning about decolonisation and ways of re-imagining aspects of Basotho culture which seem to have been overwhelmed by the Westernisation which was brought about by colonisation.

2.2.2 The introduction of Western materials into Lesotho

In Lesotho, fashion has also been impacted by colonisation in that Basotho were introduced to Western fashion in 1833 when the European settlers introduced “soft cotton and woollen clothes, which were cheaper to get” and served as a symbol of conversion to Christianity. Women who were identified as Christian converts and literate wore Seshoeshoe dresses and abandoned garments made of animal skins (Phetho-Moeti 2005: 38). The use of new fabrics promoted the Western fashion as opposed to traditional attires which were made of softened animal skins. The cotton fabric was later called “Seshoeshoe”, named after the founder of the Basotho nation, King Moshoeshoe.

This is because Seshoeshoe fabric and Seanamarena blankets were given to King Moshoeshoe 1 as a gift, and thereafter they have remained the hallmark fashionable attire of the Basotho (Mokorosi 2017: 35). In Swaziland for instance, traditional clothes incorporated leather as the main component of clothing, and “goatskin aprons imprinted with native designs”. The new forms of clothing acquired through trade were additions to, rather than replacements of Swazi-style dress” (Aris 2007: 3). Further, Westerners imposed their own style of dressing on their Swazi converts and school-going children in the form of uniforms. In so doing, the missionaries were imposing “their own concepts of decency and morality in terms of both thought and appearance as opposed to African garb, which was not worthy enough to be worn in places of religion and education” (Aris 2007: 4). In Algeria for instance, the colonisers tried to enforce change in women’s traditional dress, especially the use of a veil. However, not using the veil was against custom, for this reason:

Unveiling this woman is revealing her beauty, baring her secret, breaking her resistance, making her available for adventure. Whereas hiding the face meant the woman was disguising the secret, it is also creating a world of mystery, of the hidden (Duara 2014: 48).

The colonisers succeeded to a certain degree in unveiling Algerian women and introducing them to Western textiles and their style of dressing, which seemed to neutralize Algerian native dress. In the context of Lesotho, the cultural aspects will, in a way, be re-acquired, re-affirmed and naturalised while ways in which aspects of Basotho culture can have a hold in a fast-evolving fashion industry are being investigated.

2.3 Decolonial theory as a framework for transformation

Decolonial theory, as a framework, will assist the study to become a transformative project in appreciating and expressing aspects of Basotho culture in designs to re-claim, re-imagine and re-create fashion in this context of Lesotho. Becker (2019: 4) describes decolonisation as a “process of addressing and dismantling history and its effect on the present and future and as the positive release from cultural dominance”. As Fanon (1963: 2) contends:

Decolonisation never takes place unnoticed, for it influences individuals and modifies them fundamentally. It transforms spectators crushed with their inessentiality into privileged actors, with the grandiose glare of history's floodlights upon them. It brings a natural rhythm into existence, introduced by new men, and with it a new language and a new humanity. Decolonisation is the veritable creation of new men.

To further understand what decolonisation is, Ashcroft, Griffiths and Tiffin (2007: 56) explain that it is the process of revealing and dismantling all forms of colonialist power, including any hidden aspects of institutional and cultural forces that had maintained the colonialist power and remained so even after political independence is achieved. Mokotso (2021: 2) indicates that “the champions of decolonisation were cultured and educated into perceiving themselves as resemblances of European education, culture, and political and socio-economic arrangement”. The definitions of decolonisation above briefly indicate how cultures from most of the countries which were colonised were denigrated and, as a result, some of the cultures were lost. Hence the need for decolonisation of Basotho fashion.

Prior to colonisation, Lesotho, like the rest of the African continent, was fully embedded in cultural practices, value systems and the practice of art and religion. Basotho lived in peace, and older men and women had the responsibility of teaching boys and girls the value of cultural practices and nationality. Men had a way and a place where they taught the boys to be “real men”, who knew how to build houses and take care of a family and livestock. In the same way women also trained girls to be “real women”, who knew how to take care of their families and to decorate their homes with Litema, among other things (Mokorosi 2017: 54). The Basotho had a systematic education which was passed down from generation to generation.

The discussion on decolonisation in this study is seen from the perspective of modernity and contemporariness. Basotho culture has a depth of meaning to it which may have been less explored due to colonisation. Hence the use of the three selected design probes, which are also less explored within Basotho culture. Decolonisation as a framework will assist the study to become a

transformative project in expressing aspects of Basotho culture in designs that re-claim, re-imagine and re-create Basotho fashion. It is hoped that students will benefit from learning about decolonisation and ways of re-imagining the aspects of Basotho culture which seemed to have been smothered by the Westernisation which was brought about by colonisation.

2.3.1 The role of Afrofuturism in decolonisation

It is noteworthy that Afrofuturism is mentioned alongside decolonisation. Afrofuturism is based on the “recognition that Africa increasingly exists as the object of futurist projection” (Eshun 2003: 291). Implying that Afrofuturism can be employed in “visual culture as potentially useful” in the project of decolonisation (Becker 2019: 2). Womack (2013: 9) defines Afrofuturism as culture and notions of blackness for today and the future through literature, visual arts, music, or the grassroots, in combination with elements of science fiction, historical fiction, speculative fiction, fantasy and Afrocentricity with non-Western beliefs. Becker (2019: 3) explains that “the term Decolonisation may share similarities with aspects of Afrofuturism in that it makes reference to historical injustice with the cultural and temporal dislocation that is engendered”. Afrofuturism is based on the “recognition that Africa increasingly exists as the object of futurist projection” (Eshun 2003: 291). According to Becker (2019: 2), Afrofuturism can be employed in “visual culture as potentially useful” in the project of decolonisation.

However, Bristow (2014: 169) argues that Afrofuturism is more ascribed to African aesthetic practices with technology particularly by African Americans. Instead, Bristow (2014: 170) has coined the term “Post African Futures” in order to “remind readers that local artists have long moved past this particular point of identification into reflecting at the need to look at local contexts of technology in addressing art practice”. Bristow (2014: 171) cites examples of Post African Futures as making and curating work online, artists’ online creative collaborations and inclusion of art, culture and digital technology. The definition of Post African Futures is supported by Becker (2019: 8), who states:

Visual studies curricula at Southern African universities still have a large focus on western theory and methodology and the degree of focus on contemporary African art and visual culture. Students may study the work of South African photographer Zanele Muholi and the fashion designer Laduma Ngxokolo because these artists' work is typically studied through the lens of gender studies or postcolonial theory. Therefore, I argue that there is a need to decolonise the curricular in order to promote the Basotho culture and cultural practices in creative fashion education.

2.3.2 Decolonisation of the education system

In education, decolonisation means the exclusion and replacement of colonial elements within the curriculum which were imposed by colonialists, and inclusion of the history of the colonised and the achievements thereof of unsung leaders, past and present. During the #FeesMustFall and #FreeDecolonisedEducation demonstrations in South African universities in 2015, students demonstrated against the rise of tuition fees and demanded free education for all and one which is decolonised (Langa n.d.: 10). However, it appeared that students at different universities attached different meanings to the notion of a 'decolonised' education. For example, University of Limpopo students argued that decolonised education refers to accessibility to similar quality of education as students at historically white universities like Wits University. While other students understand decolonised education as "restoration of their lost Africanness (Langa n.d: 38).

Students at historically white universities (e.g., Wits University, University of Cape Town, Rhodes and University of KwaZulu Natal) argued that decolonised education means that the "curriculum needs to be transformed to reflect the lived experiences of African people, including recognition of their scholarly work which is often on the periphery or taught as additional modules. It was further argued that decolonised education means recentring the work of African scholars in the curriculum" (Langa n.d.: 10). Becker (2019: 5) also notes that for the "disciplines of visual studies and art history this means a focus on contemporary and historical African art". Grosfoguel, Hernández and Velásquez (2016: 57) argue that decolonisation "involves a challenge to Eurocentric paradigms of development and knowledge production, as well as a serious turn toward indigenous

knowledge, social, and economic practices.” The University of Stellenbosch (Maties) has been seen the need to decolonise their education system since students protests around South Africa in 2016. The University of Stellenbosch has been engaged in the process of introducing a learning content based on African thought leaders. Decolonisation, as Maties understands it, means; “removing the notion that content or knowledge of colonising countries (especially European/Western countries) is superior to that of colonised countries and communities” (Etheridge 2018). Based on the readings above, I argue that educational decolonisation encompasses the inclusion of indigenous knowledge in the curriculum of the respective country which was previously colonised. However, in order to comprehend the need for decolonisation, it is important to understand the background of colonisation and its effects to Lesotho and Africa as a continent, which is why this chapter started with an account of colonisation in Lesotho and its impact on Basotho fashion.

2.4 The relationship between creativity and education

Since the study is designed as a participatory and collaborative project between myself and students, through discovery, learning and conceptualisation of creative ideas and their implementation thereof, I find it imperative to discuss the importance of creativity and fashion education. Elisondo, Donolo and Rinaudo (2013: 11) state that it is important for one to understand “the relationship between creativity and education for students’ stimulation” and actions which are essential to “promote creative educational contexts”. Elisondo *et al.* (2013: 11) further write that “creativity and education are socio-cultural processes that are always developed in interaction with others” and learning can be generated inside and outside of the classrooms. On the other hand, Rissanen (2017: 532) echoes world-renowned Dutch trend forecaster Li Edelkoort’s manifesto, that “research on fashion ... are rematerialised and interconnected with the natural world and mostly set on design education which largely includes fashion”. These sentiments are stated in Edelkoort’s manifesto (Edelkoort 2016).

2.4.1 The role of teachers in the development of creativity

It is noteworthy that teachers play a vital role in the development of creativity of

their students. McWilliam (2009: 287) argues that:

...as creative practitioners, teachers can take up a twenty-first century role to be the builders of creative capacity of the meddler in the middle, co-creating curricula in innovative and responsive ways that harness their own and foster the children's creativity.

McWilliam (2009: 290) further notes that such teachers who are said to be meddlers often "create opportunities for hands-on, minds-on and, where appropriate, plugged-in learning collaborations". This indicates that teachers get involved in their students learning as participants and co-designers, as in the case this study.

Rissanen (2017: 534) shows that teachers can ask "students to design in an imagined context in connection to a real-world situation. Their "familiarity with the immediate world can simulate and facilitate the imaging of creative futures that might be the most expected or that might seem the most likely". This means that it is advantageous for students to work within a familiar context as a starting point to stimulating their creativity, prior to exploring other unfamiliar contexts. As such, creativity and fashion embedded in education will enable us, as coparticipants, to go some way towards decolonising Basotho fashion and creating a re-imagined cultural aesthetic of Basotho fashion.

2.4.2 Creativity as meeting 21st century demands for skills

The field of creativity has risen as imperative to meet the skill demands for 21st century and revolving industrial revolutions. Currently the world is entering into the 4th industrial revolution. Art and design education, which largely incorporates creativity, is fundamental to knowledge and skill development of students who are involved in participatory learning in changing one's mind, ideas, values, ways of being, knowing and doing (Danvers 2003: 51). Highlighting the importance of acquiring 21st century skills, Bleed (2005) states that designers:

- Understand basic elements of visual design, technique, and media;
- are aware of emotional, psychological, and cognitive influences in perceptions of visuals;

- comprehend representational, explanatory, abstract, and symbolic images;
- apply knowledge of visuals in electronic media;
- are informed viewers, critics, and consumers of visual information;
- are knowledgeable designers, composers, and producers of visual information;
- are effective visual communicators; and
- are expressive, innovative visual thinkers and successful problem solvers.

This means it is important for 21st century graduates to be equipped with the necessary skills to create and interpret visual messages in order to be productive skilled workforce, who are able to respond to 21st century industry needs.

In this study, the use of creativity is imperative in solving the real world and relevant problems pertaining to Basotho fashion. However, a participatory learning, involvement and action are prerequisites for the development of understanding the activity at hand, ideas surrounding the activity, issues, traditions of making, and histories of meaning, which are all encountered through direct involvement and experience, ascertains Danvers (2003: 51). The creation of a genuinely Basotho fashion, using design probes, will present participants with opportunities to be critical thinkers and risk takers while exploring their culture to innovate new fashion.

2.4.3 Creativity and collaborative learning

In emphasising the importance of collaboration in students' projects, Snyder and McNeil (2008: 2) indicate that collaborative projects equip students with competitive advantage when entering the workforce, which seeks out graduates who are effective in collaborations and have teamwork skills. These skills are attainable while students are still learning. Mattelmäki (2006: 17) specifies that the objective of the facilitators in participatory projects is encouraging the designers' "empathy (someone involved in creative design), to connect knowledge and inspiration, to facilitate or support the teamwork", encouraging and drawing out new ideas while communicating and making decisions". Snyder

and McNeil (2008: 7) further affirm that those students who participate in collaborative projects “learn to discuss, and apply concepts of group dynamics, develop effective communication styles, and personality styles prior to engaging in a group experience”.

There are, however, some challenges in collaborative projects, for instance, students expressing the opinion that “they do not like working in groups due to the typical negative aspects, such as one student doing the majority of the work and other group dynamics” (Snyder and McNeil 2008: 7). In spite of these challenges, cooperative learning between a researcher and participants has proven successful and beneficial to participants where it has been applied. For instance, Corcoran and Sim (2009: 4), note that researchers who are most concerned with engaging students were at risk of becoming disengaged within the classroom. Students who were engaged in collaborative learning, at first believed that they were not academically able and were not willing to take part in visual art classroom. Using action research as a framework, the researcher worked with fifty students, aged between 16 and 18 years, over a period of three years. The researcher states that, as participants in the action research, students were able to assess the use of cooperative learning as a strategy for enhancing creativity. As a result, they developed the ability to process their own learning meta-cognitively, resulting in the development of self-regulated learning and improved perception towards collaborative learning (Corcoran and Sim 2009: 9). It was hoped that the study would reach similar outcomes for the project of appreciating aspects of Basotho culture and incorporating them in fashion design.

Since the study was based on a qualitative research approach and used participatory action research (PAR), the four participative steps of PAR (planning, action, reflection and evaluation) were fundamental in this collaborative project for progressively implementing the design probes in the creation of Basotho fashion. Creative methods were employed in education, which was embedded in the 5-D Cycle of AI. It was hoped that the focus on unstructured focus group interview, one aspect of data collection, would strengthen students and research participants’ teamwork, collaborative learning and individual and group reflection on techniques acquired for the implementation of the design probes and the

creation of the fashion items. To assist students with creative thinking techniques, I shared with them a lesson comprising of creative thinking techniques, namely mind mapping and juxtaposition. (See Appendix G: Creative thinking notes, p. 237.)

2.4.4 Fashion and identity

This study used theories of decolonisation and Afrofuturism as ways in which Basotho fashion identity could be re-imagined and re-created by using the three selected design probes. Kawamura (2005: 1, in citing Wolff 1993: 139), identifies fashion-ology as “a study of fashion, a sociological investigation of fashion, though not the study of dress or clothing. The investigation treated fashion as a system of institutions that produces the concept as well as the phenomenon of fashion”.

Fashion conveys a number of different social meanings. At a basic level, “clothing is the generic of raw materials of what a person wears” Kawamura (2005: 3). In English it is “termed fashion and ‘la mode’ in French and it stands out from the other words, such as clothes, garment, attire, garb, apparel and costume, which are often referred to in relation to fashion. Kawamura (2005: 3, citing *The New Oxford English Dictionary on Historical Principles* 1901), defines fashion as the “action and process of making, manner, a prevailing custom, a current usage, conventional usage in dress and mode of life” and it is mostly “associated with outward appearance and women”. Whereas Simmel (1957: 543) submits that fashion is “the satisfaction of the demand for social adaptation that feeds the desire for change and contrast”. Furthermore, fashion is said to be “a dynamic phenomenon that inextricably links aesthetics, culture, economics, and everyday social life and that its very nature signifies change” (Kaiser, Nagasawa and Hutton 1995: 1). As such, “ambivalence and style change constitute a kind of ongoing interaction that assures the continuity of the fashion process” (Kaiser *et al.* 1995: 7).

Kaiser *et al.* (1995: 2, citing Davis 1988: 24) states that “fashion changes in the context of ambivalences and emphasises the importance of fashion as it gives

form, shape and colour to tensions or instabilities". However, Kaiser *et al.* (1995: 4, citing Garrison 1982), explain ambivalence as "transforming the unknown into a knowable opposite, as belonging to symptom, symbol and context". Therefore, it is worth noting the importance of cultural elements which identify the Basotho nation since their formation, namely the use of Kobo (blanket). The blanket plays a key role in the culture and grooming of Basotho. It serves to identify Basotho nation as their traditional attire and they take pride in wearing a blanket regardless of the season.

The Basotho nation have been wearing blankets since they have been recognised as a nation. Prior to the arrival of the first Missionaries and white trade settlers, as previously stated, Basotho used animal skins to make blankets and dresses, mostly out of cow, sheep and goat's tanned skins, whereas the royals used wild animal skins, the likes of leopards, crocodiles, tigers, deer and lions (Mokorosi, 2017: 49). As stated, colonialism brought about change with a sense of modernity and Basotho adopted western blanket. To influence Basotho to adopt the blanket, the white settlers designed a *Seanamarena* which incorporated *Litema* and other ethnic art as its main feature.

The blanket ties together all activities of Basotho culture. For instance, it is used as part of a daily attire by the Kings and Chiefs, members of royal family and by the general public. It is worn for various festivities, namely: mourning; a mourning wife or husband wears a blanket. Funerals: most attendants and the woman or a man who has lost a loved one wears a blanket. Also, the deceased used to be buried wrapped in a cow's skin, as being his or her a blanket, and post funerals, a blanket is worn as part of morning attire for a woman called *thapo*. When a woman completes a set mourning period, she receives a new blanket or blankets as a gift and also as a new attire, which she can wear at any given time (Basko 1981: 25).

The blanket is worn during initiation ceremonies for both men and women, as a symbol of adulthood for the initiates, it is worn by girls who are promised in marriage and it is also worn by newly married men (*Mokhoenyana*) and women (*Ngoetsi*), but mostly by women, as a sign of respect for the father-in-law.

Furthermore, it is used by pregnant women to wrap their waist and tummy to protect the unborn baby and to provide warmth. Upon birth of the child, a blanket is also used by women to carry their young ones on their backs for nurturing, protection, soothing and also to provide warmth (Basko 1981: 25). I also argue that the use of less explored aspects of culture can assist Basotho to keep up with the ever-changing landscape of fashion while maintaining those aspects of its identity. Figure 2.1 below is a demonstration of modernised design for a Basotho blanket. This design is different from the blankets which were introduced by the colonisers. It further indicates the need for a re-imagined and re-created fashion for Lesotho.



Figure 2.1: Lerato la Basotho blanket (Love of Basotho blanket) (Apara 2021)

2.5 The role of fashion education in transforming Basotho fashion

According to Agarwal (2021: 145), fashion education is important in shaping the mindsets of the students and it helps them to deal with a set of issues within fashion in a constructive and systematic manner. Fashion education empowers students with knowledge and necessary skills to keep abreast with latest trends, to play a vital role in a society as future fashion designers, to make informed decisions regarding the industry that they are to practice in and to contribute meaningfully to socio- economy of their societies. Fashion design is a practice-

based programme that relies more on learning by doing rather than theoretical knowledge. As a result, practical projects are often created and implemented to help students learn problem-solving approaches in garment design (Agarwal 2021: 157).

Fashion education is emphasised since this study is based on students' learning about aspects Basotho culture. The cultural aspects, which are used as design probes, will be used as a source of inspiration for the intended fashion collection to be produce by myself and the participants. Similar projects to this one has been undertaken by institutions in an effort to 'broaden awareness and understanding of training teachers that a visual subject like art, craft and design can be a vehicle through which learning and teaching can be enhanced by working as an artist and teacher of art, states Mindel (2018: 178). The project was participatory between students and training teachers. In the course of the project, students were interviewed, attended class presentations and critiques (crits) while 'positioning themselves within the ongoing debate around the teaching and learning of art, craft and design in schools. Students brought with them richness, breadth and depth to the project and they became aware of how this impacted on their emerging practice as art, craft and design students (Mindel 2018: 180). Fashion education is engaging in nature and as a lecturer, it is my hope that through this project, participants will explore their culture, develop their ideas and contribute meaningfully to recreate Basotho fashion.

2.6 Culture and design

One's familiarity with culture is essential in the creative process of designing clothing as it forms a desirable new lifestyle through the means of storytelling. Most designers who create a novel fashion design would have "learned from the past results in fashion trends and inherent flow" (Tian and Hu 2016: 17). In an interview with Cable News Network popularly known as CNN, two Nigerian fashion designers, namely: Adeju Thompson and Daniel Obasin, emphasised the importance of drawing inspiration from communicating one's culture. Adeju Thompson indicates that "historically, when people wore Adire (Yoruba tied and dyed fabric) it really was like a form of storytelling, and the motifs can

communicate where a person was born, or that they are in mourning” (CNN 2020). Daniel Obasin said that his “work has always been about the fact that African stories are best told by Africans. We all have different experiences, but in all that diversity and under that difference, we still have things that connect all of us together” (CNN 2020). In this study, the intention was to communicate and tell the Basotho story through fashion using the three identified design probes as the means of communicating and expressing a re-created collection that identifies Basotho fashion in the context of Lesotho. A brief overview of the cultural background account of Litsoejane, Litema and Balisana follows.

2.6.1 Cultural background of Litsoejane

Litsoejane dress and grooming consisted of the following: a) a dress (made of softened sheep skin) to cover their private body parts; b) a reed mask (veil) made of straw which was shielding them from view as a symbol of modesty and regarded as protection from badness; c) likholokoane, a three-tier layer of bands/hoops made of straw, around the waist and tummy; and d) body painting on their bodies (Figure 2.2).



Figure 2.2: Bale in their full initiation attire (Mokorosi 2017: 78)

The initiation of young people has been a long-standing tradition especially for men. From the early 1900s men and women used to be initiated as a way of preparing them for adulthood and educating them about integrity, good habits and what it takes to be a family man or woman. Above all, they were taught about

their origins, traditions, culture and heritage of the Basotho nation. Women initiation rites were also believed to increase the fertility of the initiates. In the early 1900, women's initiation was subjected to scrutiny by white missionaries, and it was seen as barbaric and unchristian; as such it was no longer practised much except in certain rural areas (Van Wyk, 1998: 116). However, of late the initiation tradition is continuing.

Mokorosi (2017: 78) and Van Wyk (1998: 117) explain the dress and grooming of Bale as follows. They wore a dress (dress made of softened sheep skin) to cover their private body parts, a reed mask (veil) made of straw which shielded them from view as a symbol of modesty and was regarded as protection from badness, and around the waist and tummy girdle they wore Likhlokoane (a three-tier sort of bands/hoops made of straw) (Figures 2.2 and 2.3). They would go through the initiation practice bare breasted and bare footed. However, married women covered their breasts with a triangular soft sheep skin cover dyed red. Also, they painted their bodies with a white ochre called Phepha, which symbolized calm and purity, while they drew Litema patterns on their legs (Van Wyk, 1998: 119).



Figure 2.3: Thethana (fringed skirt) (Apara 2021)

Litsoejane were taken through several phases of initiation as follows:

1st phase: They would learn about womanhood, including sex;

2nd phase: This focused on feminine skills like weaving grass mats, making pots and housekeeping;

3rd phase: This was based on costumes and architecture of the Basotho house (Van Wyk 1998: 117).

Towards the end of the rite, Litsoejane would walk long distances from one village to the next village asking for money or food in exchange for traditional music and dances which they learned as part of the initiation rite. En route to the villages they were taught about a variety of plants and their health benefits for humans and animals (Mokorosi, 2017: 78). Upon graduation they now qualified to dress as adult women; they wore Mose oa Khomo (a semi-circular dress made of softened cow skin, which extended at the back and was tied in the front. The dress was dyed red with Letsoku (red ochre). In front they wore a skirt called Thethana, which was made of small beads, also dyed with Letsoku. It was a skirt which reached above the knee. They also wore beads and leather adornments (Riep 2011: 129). Beadwork was mostly a responsibility of old women, however, nowadays it is the responsibility of the female family member with Tsoejane at initiation school.

2.6.2 Cultural background of Litema

Litema are colourful cultural designs painted or engraved on a wet plaster on exterior mud walls using a mixture of soil and soft cow dung. Litema are mostly the responsibility of a woman to beautify the exterior of the house (National Teachers Training College 1976: 2). De Lange (2003) and Van Wyk (1998: 78) note that the most skilled Litema artist would squat and sketch her intentions in the dust, and once she reached a conclusion on a design, was then sent out to work, sometimes in the company of other women who generously participated by giving advice and moral support, and that this is used as an opportunity for women to get-together socially and share ideas. The term “Litema” is derived from the word “lema”, meaning “to plough”, since early Litema patterns were inspired by the ploughed patterns on a field (Andersson and Sovré 1997: 38 and Van Wyk, 1998: 78) as shown in Figure 2.4.

According to Van Wyk (1998: 81), women use four techniques in the application of mural decoration of Liteima, namely:

- a) engraved patterns;
- b) mural painting;
- c) relief moulding;
- d) mosaic.



Figure 2.4: Ploughed field showing tema (De Lange 2003)

Liteima mural designs (Figure 2.5) were given names based on environmental influence, for instance, Lekoko, Lithebe, Litepo, Moseme, Moriri (animal skin, shields, spider 098765 3-web, reed mat and hair), to name but a few (Van Wyk 1998: 90).

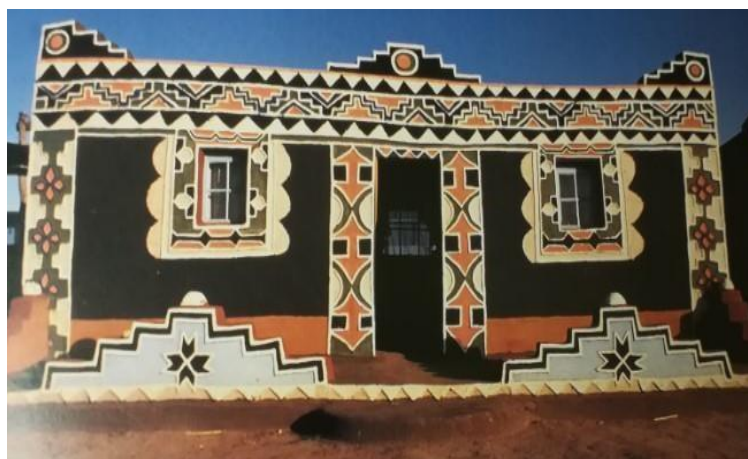


Figure 2.5: An application of Liteima on the wall of a house (Van Wyk 1998: 81)

As with Basotho women, Ndebele women have decorated their homes with stylised mural designs over the years. According to De Jager and Loots (2003: 21) house painting has been a practice by women (Figure 2.6) in the same way as in Basotho culture. It is a practice passed on from mothers to daughters. The teaching of mural painting is carried out during women initiation, while the initiates are isolated and taught womanhood, married life and other traditional elements of Ndebele culture. Ndebele women have extended the traditional art to painting of household elements and beadwork.



Figure 2.6: Dr. Esther Mahlangu applying her famous art on the exterior wall of a house (Stielau and Woodward 2015: 14)

2.6.3 Cultural background of Balisana

The life of Molisana oa Mosotho (Mosotho herdboys) starts off from the early age of five upwards (Figure 2.7). At that early age, a shepherd starts by herding or taking care of sheep or goats which, he herds not far from his house, while under the supervision of an adult male (Van Wyk 1998: 56 and Mokorosi, 2017: 53). As the boy grows older, he is tasked with herding cows out in the field, and he would leave home very early in the morning and come back in the evening. Usually, the animals are housed in Lesaka (Kraal) overnight. From the time when a young boy starts herding the flock, he wears a blanket and holds a stick, which he uses to direct his flock. He wears a Mokorotlo hat to shield himself from the scorching sun in summer and the woollen Balaclava hat in winter, as well as socks and gumboots (Figure 2.8).

It was regarded as a compulsory tradition for boys from the early teenage years to attend initiation school where they are taught to be future husbands, fathers, providers, and protectors of their villages. Makoloane (male initiates) are taught how to compose traditional songs and poems, to make musical instruments and to perform traditional dances as well as hunting (Mokorosi 2017: 97).



Figure 2.7: Shepherd herding the flock from a young age (Mosothoane 2020)



Figure 2.8: Shepherds herding the flock at a mature age (AIM International 2015)

The skills they learn at initiation school help to shape them as strong shepherds, who live most of their lives out in the open, mostly at Motebong (cattle post) in

hot and extremely cold weather (Figure 2.9). They are able to compose songs, poems and whistles that they sing for their flock and use as a form of communication with the flock. The majority of the shepherds would not have the privilege of attending formal schools because they would drop out to go to initiation school for few months.



Figure 2.9: Motebo (cattle post) (Desert 2023)

When they had graduated from the initiation they would not be allowed to enrol back at formal schools, which were mostly run by white missionaries who viewed initiation as barbaric for both men and women (Van Wyk 1998: 116). To make a living, a shepherd would herd his family's flock or be hired by a family with flocks, and he would be paid with a sheep, a goat or a cow per month, which would depend on the wealthiness of the family that a shepherd would be working for. This is how a man would eventually accumulate wealth for himself and position himself to marry and start a family.

A Mosotho artist called Teboho Mochaoa (stage name Morena Leraba) was once a shepherd and lived the lifestyle of a shepherd (Figure 2.10). Morena Leraba originated from Mafeteng district in Lesotho. From the background of a herd boy, he also learned to compose music and poems which assisted him to grow as an international musician. Kriger (2017: 1) states that "Leraba's lyrics are rooted in the folklore passed on by older generations and in his experience of working as a shepherd". Like any other young Mosotho, he has also been influenced by the

Western culture; even though he sings in Sesotho, his music is infused with Hip-hop, Kwaito and electronic music.



Figure 2.10: Leraba in his heydays as a shepherd (Leraba 2022)

What has drawn my attention about Leraba is his stage attire (Figures 2.11). He is popularly known as a shepherd and dresses exactly the way Basotho shepherds dress: blanket, stick, woollen Balaclava hat, gumboots, and several socks folded above the boots. This distinctive look and original genre of music has gained him popularity and has turned attention to shepherds as source of inspiration for fashion. Gronow (2020: 106) points out that “fashion operates predominantly in the modern differentiated and individualized society where stronger traditional ties that bind people with their social groups have lost much of their hold on their members”. In accord with Gronow’s opinion, I am of the opinion that if a focus group, as has been identified for this study, were to inquire and appreciate the likes of Leraba and his stage attire they would be in a position to generate innovative ideas inspired by shepherds to which society has not been paying much attention.



Figure 2.11: Leraba in his stage attire (Leraba 2022)

The balaclava worn by Balisana has also been seen a lot recently in recent times, especially during the COVID-19 pandemic as a winter accessory for men and women. Balaclava has also graced the runways, worn with gumboots (Figure 2.12). I argue that the look has been inspired and popularized by the Basotho Balisana and through the international performances of Morena Leraba.



Figure 2.12: Balaclava and gumboot at the fashion ramps of Fall Winter 2022 (Loewe 2022)

2.6.4 Textile design and African culture

Africans have long been identified by different textiles which convey their ethnic art and are a representative of their environment and livelihood. Most African fabrics have geometric designs in earthly tones and bright colours. Basotho are no different from the rest of the African continent. For instance, the design of Seshoeshoe fabric has been inspired mainly by Litema and other ethnic art, whereas the design of Seanamarena blanket has been inspired by animals, agriculture, lifestyle and organic plants which are commonly found in Lesotho, for example, the aloe (Mokorosi 2017: 40). The transformation of the designs on a fabric can convey one's creative and artistic abilities or communicate one's cultural background. This art sometimes conveys individual creativity on different circumstances and other hidden values that come together to exemplify the designer's abstract art. Debeli, Yuan and Jiu (2013: 230) describe the design of textiles as an "art of putting things around us artistically on paper and it's then transformed to fabric, it requires the ability to arrange related objects such as lines, angles, spaces, shapes, colours, texture".

2.6.5 Similarities and links among the chosen cultural themes

There are strong similarities and links among the chosen design probes mentioned above, including the blanket that ties them together. The costume that Litsoejane wear runs parallel to Basotho architecture in that Likholokoane resembles and it is derived from Seotloana, a curved reed fence (Figure 2.13).



Figure 2.13: A hut fenced with Seotloana made of reed (Reid 2019)

Van Wyk (1998: 119) states that the purpose of Seotloana is to screen the house from the public view and to protect it against bad weather. Likhologoane are circular, meaning that they have no beginning or end; as such it depicts that a family, as part of the community, is eternal as long there is procreation. As stated earlier, Litsoejane would have learned the art of Litema drawings as part of their initiation training; they also portray this art by applying it on their bodies during the initiation and upon graduating. Both male and women use Lesira as part of the attire during the initiation training, which also serves as family protection medicinally and from any evil. Cheng (2018:) wrote that everything has the potential of being utilised to create new fashion, or even to be fashion in itself. Fashion creativity originates in organised design, as well as in every part of society. The chosen themes also have the potential of inspiring new and innovative fashion.

2.7 Traditional education and initiation training

The cultural practices discussed above would have been learned in traditional Basotho education, usually in secret initiation ceremonies. Collins English dictionary (2023) defines initiation as follows:

The act or process by which a person become a member, often involving special ceremonies or the often secret ceremony initiating new members into an organization. Formal admission or acceptance into an organization or club, adult status in one's community or society, the ceremonies, or rites of admission...

Traditional initiation schools form part of an informal education system where a young man or a young woman acquires education from leaders in a society, parents, family members and peers, often through word of mouth: "A young individual learns attitudes, values, skills and knowledge from daily experiences" that develops an individual to function within a society where he/she resides. Often such education is "not present in either formal or informal education" (Melish 2005: 3; Achi 2021: 2).

Traditional Basotho education is passed from generation or from person to person and it incorporates: the way clothes are made and worn, construction of

houses, household chores, wealth and health of animals, marital activities including motherhood and raising children, to make cooking and eating utensils, to name but the few. When relating to indigenous knowledge and skills which are categorised under traditional education, Pitikoe (2016: 78) includes arts and crafts, poetry, poems and songs. Whereas Achi (2021: 1) includes beliefs, facts and customs of a nation under study as part of curriculum for traditional education.

Highlighting the importance of initiation training, Rasing (2021: 57) indicates that in Zambia, initiation training aims to change a female from girl into woman, to learn all aspects of womanhood and motherhood. “This includes many aspects of life, norms and values such as food taboos, how to dress properly, personal hygiene, menstruation, how to deal with her future husband and in-laws, sexuality, agriculture, and other aspects of society” (Rasing 2021: 57). The Bhaca people, from Eastern Cape province in South Africa, believe that “children’s incorporation into their society is highly dependent on and achieved through initiation schools” (Makaula and Lumbwe 2014: 167). The following data collected from community elders and participants bears the facts of how traditional education plays a major role within initiation of Litsoajane, development of Litema and initiation of young men, who would often transit into Balisana. The initiation of males and females has been a long-standing practice among Basotho. For females, it is an official practice which is grounded on female education and transition from childhood to womanhood (Mokorosi 2017: 77).

2.8 Conclusion

This chapter has shown how fashion in Lesotho has until now reflected the impositions of colonial cultures rather than the traditional customs and time-honoured practices of the Basotho nation. It has suggested that Basotho fashion needs not only to be decolonised but to be revitalised and renewed by looking at traditional motifs and themes and rendering these in exciting new configurations, guided by the principles of Afrofuturism. It has been suggested that fashion education, in particular, the piloting of new design models based on projecting traditional motifs into the future, can assist in decolonising and revitalising

Basotho fashion. As the previous chapter suggests, this can be done by stimulating students' creativity by use of appreciative inquiry in a collaborative learning project.

This is why the aim of the research was formulated as investigating the use of appreciative inquiry to develop innovative Basotho fashion by probing these aspects of Basotho culture: Litsoejane (women initiates), Litema (motifs/geometric patterns) and Balisana (shepherds). This was to be done by using these aspects in design probes to create a fashion collection which showcased examples of the innovative fashion items arising from the process. The following objectives were formulated so as to achieve the research aim: To investigate how the 5-D Cycle of Appreciative Inquiry as applied to chosen design probes could be used by fashion students and their lecturer to produce innovative Basotho fashion designs.

In carrying out the 5-D Cycle of Appreciative Inquiry, to establish:

- What indigenous knowledge about Litsoejane (women initiates), Litema (motifs/geometric patterns) and Balisana (shepherds) Basotho elders could provide for the design probes;
- What typically Basotho fashion elements could be seen to emerge from the process of appreciative inquiry as applied to the design probes;
- The result/s of incorporating these elements into a fashion collection in terms of producing innovative Basotho fashion designs; and
- The response of Limkokwing community members to the showcasing of the fashion collection.

It was thought that achieving the above objectives would enable the researcher to draw conclusions about using the 5-D Cycle of Appreciative Inquiry to conceptualise and re-create a re-imagined yet culturally inspired Basotho fashion collection, as well as the implications of this process for using Afrofuturism to decolonise Fashion Education. The next chapter describes the research design used in an attempt to fulfil the above aim and objectives.

Chapter 3: Research design

3.1 Introduction

Chapter 3 provides an overview of the research design used in this study as well as the techniques used to collect and analyse data. In order to produce well-structured and practical based research, formulated from the design probes, it is imperative to employ a well-fitting research design. The study was qualitative in nature. It involved participants' who were also facilitators and co-designers. I chose to shape the study using the theoretical frameworks of Appreciative Inquiry and Participation Action Research. The research was embedded in the study of three design probes, namely; Litsoejane, Litema and Balisana, to recreate Basotho fashion. To put design probes in perspective, they are small scale objects, assignments or cultural artefacts which are meant be to provoke specific questions with an expected creative outcome in mind (Wallace, McCarthy, Wright and Olivier 2013: 1). In this study, design probes were interpreted creatively instead of being used to solve a problem. They were aimed at intriguing participants' minds to express and explicate their experiences in order to come up with creative concepts that would speak to a new Basotho fashion. Data was collected from primary sources by means of semi-structured interviews and through a practical research project with participants, with the implementation of the 5-D Cycle of Appreciative Inquiry. Data was analysed and conclusions were drawn from the feedback from the Limkokwing community following the showcase of the collection based on the three design probes.

3.2 Research design: qualitative research

The qualitative research approach used here is multi-method in focus and involved an interpretative and naturalistic approach to its subject matter as the researcher attempted to make sense of phenomena or interpret these in terms of the meanings the participants bring to them (Aspers and Corte 2019: 5; Macdonald 2012: 34; Jason and Glenwick 2016: 14). Denzin and Lincoln (2018: 43) define qualitative research as:

A situated activity that locates the observer in the world. Qualitative research consists of a set of interpretive, material practices that make the world visible. These practices transform the world. They turn the world into a series of representations, including field notes, interviews, conversations, photographs, recordings, and memos to the self.

A qualitative research approach can be used in the collection of a variety of empirical data from various phenomena, namely: personal experiences, life story, interview, observational, historical, interactional, and visual texts (Denzin and Lincoln 2005:2, cited in Aspers and Corte 2019: 5). Qualitative methods “give attention to the iterative nature of processes and knowledge, as well as the standpoint of both the researcher and participant in the production and discovery of such knowledge” (Jason and Glenwick 2016: 14). Qualitative research involves methods and approaches, such as: participatory inquiry, interviewing, participant observation, visual methods, and interpretive analysis (Denzin and Lincoln 2018: 41). It is noteworthy that some of these approaches are embedded in this study.

The explanation of a qualitative research approach characterises the manner in which the study is intended, in that while working with students I was in the position to interview them as a focus group in each phase of the 5-D Cycle. The interviews helped to establish students’ foreknowledge about the three selected design probes, the role that education should play in creatively unfolding and re-imagining the design probes. In addition, I incorporated the participatory steps of PAR, namely: planning, action, reflection and evaluation, to participate with students to discover new knowledge and cultural meanings pertaining to aspects of Basotho culture in their use in the design process. The 5-D Cycle of AI, namely: definition, discovery, dream, design, and destiny was also used in conjunction with PAR for a step-by-step progress of the project. Participation with students also gave me an opportunity to observe and document how the project was developing, so that in the end I could process and interpret the findings of the study.

3.3 Participatory action research (PAR)

Appreciative Inquiry is known as an offshoot of Participatory Action Research, therefore before focusing on AI specifically, I consider PAR more generally. PAR

is a framework, which originates from the work of Kurt Lewin (Macdonald 2012: 37) and Morales (2016: 158). According to McGarvey (2007: 1) PAR:

...promotes positive change as it produces objective data, building knowledge that communities can put to use in strengthening themselves, produces evidence about an ongoing process of change and promotes learning among the people closest to change, it can ignite a cycle of inquiry that is participatory and committed to action.

A participatory form of inquiry was selected for the study because it incorporates the participative steps of planning, action, reflection and evaluation that are important for the development of the study and these steps were incorporated in the 5-D Cycle of AI as part of the creation process using the three design probes. The development of the project is categorised into three phases based on the three participatory steps of PAR (phase 1 to phase 3). Each phase carries the 5-D Cycle of AI and shows how the project progressively unfolded progressively.

PAR, as a research method, is participatory in nature, and in this study it involves myself as researcher and a group of students as research participants, from the conception of the research project through the 5-D Cycle of AI categorised under three phases of PAR for data collection, analysis and interpretation of the findings. As such as a lecturer, a researcher and a co-participant I have to relinquish my authority in class while at the time taking care to maintain order and to ensure that the study runs as smoothly as possible.

Lawson, Paringi, Pyles, Jurkowski and Bozlak (2015: ix) highlight one of the priorities of PAR as enabling “democratic participation in real-world problem-solving by local stakeholders who typically lack formal research training and credentials when the research begins”. Participants were students who had the basic knowledge of research, but they were in a position to solve real-world problems under my guidance and facilitation as researcher.

3.4 Appreciative inquiry

Appreciative Inquiry was chosen to frame this study because I found it necessary to take into consideration the value of Basotho’s diverse culture and traditions.

Together with the students, having elicited from the community elders the core values of the three design probes, we had a positive dialogue to effect a change by appreciating the design probes as sources of inspiration for Basotho fashion.

Appreciative inquiry (AI) was developed by David L. Cooperrider and Suresh Srivastva and was originally intended to contribute to organisational change and management thought. However, AI is not only confined to organisations and communities, but has also been used in college and school settings. Macpherson (2015: 2) shows that AI can assist in locating the past and present experiences to build the future. When working with AI, it is vital that the people involved start off with the positive mind-set and keep that focus as they search for what works in the context of its application. It could certainly be used in school settings to mitigate challenges and improve the systems that may go beyond the school setting as used in this study.

Cooperrider, Whitney and Stavros (2008: 3) explain AI as follows: “Appreciation as a concept is the art of appreciation and valuing those factors that give life to a group”. AI “invites people to participate in dialogues and share stories about their past and present achievements, assets, unexplored potentials, innovations, strengths, elevated thoughts, opportunities, traditions, and distinctive competencies, expressions of wisdom, and visions of valued and possible futures” (Cooperrider, Whitney and Stavros 2008: 3). AI may “involve interviewing and storytelling to draw out the best of the past, to understand what one wants more of, and to set the stage for effective visualisation of the future” (Cooperrider, Whitney and Stavros 2008: 30). AI gives “way to inquiry, imagination, and innovation, and [promotes the idea] that every community has many untapped and rich accounts of the positive, what people talk about as past, present, and future capacities” (Cooperrider and Whitney 2005: 8).

Appreciative Inquiry was chosen because, as a methodology, it was consistent with the aim of the study, that is, to use inspiration gained from the three selected design probes for the participants to create innovative yet culturally relevant fashion items. The study involved the interviews, storytelling by the community elders, learn about the unexplored cultural aspects of Basotho, the past and

present. After that, we used the three design probes to innovate Basotho fashion in a manner that Basotho might seamlessly identify with the design probes as their well-known cultural practices.

3.4.1 The 5-D cycle of appreciative inquiry

The 5-D cycle of appreciative inquiry was developed out of the 4-D cycle of appreciative inquiry (see Figure 3.1).

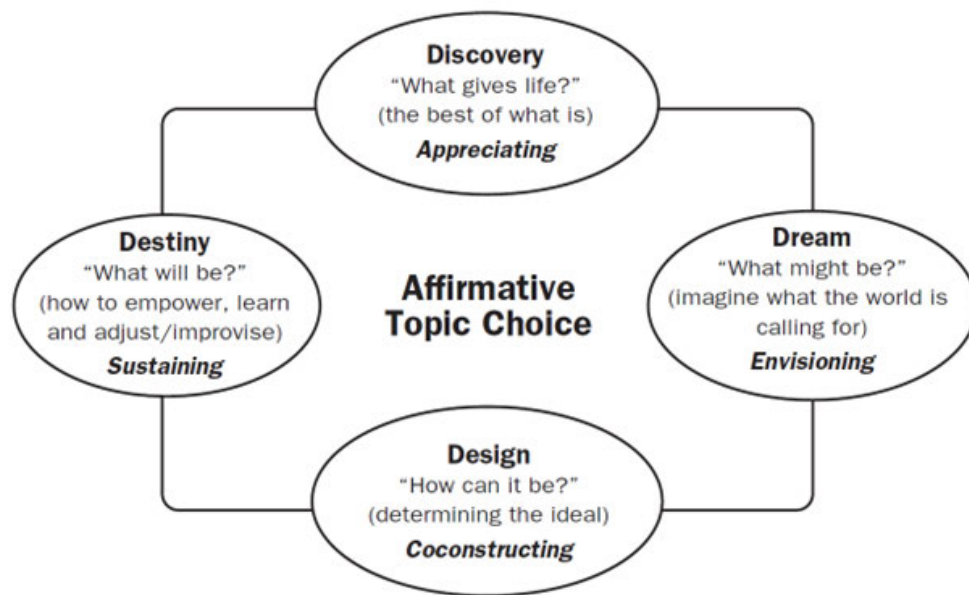


Figure 3.1: The 4-D Cycle of Appreciative Inquiry (from Cooperrider, Whitney and Stavros 2008: 3)

Stavros, Godwin and Cooperrider (2015: 103) show that the 4-D- cycle has been used mostly to describe the appreciative Inquiry process. However, with time, in organisation development there was a:

...conversation on defining the purpose of how and why Appreciative Inquiry will be used, resulting in addition of “fifth D, Define, to center the model to cover what Organisational Development practitioners typically call the ‘contracting phase of the process’. Define cycle guides the question: What generative topic do we want to focus on together? Define cycle is meant to reframe or clarify a pressing organisational issue into opportunity areas for further inquiry Stavros, Godwin and Cooperrider (2015: 103).

The 5-D Cycle of Appreciative Inquiry is narrated as a process of positive change and cycle of activity that starts by engaging members of an organisation or community, as participants, in a set of interviews and deep dialogue about strengths, resources, and capabilities that the community possess. The process then moves participants through a series of activities focused on envisioning bold possibilities and lifting generating life centric dreams for the future. From there, it asks participants to create propositions that might guide their future together. And finally, it involves the formation of teams to carry out the work needed to realise the new dream and designs for the future (Cooperrider and Whitney 2005: 15). According to Stavros, Godwin and Cooperrider (2015: 103) the 5-D cycle offers generative yet practical scaffolding upon which Appreciative Inquiry work is often built. Each of the “Ds” represents different activities and generated dialogues which are meant to take place systematically throughout the organisational system. The 5-D Cycle of appreciative inquiry (Figure 3.2) was developed from the 4-D Cycle (Figure 3.1).

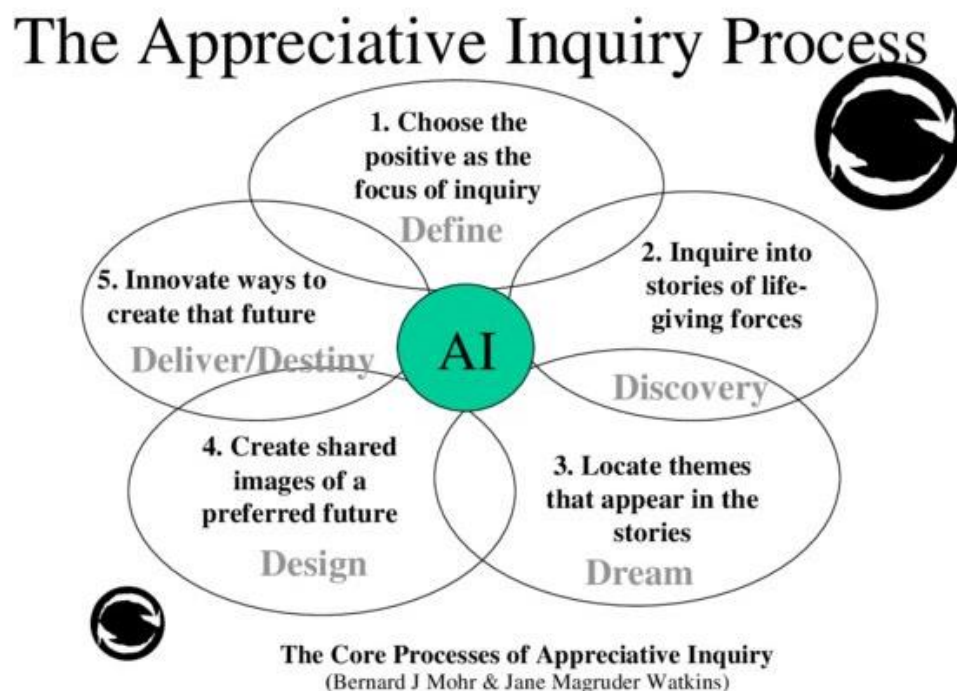


Figure 3.2: The 5-D cycle of appreciative inquiry process (from Watkins and Mohr 2001: 39)

It was conceptualised by Cooperrider, Whitney and Stavros (2008) as being able to “engage people at any or all levels to produce effective, positive change” (in Attia 2015: 186). The 5-D Cycle incorporates the elements of the PAR cycle: planning, action, reflection and evaluation (see Figure 3.3, which is an adaptation of Figure 3.2). Phase 1 is called Planning, and in this study it is based on discovering the prior knowledge about the three chosen probes. Phase 2 is Action, that carried out by myself and the student research participants. It incorporates the implementation of the information from the Phase 1. Phase 3 is the Reflection and Evaluation stage as it focused on finished products and documentation of the entire process.

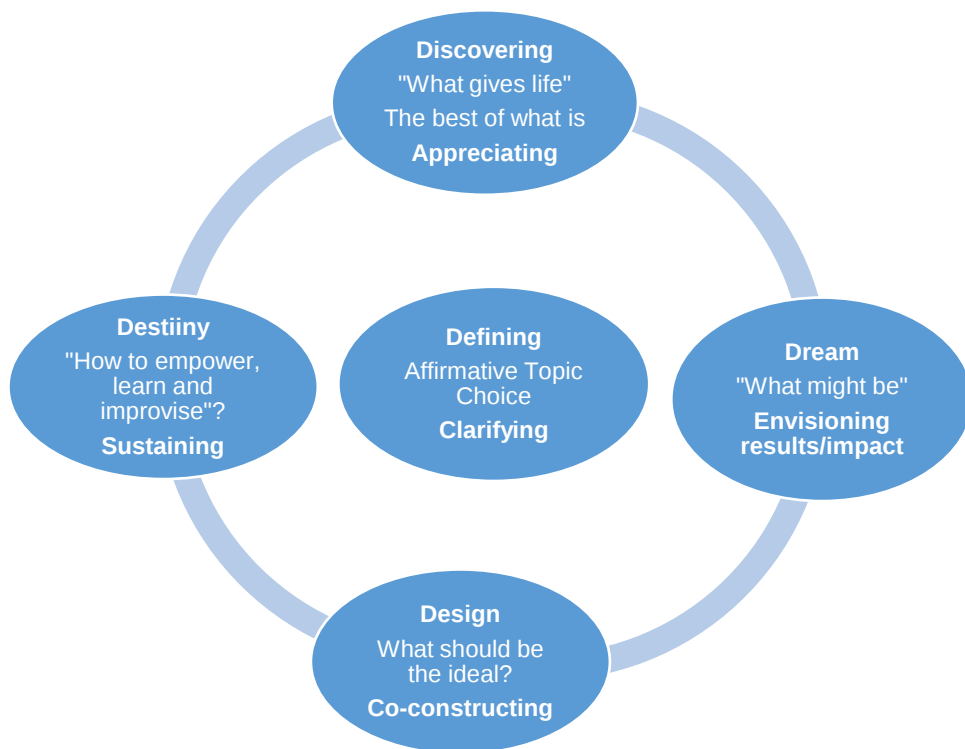


Figure 3.3: The adapted respective project 5-D of Appreciative Inquiry (Stavros, Godwin and Cooperrider 2015: 104)

Together, the students and I reflected on the lessons learned and evaluate the entire project and I also gave students feedback based of their contributions to the project. I presented the collection for further for evaluation and assessment by the supervisor for the purpose of this research study. It was hoped that the ensuing discussions, focus group interviews and the practical project between

myself and students might help them to appreciate the three selected design probes and other aspects of Basotho culture. Figure 3.3 is an adaptation of Figure 3.2, and speaks to a project that incorporates each step of 5-D Cycle and Participation action research's Cycles.

The project was timetabled such that we met once a week for a lecture of 4 hours (for practical work). Participants' consultations were arranged when the need arose outside of the timetable. Each participant worked on one outfit. However, I was aware of the challenges brought about by COVID-19 and lockdown regulations it imposed, as such I minimised contact sessions with participants as much as possible. Some elements of the project took place remotely at students' homes. For instance, students developed their designs at home and interviews happened virtually through teleconferencing and videoconferencing respectively, using Google classroom or WhatsApp platforms. Only pattern drafting and garment construction happened in the studios at Limkokwing University campus. The explanation and adaptation of 5-D Cycle is shown in Figure 3.4.

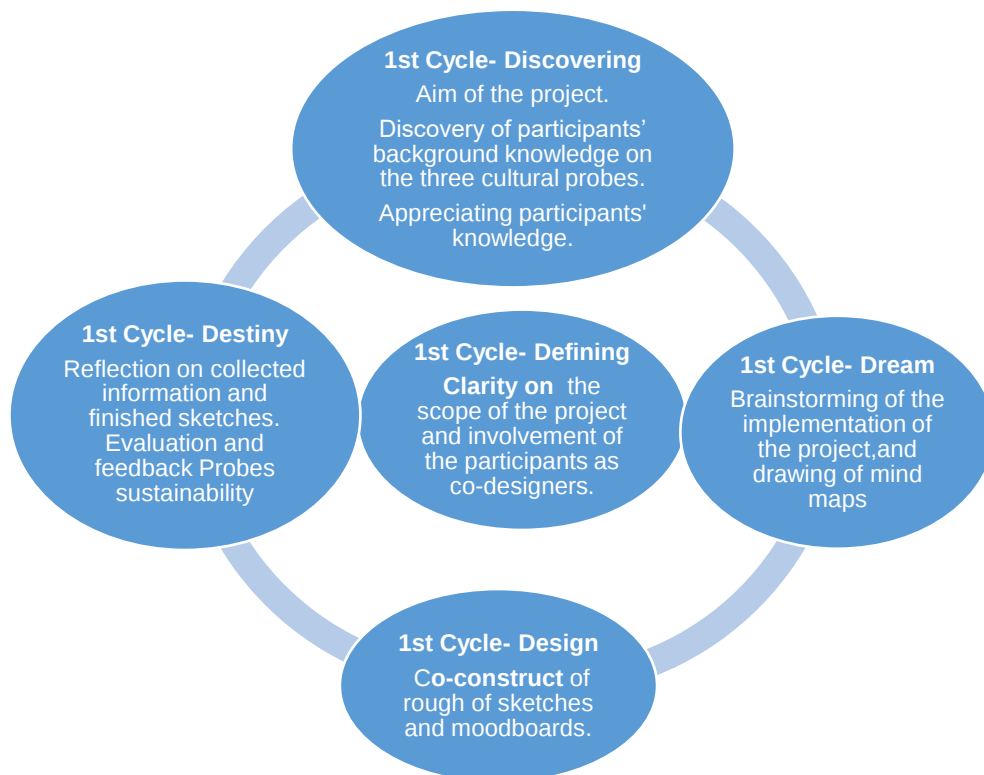


Figure 3.4: Adapted 5-D Cycle of Appreciative Inquiry for 1st phase (Stavros, Godwin and Cooperrider 2015: 104)

The cycles are categorised into phases according to how the project unfolded. The 5-D Cycle (Figure 3.4) is explained in the various phases as follows.

3.4.2 Phase 1: Research and planning

Definition is a first step of the cycle which affirms the topic or clarify the focus of inquiry (Cooperrider, Whitney and Stavros 2008: 6; Lewis 2016: 122; Attia 2015: 190). In this study, planning took place in Phase 1, based on discovering the prior knowledge about the three chosen probes, and I shared with the students the gathered information on the selected design probes. Figure 3.4 is an adaptation of Figure 3.2 and it summarises the activities of Phase 1 (see Figure 3.4).

Definition cycle took place as follows:

Task 1: As researcher, I briefed the student participants and communicated to them information about the project, its aims, expected project outcomes, roles and responsibilities. The participants were briefed using the Information Letter and the project brief during a briefing session. (See Appendix B: Gatekeepers' letters / letters of information and consent: students, pp. 186-187.)

Discovery is a broad cooperative search that appreciates the best from the current and the past. In its appreciation the method includes focus group and large group meetings and entails confirmatory conversations among peoples belonging to the same community (or school) (Cooperrider, Whitney and Stavros 2008: 6; Lewis 2016: 122; Attia 2015: 190). Discovery cycle rolled out as follows:

Task 1: It is at the discovery cycle where focus group interviews was held. The interviews were held once with each phase. At Phase 1 the interview was based on discovering the background knowledge of the three selected design probes from students. The task happened in week 1 contact for 1 hour and it took place through videoconferencing using google classroom or WhatsApp.

Task 2: I shared the researched information with the participants based

on the three design probes. The task happened in week 1 for 30 minutes of class and it took place through videoconferencing using google classroom or WhatsApp.

Dream entails the prospect of what might be in the future when people collectively explore, hope and dream, and visualise big, bold and beyond boundaries of what has been in the past that can be important and utilised for the future (Cooperrider, Whitney and Stavros 2008: 6; Lewis 2016: 122; Attia 2015: 190). During the Dream cycle in Phase 1 the practical roll out of the project was based on the information acquired from the first interviews and information sharing by myself as researcher. As practical activities are unfolding they are documented through photographs and note taking. The Dream cycle rolled out as follows:

Task 1: Brainstorming and the development of the mind maps on understanding of the selected design probes, served as the basis for design process. Task 1 activities took place in week 2 of contact session and development of mind maps was issued out to students as an assignment. Mind maps were handed in in week 3 by students to myself for guidance. The activities for Dream cycle ran for 4 hours and took place at students' homes. Students had the option of using the library at Limkokwing university and other libraries.

Design draws on what should be by focusing on the future activities that are taking place in large group forums or within a small group of people (Cooperrider, Whitney and Stavros 2008: 6, Lewis 2016: 122 and Attia 2015: 190). As practical activities are unfolding, they are documented through photographs and effective note taking, as part of data collection for interpretation of images and record keeping of practical activities of the project. The information was later used in analysis of the findings. The Design cycle unfolded as follows:

Task 1: In week 3 we developed mood boards created by using the design probes. Task 1 activities were issued in week 3 and were handed in on week 4. The activities for the Design cycle ran for 4 hours and students developed the mood boards at their respective homes.

Task 2: We developed rough sketches demonstrating the interpretation of the three design probes. It was planned that Phase 1 was scheduled for two weeks or two consecutive contact sessions. Task 2 activities were issued in week 3 as an assignment that was reviewed in week 4. Students sent rough sketches through WhatsApp or email for review. The activities for the Design cycle took place at students' homes.

Destiny is a series of stimulated actions that support ongoing learning and innovation of what the future was (Cooperrider, Whitney and Stavros 2008: 6, Lewis 2016: 122 and Attia 2015: 190). The Destiny cycle proceeded as follows:

Task 1: The cycle focused on group discussion about the information that was collected at that stage. The design sketches also had to be finished in week 4. Completion of review and feedback on mood boards took place at this stage. We came together for group discussions and reflection through videoconferencing using google classroom or WhatsApp. I also conducted a progress check on individual rough sketches sent by students via WhatsApp or email. The activities for Design cycle ran for four hours.

3.4.3 Phase 2: Action

Definition cycle unfolded as follows:

Task 1: Students were briefed, using a project brief, about the activities of phase 2, the aims and the expected outcomes. The briefing happened in week 5 for 30 minutes through videoconferencing using google classroom or WhatsApp.

Task 2: The group interview focused on what was discovered as the project was unfolding, the knowledge acquired by participants and information shared with students. The group interview focused on the use of the three design probes in the creation process. The task took place in week 5 for 2 hours through videoconferencing using google classroom or WhatsApp

Dream cycle developed as follows:

Task 1: Participants developed rough sketches into Illustrations and technical drawings. Task 1 activities were issued in week 5 and in week 6 I checked the progress for individual students and in week 7 the illustrations and technical drawings were submitted for review and guidance. The development of illustrations took place at students' home for 4 hours.

Design cycle involved the following:

Task 1: We developed the designs into working patterns. Task 1 activities were issued in week 7 and ran for 2 weeks or 2 contact sessions (week 7 and 8). The task took place in the Pattern drafting studio for 4 hours at Limkokwing university.

Task 2: We cut the fabric. Task 2 activities took place in week 9 and ran for 4 hours in the Pattern drafting studio at Limkokwing university.

Task 3: We constructed the garments. Task 3 activities ran in week 10. The task started in week 10 to week 14 and it took place in the Fashion studio for 4 hours per contact session at Limkokwing university.

Destiny cycle unfolded as follows:

Task 1: Students were assessed on creativity and interpretation of the re-created three design probes from design process to finish garments. The task started in week 15 to week 16 and took place at Limkokwing university.

3.4.4 Phase 3: Reflection and evaluation

Data were analysed from this phase. **Definition** cycle rolled out as follows:

Task 1: Using the project brief students were briefed about the activities of phase 3, the aims and the expected outcomes of reflection and evaluation. The briefing happened in week 16 for 30 minutes and it took place through videoconferencing using google classroom or WhatsApp

Discovery cycle rolled out as follows:

Task 1: There was a group interview which focused on reflection of the lessons learned about the project and evaluation of the outcomes of the project by research participants. Data analysis for Discovery cycle happened in week 16 for 2 hours through videoconferencing using google classroom or WhatsApp.

Dream cycle rolled out as follows:

Task 1: Students were given feedback on the tasks given. This task took place in week 17 for 2 hours through videoconferencing using google classroom or WhatsApp.

Task 2: As participants we prepared for the internal (Limkokwing) fashion show. The preparations started from week 17 for 4 hours. The task was carried out in the fashion studio at Limkokwing university.

Design cycle rolled out as follows:

Task 1: I documented the research discoveries of the three design probes. The task took place throughout the project.

Task 2: I arranged the findings and outcomes of the fashion items into themes under the three design probes. The task took place after the completion of the project. At this stage, the students and I had completed the collection.

Destiny cycle rolled out as follows:

Task 1: We presented and showcased the collection based on the design probes to Limkokwing community. The task took place in week 19, was aimed to run for 1 hour, and took place at Limkokwing University.

Task 2: We reflected on the entire outcomes of the project and I gave feedback to students based on project outcomes. We also evaluated how the project had unfolded, challenges met and discoveries made in appreciating the design probes and close off the research. The task ran in week 20 for two hours of class in the lecture room at Limkokwing University. Phase 3 activities are summarised in Figure 3.5.

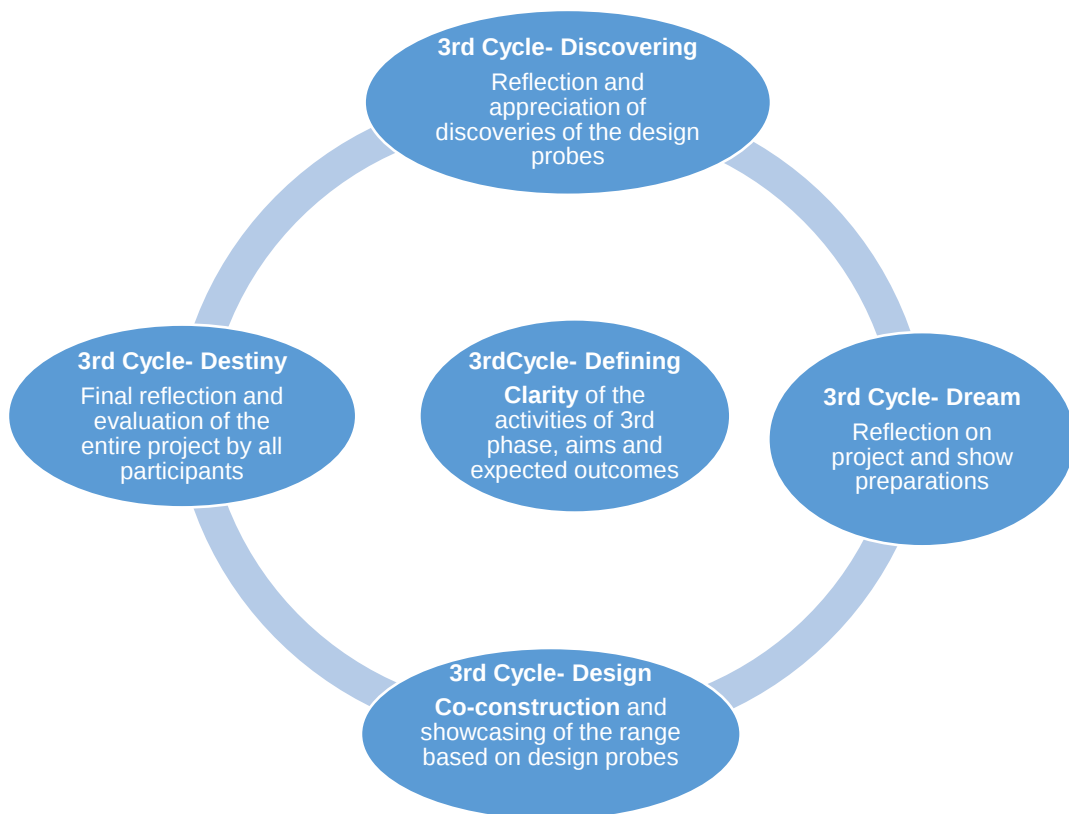


Figure 3.5: Adapted 5-D Cycle for 3rd phase (Stavros, Godwin and Cooperrider 2015: 104)

Evaluation and reflection meant that we had come to the completion of the project and collection of data based on interpretation of the design probes. This phase also saw the results of the finished project in a collection of garments, which were

presented to Limkokwing community by participants. The participants also had an opportunity to evaluate and reflect on the lessons learned about Basotho culture, and revival of the culture in the creation of innovative Basotho fashion.

3.5 Sampling

The study was intended to work with a specific group of students who would participate in the research on an ongoing basis. Also, the study incorporated two elders from the community who were conversant with indigenous culture. The community elders were interviewed and served as sources of primary data for the selected design probes. In selecting the elders to interview, I first inquired about areas and villages which continually practice women's initiation culture and those which have women who continually practice the application of Litema on their traditional houses. Once the villages were identified, I approached village Chief/s to seek out the leading elders for the design probes and request permission to interview the elders I found. (See Appendix A: Gatekeepers' letters / letters of information and consent: elders, p.171.)

If community elders in some villages identified did not want to participate in the interviews, I approached other villages identified, and followed a similar protocol. The community elders to be interviewed were presented with letter of information and consent written in Sesotho and English. To select the community elders and participants, I used a purposive approach, which is a form of non-probability sampling. Non-probability sampling is based on the expert's judgement in selecting the cases with a specific group or persons in mind and it may not be "appropriate if the goal is to have representative sample or to have a case that represents the entire population" (Neuman 2014: 273).

I carried out a pilot study with the student participants in 2022, a group of third year students registered at Limkokwing University of Creative Technology. I was teaching them a module called Fashion Design & Visualisation: Project Runway 2-Production. The project was intended to be additional work that students would undertake outside of the scheduled classes, and participation or non-participation would have no effect on scholarly performance. However, beginning of 2023, I

undertook the actual project with additional group of fashion students, namely; students who are registered for Diploma in Fashion and Apparel Design. I teach History of Fashion to this group of students and the research project was scheduled as part of a class which has an effect on scholarly performance. The involvement of the participants in the research project would have a bearing of 20% of semester assessment. Students who would opt for no participation were required to undertake the assignment for semester assessment but were not subjected to group interviews and their garment would not be showcased to Limkokwing community. By investigating Basotho culture and participating in the project it was hoped that it would inspire students to apply newly found inspiration in other areas of their study and practice.

The two community elders who were interviewed for the study were identified and approached based on their depth of knowledge about Basotho culture, especially the cultural aspects of the chosen design probes. The student participants who were recruited for the pilot study were seven in number, which was the number of students in that particular class, with ages ranging between ages 20-25. The second group of students which was recruited in the beginning of 2023 were sixty-five in number, which is also the number of students in that class. Their ages ranges between 19-25 years. The classes were recruited because they were at the advanced level of study, the pilot group was in year three of the fourth year of study, whereas the second group is in the second year of three years of study. At those levels they possessed a well-balanced academic experience for sourcing information through research, designing, pattern drafting and garment construction. These factors were key in the running of the project. Hence, the processes involved in the project might be beneficial for them in the sense that they might be operating as future fashion designers and the project might further present an opportunity for them to choose alternative cultural aspects of Basotho as sources of inspiration. Recruitment of students to participate in the project was flexible in that those who did not want to participate or withdraw at a later stage were not victimised in any way.

I was aware of the challenges brought about by COVID-19 and the likelihood that the inception of the project might take place amid COVID-19 restrictions.

Therefore, it was important to observe the regulations of COVID-19 set in Lesotho such as social distancing practices and mandatory mask.

3.6 Inclusion criteria

The inclusion criteria for this study were as follows:

- a) Community elders to be interviewed were identified based on their depth of knowledge about Basotho culture, especially the chosen design probes.
- b) Community elders had to be citizens of Lesotho.
- c) Community elders could be either Mosotho males or females.
- d) Community elders had to be over the age of 50.
- e) Participants had to agree to participate in the project.
- f) Student participants had to be registered at the Limkokwing University of Creative Technology at the Lesotho campus, and must be:
 - i. registered for the Bachelor of Arts Degree in Fashion Design and Retailing programme and would be undertaking the module,
 - ii. at third year level of their studies.
 - iii. over the age of 18.
- g) The student participants had to be registered at Limkokwing University of Creative Technology at the Lesotho campus, and must be:
 - i. Registered for Diploma in Fashion and Apparel Design and also be undertaking History of Fashion module.
 - ii. At their second year of their studies.
 - iii. Over the age of 18.

Note: The criteria were applicable to all students in that particular class regardless of their nationality, race, disability or gender.

3.7 Data collection method

Primary data refers to data “collected by the researcher”, and secondary data, to data “collected and archived or published by others” (Schensul 2008: 232). In this study, primary data was collected from the structured interviews with community elders and the semi-structured focus group interviews with participants.

Secondary data was sourced from libraries, Internet, Morija Archives, artifacts and news articles.

3.7.1 Interviews with community elders

Primary data were collected by means of semi-structured interviews from community elders in the Sesotho language. (See Appendix C: Interview questions for elders, in Sesotho with English translation, pp. 188-190.) For the semi-structured interviews, the set of questions that were prepared served only to guide the interviews. The interviewee had the opportunity and flexibility to answer the questions with depth. Adhabi and Anozie (2017: 89) explain that the “implementation of questions will be dependent on how the interviewee responds to the question or topics laid across by the researcher”. To collect in-depth data for the study about the chosen design probes from the community elders, the semi-structured interview was the most appropriate since it does not have a rigid adherence to the process. Information and knowledge from the elders’ interviews served as the foundation of the project in terms of being used in the design probes.

It must be emphasised that initiation is a secret rite of passage, and that I fully understand the secrecy and confidentiality of initiation training for males and females, especially when I am not initiated. Matobo, Makatsa and Obioha (2009: 107) state that “among the Basotho, Lebollo (initiation) is a taboo that cannot be discussed in public by those who have not been initiated”. When I was interviewing the three elders who, are experts, and Molapo (the initiate), I made the interviews as informal as possible to create an atmosphere where we could also make social conversation. As such, I was able to probe for more information without compromising on the secrecy and confidentiality of the initiation.

3.7.2 Focus group Interviews

Since the study was based on myself and students as co-designers and research participants, the semi-structured focus group interviews were well fitted as a means for data collection to draw out the background knowledge of design probes from participants using narrative interviews. (See Appendix D: Interview

questions for students, p. 191.) Tracey (2013: 141) states that narrative interviews are “open-ended and encourage the participants to tell their stories which might relate to the participants’ experiences, or the events they have witnessed rather than just answer questions”. Tracey (2013: 168) further comments that an “interesting perk of focus groups is that they basically serve as a mini-interaction laboratory, allowing the researcher to observe how ideas interact with and cascade from one to another, and the extent to which people are able to articulate their ideas, as they must grapple with others’ interruptions, starts and stops, and compete for floor time”.

I recorded the semi-structured interviews with community elders and the participants using an audio recording device to collect data, and the audio information was transcribed. I also took note of the discoveries and activities of the project, minor and major, through a researcher diary and memos, and visually, by means of photographs, as the project unfolded. The content was not analysed as data, but it was intended to assist the researcher to remember what happened during the activities when participants were discussing or answering questions on activities. During the 5-D Cycle I observed the research participants to note how they responded to the processes of the project, mainly focusing on how students appreciated the discovered knowledge pertaining to the three design probes, and how they interpreted and re-created the three design probes through the design process, pattern drafting and garment construction. The observation is important, as it allowed me to advise and guide, without restricting students’ creativity, and to observe if the project achieves the aim of the study. The observations were thus intended to assist with project facilitation, and not to provide data to be analysed.

English is a medium of instruction at Limkokwing university but there was an inclusion of Sesotho words, which were interpreted. The elders’ interviews were written and conducted in Sesotho, but they were also translated into English for the purpose of this research. The data collection tools applied to all three phases of 5-D Cycle. By observing COVID-19 protocols, direct contact with participants was minimised as much as possible. As a result, participants benefited by

working on the project in the comfort of their homes and by using familiar facilities at Limkokwing University, which created a relaxed atmosphere. This facilitated open communication among participants during the semi-structured focus group interview.

3.8 Data organising and analysis

The research question provided guidance on organising and categorising raw data into conceptualised themes under investigation while we focus on seeking “the most authentic, valid, true, or worthy description and explanation among the alternatives” from discovered information regarding the three design probes and their interpretation (Neuman 2014: 478). Collected data were analysed and coded through audio recording of the interviews, by reviewing the notes made during the observation, analysis of photographs taken during the 5-D Cycle and the interpretation of design probes into a collection. It is likely that as elders’ interviews are unfolding there were similarities, connecting aspects of culture and tendencies among the designs probes. As such, it was imperative to pay attention to classification of information into appropriate themes, therefore code similar patterns as data set. The 5-D Cycle was analysed and interpreted through descriptive and open coding. Tracey (2013:189), describe coding as the “active process of identifying data as belonging to, or representing some type of phenomenon and the phenomenon may be a concept, belief, action, theme, cultural practice, or relationship”. Furthermore, Andrasik, Frey and Endeshaw (2014: 16) state that descriptive coding describes characteristics of data itself and answers the questions who, where, and how the data were collected. In “qualitative coding we ask questions of data in order to develop, identify, elaborate, and refine analytic categories and insights” (Robert, Rachel and Linda 2011: 609). Hence, with open coding, I subjected audio recorded interviews, observation notes, and photographs to categorisation in order to “identify and formulate any and all ideas, themes, or issues” pertaining to design probes, no matter how they may vary (Robert, Rachel and Linda 2011: 596).

Since unstructured and focus group interviews were recorded as audio, data was transcribed in order to ensure that no information was left undocumented.

“Transcription facilitates the close examination of data, which is so imperative for interpretation” (Tracey 2013: 178). As information was discovered, there were interval meetings and discussions with students regarding the findings of the three design probes. Based on the findings from focus group interviews, literature and artefacts, we manually created visual boards and organise the photographs in order to ensure that information is classified properly into themes of the three design probes. Data was constructed and interpreted into distinctive cultural meanings and themes, including the transcribed data. Analysed data were further used to communicate the three design probes to re-create a re-imagined fashion collection which identified Basotho fashion.

3.9 Credibility, dependability, transferability and confirmability

Since this study adopts a qualitative research approach, it is imperative to speak to the trustworthiness of the study through the four (4) constructs: transferability, dependability, confirmability and credibility. Brown, Stevens, Troiano and Schneider (2002: 10), Sikolia, Biros, Mason and Weiser (2013: 3) and Newton (2012: 363 citing Lincoln and Guba 1985) explain **transferability** as the “applicability or comparisons of one set of findings to another setting or fields or cross cases” and it can be validated “through clear descriptions of the research, the participant’s diverse perspectives and experiences, methodology, interpretation of results, and contributions from peer debriefers”. To ensure transferability of the study, findings from focus group interviews, from phase 1 to phase 3, and the outcomes of re-created collection by research participants, the literature and other related cultural artefacts from Morija Museum and Archives and Library, all based on the three design probes, were clearly articulated and interpreted through descriptive coding to identify Basotho fashion in the context of Lesotho.

Brown *et al.* (2002: 9) and Sikolia *et al.* (2013: 3) define dependability as “the confirmation that data represents the changing conditions of the phenomenon under study”. However, the study would appear as new, even if the “study were repeated in the same context with the same participants, given the ever-changing social world and perceptual shifts including news events that may change our

thinking. Dependability is enhanced by common qualitative strategies, namely: audit trails, rich documentation and triangulation” (Newton (2012: 363 citing Lincoln and Guba 1985). By applying cohesive qualitative strategies employed for this study, especially the use of 5-D Cycles of AI, categorised under three phases of PAR and triangulation of three aspects of data collection, namely: focus group interviews, literature and artefacts and practical project by research participants should produce similar findings if the process can be repeated.

Confirmability means that “another researcher can confirm the findings of the study if presented with the same data” (Brown *et al.* 2002: 10). Confirmability also “refers to objectivity (neutrality) and the control of researcher bias. It is enhanced by consistency with quantitative research findings that reach similar conclusions and the evidence that includes the consensus reached by peer review” (Newton (2012: 363).

Brown *et al.* (2002: 8) and Carcary (2009: 14) describe **credibility** as referring to “how much the data collected accurately reflects the multiple realities of the phenomenon” and it can be produced through prolonged engagement with informants and triangulation of data”. According to Newton (2012: 363) credibility also refers to the “believability of the findings and is enhanced by evidence such as confirming evaluation of conclusions by research participants, control of unwanted influences, and theoretical fit. Maximum confidence in the believability of conclusions comes from support provided by participants’ agreement, analysis of multiple sources of data, others’ interpretations, and prediction based on relevant theoretical models”. The study engaged the research participants from the inception of the project through to 5-D Cycles of AI, categorised under three phases of PAR. Under 5-D Cycle participants were involved in three phases of data collection and project evaluation and feedback. This means that there is no part of the study that was shielded from the participants. This ensured that the confirmability and credibility of the findings and interpretation of the study thereof. In order to confirm the findings and to avoid any bias, I kept within the participatory aspect of the study by involving students in the process. I identified the themes of the study and ask them to confirm if my interpretation thereof is

true to their interpretation of the probes. In addition, I presented the same findings to a colleague to strengthen the confirmability of the findings.

3.10 Limitations and delimitations

The study is based on the learning, rediscovery, exploring and appreciating the three design probes and exploring the role of education in creating a fashion identity in this context of Lesotho, as such, this study does not go without some limitations. While the study used the three design probes, due to participatory and appreciative nature of the study, any discoveries of other probes by participants were not incorporated into the study. This was not meant to restrict participants' creative imagination rather to ensure that the study was focused and did not end up with more probes than planned for. The study was conducted with one group of students in a specific location of Lesotho (Limkokwing University), therefore, the findings cannot be generalised to the entire country of Lesotho.

3.11 Ethical considerations

As a participatory study between myself and students, there was a likelihood of power shift as the study progresses. However, I had the obligation to take into consideration protocols of code of ethics outlined by Durban University of Technology Ethics Committee. I took into consideration the following aspects:

3.11.1 Respect for participants

Stuart (1998: 302) describes respect for participants as requiring that researchers "treat others as individuals with the right to autonomous decision making" and protect people "who have diminished capacity or impaired autonomy" from abuse. This required that I took the participants' thinking, suggestions and their decisions as important. I showed respect by ensuring that students are well informed about the requirements and expectations of the project before the project starts and that they are not compelled into signing a consent form.

3.11.2 Anonymity

Elders who were interviewed and participants remained anonymous especially during the interviews. However, due to the group nature of the project, members of the group knew who the fellow participants were. I did not guarantee anonymity entirely since the participants showcased their final collection to members of the community. However, a student who did not want to be named or appear at the end of the show was respected and remained anonymous. In this study, the Informed consent form provided valuable information to the participants as far as their privacy and anonymity was concerned.

3.11.3 Non-maleficence

Stuart (1998: 302) states: "Do no harm to others" This principle required that I minimised anything that might cause harm to participants physically, psychologically, socially, or economically.

3.11.4 Justice

Stuart (1998: 304) explains this principle as follows: "The principle of justice assumes that all persons are equal, and should be treated in a manner that guarantees the equitable distribution of both benefits and burdens". This principle required that I treated all participants equally and did not discriminate anyone of them. If there are benefits which were meant for participants, they should have been enjoyed by all and not the selected few. The participants received all of the fabrics and trimmings to undertake the project. I was not biased but made the fabrics available to all participants as per their needs.

3.11.5 Care and concern

According to Stuart (1998: 308), the principle of care and concern is as follows:

This principle holds that as a researcher, I offer, through my relationship with participants, an empathetic understanding of their hopes and fears as well as active support for change in their circumstances in relation to those hopes and fears. In this principle, relationships with participants are held as a high priority.

This principle required that I took care to ensure that participants did not feel vulnerable while undertaking the project and that I showed empathy in the case where they might have needed emotional supported, and that their wellbeing was more important than the project itself.

3.11.6 Gatekeepers' permission

I sought permission from the gatekeepers for permission to work with students. The gatekeepers were Director of Academics and Limkokwing Research Committee based at Limkokwing University Lesotho Campus. The gatekeepers granted me the permission to work with the students as research participants for this study. (See Appendix B: Gatekeepers' letters / letters of information and consent: students, for gatekeeper's letter of permission, pp. 183-187.)

3.11.7 Letters of information and informed consent

I informed students thoroughly about the project, its scope, the outcomes and the reasons why they were recruited. Procedures to opt out were also communicated and I made the students aware that it would not be mandatory to participate if anyone felt uncomfortable. (See Appendix B: Gatekeepers' letters / letters of information and consent: students, pp. 183-187.)

3.12 Conclusion

The chapter discussed features of research design for this study. The importance of the qualitative method was outlined as fitting the nature of the research. The frameworks of Appreciative inquiry with 5-D Cycle and Participation action research were dealt with in detail. It was shown how the 5-D Cycle and three Cycles of PAR were incorporated to guide the practical project in the implementation of design probes. Methods of data collection and data analysis utilized in this research were discussed. The four constructs, credibility, dependability, transferability and confirmability were emphasised with the purpose of speaking to trustworthiness of the study. Since the study included participants, it was equally important to acknowledge the importance of ethical consideration for participants.

Chapter 4: Elders' knowledge of the probes

4.1 Introduction

This chapter provides the contextual background of the three design probes which were obtained by means of semi-structured interviews. The chapter presents the responses of community elders who were knowledgeable about lifestyle, body painting and dress and grooming of Litsoejane. I interviewed two elderly women. One initiated women, and she is referred to here as Mme Maseabata (pseudonym) and another lady, Mme Lieketseng (pseudonym), who was known as a traditional expert. I also interviewed Ntate Tumisang (pseudonym) who initiated males and was known to be an expert in male initiation training. Last of all, I interviewed Molapo (pseudonym), the university student who had been initiated. For understanding of Litema, secondary resources were incorporated to collect additional visuals which I could not capture during the field work. I took as many photographs as possible to provide for visual communication on aspects of Basotho's culture, especially the design probes. At the time when I went for data collection, the government was preparing to allow initiation training to resume (initiation training had been prohibited during the COVID-19 pandemic). Procedures were under way by providers of initiation training, who were preparing to initiate. As a result, I could not access photographs of Litsoejane and male initiates. In December and January, I met female and male initiates, but I was not allowed to take their photographs. I therefore relied on secondary sources (referenced) for presentation of visuals. In an effort to learn more about the culture of Basotho and to collect data, I took a tour to Thaba-bosiu cultural village, where there is a museum, and I went to the Morija Museum and Achieves as well. Later, I embarked on a second tour with student participants so that they could also experience first-hand information about Basotho culture. The tour was meant to give them a "better understanding of the subject matter at hand" so that Lesotho and its cultural practices could be "visible to them in a different way" (Denzin and Lincoln 2018: 43). Participants were excited to learn about aspects of their culture to which they had not previously been exposed.

4.2 Basotho female initiation

Mme Maseabata did not have a problem being interviewed since she had been interviewed by different people, including organisations. She mentioned that she was clear about the demarcations of sharing information with initiated and uninitiated people. Mme Maseabata informed me of the following details:

The initiation is a legalised process that involves the approvals of the local head Chief, Principal Chiefs and the guardians of women who are to be initiated. When the approvals have been concluded with the chiefs, the head of the initiation school is allocated a place to initiate women called Mophato (a secluded place where part of initiation training takes place) which is usually built inside the gorge away from the village. Initiation training is very private and confidential, its activities must take place away from the public, hence the gorge. The second Mophato for Bale is built within the village near the house of the head of the initiation school (which is about 15-20m away from the head of initiation's house). Both Mephatho are fenced with Sentlouljane (a reed fence made of straw) (Figure 4.1).



Part of lekhoakhoa
or sentlouljane
which resembles
likholokoane

Figure 4.1: Basotho traditional house fenced with lekhoakhoa, a similar fencing is Sentlouljane for mephato

Basotho houses were fenced with a straw reed and had grass ropes which held the straw together. The grass ropes are made the same way as Likholokoane (circular grass hoops worn by Bale). A reed fencing is called Lekhoakhoa with an entrance into lelapa (lelapa means “family”, and this is the immediate area inside of the reed fencing and a private space for family). Mme Maseabata also confirmed that the structure of lekhoakhoa resembled likholokoane:

Mophato is built by men and women who have undergone the initiation training. You know that Basotho houses were fenced with a straw reed and had 'belts like' part which holds the reed straw together. That fencing is called Lekhoakhoa and the same fencing for mephatho is called Sentloujane.

Van Wyk (1998: 117) indicates that the "initiates spend several weeks in seclusion in their hut in the village, where they learn feminine skills, such as weaving, grass mats, making pots, and housekeeping".

4.3 The first stage: 'ho qacha'

There are three (3) stages of women's initiation. The first stage is 'ho qacha' (the stage when they gather wood for cooking purposes. This first stage runs for one to two months, or it can run into the beginning of the third month. Mme Maseabata and Mme Lieketseng described this stage as follows:

*The life of Tsoejane (singular for Litsoejane) starts off as Ngoale (singular for Bale). Bale are women initiates from the ages of 18 upward. In the first two-three (2-3) months of initiation they start with the process called 'ho-qacha'. 'Ho-qacha' is the time when they wear their regular clothing and fetch wood daily and they also learn the rules and regulations of initiation. In the first stage of initiation the initiates apply a black oil called Pilo as part of the initiation rites. The oil is made black by mixing it with a burned grass, called Moseha (*Merxmuellera macowanii*). Pilo is applied in the first two months of 'ho qacha'.*



Figure 4.2: (left) Women carrying firewood on their heads (VisitLesotho 2021); (right) Women carrying firewood on their back shoulders (Njenga, Gitau and Mendum 2021: 8)

It is also significant to note that during ho-Qacha Bale fetch firewood carrying it on their backs instead of their heads. It is a norm for Basotho women to gather firewood for cooking and warming purposes, and they usually carry such firewood on their heads (Figure 4.2).

During the period of 'ho qacha' the girls wear Mokhahla:

Mokhahla is a blanket made of softened cow hide (Figure 4.3). Mokhahla is used to protect the girls while they fetch firewood. Litsoejane carry wood on their backs instead of carrying it on their heads. Mokhahla is used to protect Bales' backs and necks against scratches and discomforts which may be caused by carrying firewood on their backs. Prior to initiation, the family of the initiate would cook and brew a traditional beer, then invite men from the community to assist to soften a cow hide by scrapping the inside of it using sefalo (tool used to scarp the inside of a hide, Figure 4.3) and tanning it. Underneath mokhahla they wear their regular garments and a soft blanket. (Mme Maseabata).



Figure 4.3: (left) A Mosotho woman wearing cow hide blanket, similar to mokhahla (Facebook 2015); (right) Sefalo (scraping tool)

Mokhahla has been used by Basotho over the years, mainly as a blanket and a sleeping carpet. Nowadays the softened cow hide is used as a decorative carpet or a wall hanging.

4.4 The second stage: Bale

The term used to refer to female initiates has been used loosely. Mme Lieketeseng clarified the different stages of a Mosotho female initiate, especially the terms which are often used interchangeably, namely, Litsoejane and Bale. Mme Lieketseng showed that the initiates “are referred to as Bale in the second stage which runs for 3-5 months of initiation “when they are applying Phepha and wearing Likholoakoane, Seobi, Lesira and back skirt made of softened cow’s hide”. “Whereas they are referred to as Litsoejane towards the end of training when they apply letsoku (red ochre) on their entire bodies, wear Setea and thethana”. The second stage is the longest of the three stages. At this stage, Bale are seen mostly in the open, though their faces are covered. They walk about while being taught about different uses of plants, medicinal plants and work that is carried out in the fields.

4.4.1 Bale body painting

As Mme Maseabata explained:

From the third month to the fifth month, the initiates paint their bodies white with Phepha on their faces, exposed upper body, arms and around legs. Phepha is a soft white soil which is grinded and mixed with oil or petroleum jelly to make it into a soft paste that is easy to apply on one’s body. At this stage they are now referred to as Bale.

Du Plooy (2006: 122) states that in the Free State, a black Pilo is maintained by mixing grass ash and old dirty motor oil. In the past, Phepha was made by mixing a soft grinded soil with a dissolved fat of animals. Writing about female initiation in Northern Mozambique, Arnfred (2010: 78) states that “during the long seclusion period the faces of young initiates would be smeared with msiro, a white substance made from the grounded weed of a certain tree, mixed with water”. A white substance from Northern Mozambique sounds similar to Phepha even though they differ in nature. Phepha is made from soil and msiro is made from a grounded weed.

I asked Mme Maseabata about the significance of the names that Bale writes on their bodies when they have applied Phepha. Mme Maseabata said:

Once Phepha is mixed, they draw Litema or write the names of their heroes or certain members of the community or their family members on their bodies.

Mme Lieketseng added:

Bale decorate their bodies with Litema and choose the names of passed Basotho men who were outstanding or deemed heroes in the country. Sometimes they write the names of current chiefs or outstanding men in their communities or from their families. The purpose of selecting the names of such men is that, at the end of the initiation they are also said to be the heroines of their own communities. (Figure 4.4)



Figure 4.4: Dress and grooming in Bale's attire

4.4.2 Dress and grooming of Bale

The dress or regalia of Bale are described in detail below.

a. Seobi

Mme Maseabata states that “for a front skirt, Bale wear *lekoko la poli* or *la nku*” (softened goat skin or softened sheep skin). However, Mme Lieketseng stated the name and purpose of the front skirt:

*Bale wear **Seobi** (a skirt made of soften goat or sheep skin). Seobi is worn as a front skirt (Figure 4). When Bale sing, they beat on Seobi to make a drum beat sound. This type of dress has long been worn over the years, for as long as women initiation has been in practice. The purpose of Seobi is to warm and protect a women's lower body.*

Since female initiation incorporates the use of several animal hides as part of dress for Bale, a naming for each animal hide and its purpose helps differentiate them at each stage.

b. Lesira

Bale cover their faces with Lesira (a woven grass veil, see Figure 4.5) when they go out from Mophthato, which is located in the village. Mme Lieketseng explains the purpose of Lesira:

Basotho liked people who were humble. Lesira is worn when Bale leave their initiation places. Lesira hides them so that they are not recognizable from onlookers up until the day when they are officially revealed upon graduation and to prevent Bale's eyes from roving about, perhaps looking at men. (Mme Lieketseng)



Figure 4.5: Lesira (Lekoekoe 2022)

As Bale, they have an attire that they wear during the entire time, including application of Phepha on their bodies. Bale wear Likhlokoana, Seobi, Lesira and they hold sticks (Mokorosi 2017:77).

c. Likhlokoane

Mme Maseabata and Mme Leiketseng described Likhlokoane as follows:

Bale wear Likhlokoane (circular grass hoops Figure 4.7). Likhlokoane are made of moseha grass (Merxmuellera macowanii).

Moseha is wrapped with a thick thread called Kholokoane to hold the grass together and to protect the wearer against any protruding grass. Likholokoane were made by older men who have undergone the initiation process to ensure that they are strong enough to last the initiation process, however, of late Bale make their own Likholokoane during the period of 'ho-qacha'. Older women, who would have undergone the initiation process, measure the body of each Bale, from under bust to a waist, to make Likholokoane which are enough to cover the stomach. They are measured to leave a room for ease of wearing and taking them off. They are made such that the breasts rest on them. (Mme Maseabata)

Mokorosi (2017: 77) also notes that Bale have been wearing Likholokoane made of Moseha grass. Moseha is usually used by Basotho women to make brooms, Mokorotlo hats and grass mats. Mme Lieketseng explained further on the meaning and purpose of Likholokoane. She indicated that “Basotho were very intelligent” in the construction or making of artifacts and utensils and how they all tied in together through their symbolic meaning.

Kholokoana (kholokoana is singular for Likholokoana) looks like a woman's womb and kharetsa (part of roofing of traditional house which holds and strengthened the grass roofing together) as well as lekhoakhoa (a reed fence which also had a belt like part that looks like Kholokoana (Figure 4.6). The belt that looks like Kholokoana is used to strengthen the reed fence. Likholokoana were used by Bale with the aim of teaching them to wrap and tighten the waist after birth. There is a lot of resemblance with the roofing of a house, its fence and Likholokoana. Since a Mosotho woman is expected to get married and give birth, Likholokoane are made to protect a woman's stomach which is said to represent ntlo (a house for an unborn child) and to continue to tighten the stomach after birth. Bale further wrap their waists with Tjale (Figure 4.7) to hold Likholokoane together once they are worn.



Figure 4.6: Likholokoane on Litsoejane's body



Figure 4.7: Tjale (Aranda 2022)

d. The stick

Bale hold a long stick whenever they leave Mophato in a village (Figure 4.8). They often threaten to whip people that they come across, hence most people know Bale as chasers and capable of beating people they come across. Mme Maseabata says, “the sticks are used for entertainment purposes”. Mme Lieketsen offered further insight on the main purpose of stick:

A stick gives a woman power to choose the man she would like to marry. Initially, molalu (a thick stick which is a man’s accessory) is a man’s accessory and by holding it and giving it to a man during a game called Selia-lia, that serves as an indication that a woman has a power to choose a husband and to propose marriage, as opposed to normal way where a man is the one who confronts a woman. Bale holds a stick during the initiation training and post the initiation. They chase people as part of entertainment. They don’t mean any harm.



Figure 4.8: Bale wearing: (a) Likhlokoana covered with tjale, (b) Lesira and (c) sticks (Basotho Kopanang 2013)

As indicated by Mme Lieketseng, Selia-lia is a game between a maiden and a young man which take place after the initiation. A maiden will hand her stick to a young man that she chooses as a prospective marriage partner following the initiation. Following Selia-lia play, marriage arrangements could resume, or the maiden and a young man can choose to elope. In the case where a young man rejects the stick, then that would mean that he has rejected the maiden's proposal.

4.5 The third stage: Litsoejane

On the 5th or 6th month of initiation, depending on whether the initiation training is set to take five or full six months, initiates enter the last stage where they are referred to as Litsoejane. Prior to interviewing the elders, I never knew the different stages that Litsoejane undergoes, from 'ho qacha', as Bale and later as Litsoejane. The last stage of Litsoejane is a preparation for graduation, where they will demonstrate to their parents, guardians, and the public that they have transitioned into women, they are no longer girls. Mme Maseabata shows that during this stage Litsoejane apply Letsoku. Letsoku is applied on the entire body, including the head. Letsoku goes with its attire. Letsoku is a red powder which is mixed with petroleum jelly or oil, and into a very soft paste (a red ochre) recently the red powder is mixed with margarine. Once it is mixed into a paste, it is easy to apply to an individual's body. There are activities in which Litsoejane engage, but they are visible to the public only during the graduation festivity. On the graduation day, there are regalia that Litsoejane wear. Mme Maseabata and Mme Lieketseng described their dress during this stage.

4.5.1 Thethana

Thethana has been worn by young Basotho girls, from an early age up to a time when they get married. Young girls would wear thethana from the front to the side hips, whereas the older girls wear Thethana all around the waist, even though it shows the lower part of the buttocks.

Graduation is an exciting time for Litsoejane. During graduation (ha ba tsoa) they wear Thethana (a fringed skirt), worn at the front to the side of the hips. Thethana is also dyed red with letsoku. Married women

wear a longer one whereas the maidens wear it shorter. During the period when they are applying Phepha, they hold long sticks. They also hold the same stick upon graduation. Litsoejane are also at liberty to be as creative as possible with embellishment of their attire. (Mme Maseabata)

Mme Lieketseng went on to explain how Thethana was made:

*Litsoejane wear **Thethana** as well. Traditional thethana was made of Tsikitlana (*Gazania krebsiana* less), flower leaves which were twined together and made stiff sand dyed red with letsoku. A modern day thethana is made of a twine which is twisted together, fringed and dyed red with letsoku to resemble original one. Of late, a ready-made red twine is also available which resemble the one dyed with letsoku. Married women cover the breast with leather brassier or thatsana (a fringed top which looks exactly like thethana and covers the breasts). The maidens' breasts remain uncovered. Litsoejane wear senyepa, (a beaded belt, which is made to embellish thethana). Senyepa is attached around the front waist of Thethana. (Figure 4.9)*



Figure 4.9: Plain Thethana (left); Thethana dyed red (right) with letsoku and embellished with Senyepa (Riep 2022)

It can be seen that Mme Maseabata and Mme Lieketseng agreed on how Thethana is worn by married and unmarried women.

4.5.2 Setea

Initiates wear Setea as a skirt (a skirt made of softened cow hide). Below is an extract from data collection which shows the following:

Setea is worn from the back to the side along the hips and fastened with leather string around the stomach. Remember that skin hides are not so big. So, only so much can be made from hides as clothes. This is Setea (pointing at the video on the phone which we kept perusing). (Mme Maseabata).

There is a difference of opinion regarding the stage at which Setea is worn (Figure 4.10). Mme Lieketseng argued that Setea is worn at the last stage when they are called Litsoejane. This is a stage when they have neared the end of initiation and they are due for graduation.

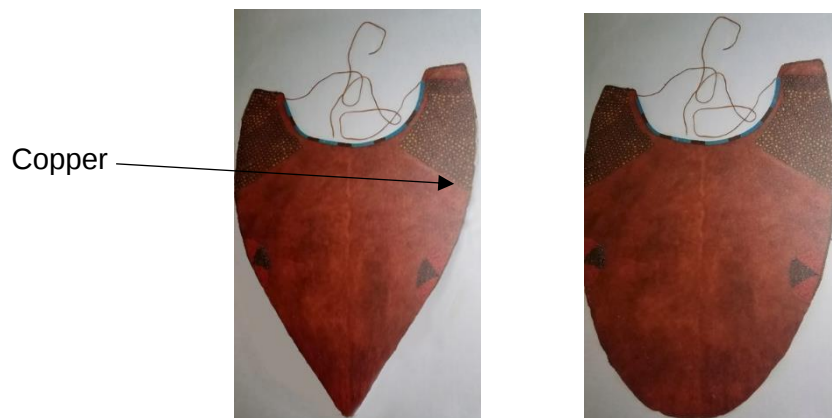


Figure 4.10: Setea for maidens (left) and Setea for married women (right)

Mme Lieketseng added:

Litsojane wear Setea which is prepared the same way as Mokhahla blanket; the inside of the cow hide is scrapped and tanned. Setea is dyed red colour with Letsoku. The dress is worn from the back and ends just by the side thighs and tied at the front. Setea differs in size and shape depending on whether it is worn by a maiden or a married woman. A maiden wears a pointed and shorter Setea, which shows the back knees and signifies purity. Married women wear Setea that is round at back and covers the back knees. Setea is worn inside out, in that, the part of the hide with fur is the inside of the skirt, whereas the skin part is the one that is dyed red with Letsoku, and it is the outer part. Since animal skins are not as wide as any woven or knitted fabric, Setea was made to ensure that a woman is well covered at the back. Setea can be decorated with copper on top of it and along the edges. However, due to economic changes, people do not use cowskin hides as often as they used to. Lately Bale/Litsoejane buy softened skin hides which are readily available or any red leather fabric.

4.5.3 Litsoejane's accessories

Mme Lieketseng described Litsoejane's accessories as follows:

Litsoejane wear mohlehlo as a neck piece (Figure 4.11). (Mohlehlo is a hard fat layering the inside a belly of a sheep or goat. It is folded and gathered to make into a neck piece). A family of each Tsoejane brings a sheep or goat which is slaughtered as part of the food that is prepared for the initiation graduation and so mohlehlo is set aside, prepared and used as a necklace around the neck of each Tsoejane. During the graduation, they are adorned with colourful accessories that their family gift them with. On the graduation day, Litsoejane 'lia tebuka' (they walk slowly in a sequence following a set rhythm), while covering their navel with another hand. The whole time from 'ho qacha' up to graduation day, they walk bare feet. (Mme Maseabata).



Figure 4.11: Litsoejane are adorned with: (a) mohlehlo, (b) modern accessories, (c) thethana, (d) senyepa, (e) setea and (f) sticks

Bale are mostly adorned with colourful beads and other accessories that their families make or buy for them and bring over to where they are initiated just before their graduation day. Litsoejane continue to carry the sticks during the graduation day. Litsoejane do not wear as many items as when they are still Bale. The maiden Tsoejane does not cover the breast. The reason behind that is, they are expected to be girls and breasts show how pure they still are. This is different for married women who cover their breasts with a leather brassiere.

4.5.4 Post initiation

Mme Liketseng indicated that a female initiation does not end on the day that Tsoejane is graduating. After the initiates are released to their respective families, there are restrictions that she must abide by for a stipulated period.

*Post the Initiation training, traditionally, married women wore Mose-
oa-khomo which resembles Setea, but it is a two-part dress that allows
for a movement. One part of the dress is worn from the back to the
front, and it is longer, whereas the front part is worn from the front to
the sides, and it is shorter in length. Mose-
oa-Khomo was two-part for
ease of movement, especially during the war times when people had
to run. Mose-
oa-khomo has been replaced by traditional Seshoeshoe
dress.*

There is a difference on how Basotho women are initiated in Lesotho and in the Free State, South Africa, in terms of naming of each stage and the duration of initiation. Du Plooy (2006: 95) records the stages that a female initiate goes through in the Free State as follows:

- a) The first stage is Preparatory (ho qacha period). The stage takes 1-4 days.
- b) The second stage is called Black oil (the time when initiates apply Pilo). The stage takes 2 weeks. In Lesotho, the initiates apply Pilo during 'ho qacha period' and that period takes 2-3 months at most.
- c) The third stage is called White stage (when Bale apply Phepha). This stage takes 2-3 weeks. In Lesotho, Bale apply phepha for 2-3 months. The length of application of Phepha depends on the duration of 'ho qacha'. If 'ho qacha' runs for 3 months, then application of Phepha will take 2 months. If 'ho qacha' runs for 2 months, then application of Phepha will take 3 months.
- d) The fourth stage is called a Red stage (the stage when Litsoejane apply letsoku) and it lasts for 1 week. In Lesotho the stage lasts for one month and leads to graduation.
- e) The fifth stage is the Post-initiation period which lasts for 1 month. In Lesotho the restrictions that a newly initiated is expected to observe runs for a period of up to 6 months.

4.6 Liteima

As stated in Chapter 2, Liteima are mural paintings applied on the interior floors, interior and exterior walls and the porch of a mud plastered house. Liteima are

not achieved unless the house is built. Mme Lieketseng described the background of Litema as follows:

Once the newly married couple have decided on building a home, it is the responsibility of the husband to collect all building materials and to build a house for his family. The house will be roofed with mohlomo (thatching grass/Hyparrhenia hirta) (Figure 4:12). When the building and roofing are completed, a women would start the process of applying Litema on the exterior and interior walls, exterior porch and moholoana (clay display cabinet).



Figure 4.12: Mohlomo grass used for roofing

The fact that other members of the community would rally behind the newlyweds to lend a hand in preparation of their new house, to sickle the grass together, and carry it on their heads to deliver it to their prospective homes, highlights some characteristics that Basotho were known for, that is, to be cooperative and united.

4.6.1 House preparation for application of Litema

As stated in Chapter 2, Litema are solely the responsibility of a woman, the owner of the house, to decorate and to beautify her house. Sekokotoana (2020) confirms that “litema are the designs women used to decorate their homes with, mostly on the outside walls”. However, it would not be easy for a woman to carry out the tradition of litema application unless she was taught, and, while growing up, had observed her mother doing it. To indicate the importance of traditional education for young women, where knowledge of traditional activities has been passed from generation to generation, Mme Lieketseng explained:

A young Mosotho is guided by her mother to teach her household chores that a woman is expected to undertake. In the same manner,

a young woman will learn ho-lila (to smudge) from her mother or the closest women in her life or a woman who is a prominent community member. At times there will be other women who are experts in smudging or certain household chores that a young woman can learn from. (Mme Lieketseng)

It is, therefore, arguable that education was not introduced to Basotho by the arrival of the white traders and British colonisation. Basotho had a systematic way of carrying out their day-to-day activities. In the same way, the Ndebele's young women learned the art of mural painting of the walls "from their mothers or other close relatives. Whereas outsiders who marry into the group are taught the art, especially the patterns as they are different from those done by Sotho group" (Goitsemodimo 2016: 7). Mme Lieketseng also argues that "education has always been the backbone of our culture. Young men and women were taught a lot of things which would equip them later in their adulthood life". Beyer (2014: 58) confirms that "artists are at times assisted by female relations, often comprised of mothers and their daughters or siblings, neighbours, friends and some travelling from other locations to lend their support" This indicates that women's chores offer them the social environmental where they share ideas, laughter, and food (Beyer 2014: 59).

A young man needed to have learned to measure the circumference of his house, door size, window opening, height of from floor to the peak of a roof, plan the thatch roofing and ensure that it is well strengthened and create leifo (cooking space) in the centre of the house (Figure 4.13). Although this is a man's responsibility, other men who have constructed houses before or the experts in the community, would guide and assist a young man in building his house. When the house is built and roofed a woman would start to smooth and beautify it. The stages are as follows:

To prepare the walls and the floor for smudging a woman will mix Lekoetje soil with a horse or donkey dung and water to make a thick paste. The paste will be applied onto the wall of the house as if it is being thrown. The process is called 'ho phara'. A Mosotho woman would then seal the paste by smearing the wall very hard to remove grass and any protruding lumps, while adding some water to achieve the smoothness (as if plastering with a hand). Once this process is complete, the walls are ready for 'ho liloa' (to be smudged) with soft soil and to apply Liteima. A woman would mix Loam or Lekoetje soil with a

soft cow dung and water to make it into a soft paste that slides easily, from right to left when smudging. While smudging with this paste, moving a hand in a sweeping movement, Tema will be formed. This is more visible on smudged floor or walls without any colouring finish. (Mme Liketseng)



Figure 4.13: A smudged interior floor with leifo in the middle of the house

4.6.2 The smudging

'Ho lila' is Basotho's regular practice for maintaining the interior floor, interior and exterior walls, setupu (the porch) and leifo. Exterior walls, where Litema are mostly focused on are referred to as sefahleho (the face), which is the area on both sides of the door facing the oncoming people, hence the name sefahleho. (Mme Lieketseng) (Sovré 1997: 30; Goitsemodimo 2016: 6). According to Rolland (2013: 104-105) Sirigu women mix loam soil, smooth sand and mix it with cow dung collected from animal pens or from the open field; the mix is used for plastering walls prior to mural decoration The extract below illustrates how a woman would start the preparations for application of Litema:

Women would quarry the soil from the area called Khatampi (an identified area where women get a desired type of soils for colouring the smudged walls). Khatampi has different colours of soil, namely; red, light green, white, cream white, grey and purple. Sometimes young women will travel even further to quarry a certain colour that is not easily found in their area. The soil is mixed with just water because the purpose of using the coloured soil is to create a paste that is colourful. To achieve a different shade/tint natural dyes are used, such as, crushed red berries or prickly pear or roots of a certain plant which are mixed with water and added to a coloured soil paste. The coloured paste will be applied with a piece of sheep skin, the hairy part. The process is called 'ho beta' (to paint). In modern times the soil that women used to quarry has been replaced by water paints and applied with a roller. (Mme Lieketseng)

4.6.3 Techniques used for applying Litema

There are techniques which are applied in making Litema. Traditional education which a young woman acquired, involves different techniques which are used to make Litema. However, it is noted that there are different techniques of Litema application for Basotho in Lesotho and Basotho in South Africa. Mme Lieketseng shows that “Basotho women in Lesotho use hand techniques whereas Basotho women in Qwaqwa, South Africa, use a fork to attain a desired Tema”. Mme Lieketseng further demonstrated the techniques as shown in Figure 4.14:



1st hand technique: *Make a fist with and open it slightly to make an oval shape like an egg. With this technique, you use a small finger together with the side of a hand.*



2nd hand Technique: *Open a hand wide and use the base of the fingers. This one is simple, but it should be done repeatedly to form a pattern. This Tema is called Ngoloane.*



3rd hand technique: *Open a hand and stretch it and the fingers are raised so that one uses the palm of a hand. When both palms are used repeatedly, they form a pattern that forms Tema.*

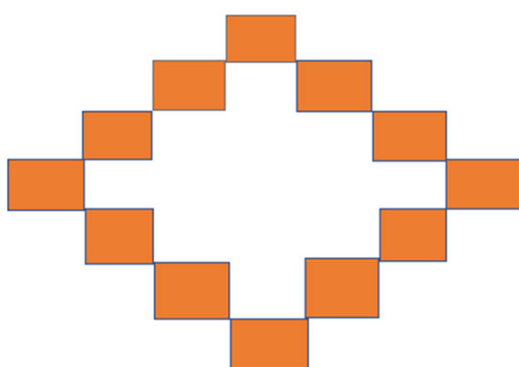


4th hand technique: *A hand is opened wide, fingers are spread wide as well and the palm is raised. The fingers are used to make Litema.*

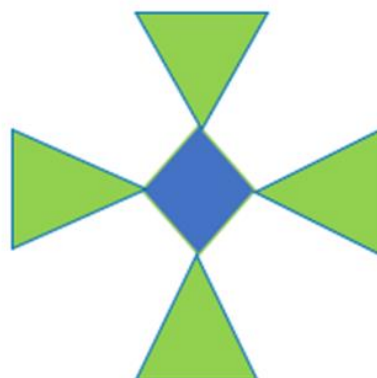
Figure 4.14: Hand techniques used to apply Litema

With all these hand techniques, a woman would make a repetitive shape or a pattern to make thought-out Tema. Usually, when patterns meet, they will come out as either a diamond or any shape. But the favourite shape has always been a diamond. Another pattern is achieved by drawing triangles that meet at the corners or squares which also meet to form a diamond shape. The technique of squares

and triangles needs someone who is quite good with it. (Figure 4.15) For example, with the 1st hand technique: Using both hands, make sure that folded fingers of both hands connect at the top and also that the bottom sides of your hands connect. If a technique is repeated to make a pattern, it will result in a diamond shape.



a. Tema made of square templates to form a diamond



b. Tema made of triangles that combine to make a diamond shape in the middle

Figure 4.15: Patterns formed by hand techniques

The method of painting Litema seemed to be similar with the manner in which the Sirigu women applied mural paintings on their walls. Rolland (2013: 104) describes that traditionally Sirigu women used “millet cobs, feathers from guinea fowls and chickens and beaten twigs in painting various colours on the walls”. As modernization takes over, Siringu women also adopted the use “of imported bristle brushes as part of the toolbox of the artisans. Some of the mural decorators use their hands to apply pigments onto the walls during decoration” Rolland (2013: 104). One would wonder how Basotho women mastered the art or Litema even though they were not exposed to modern methods of education, namely: elements and principles of art and calculations.

Basotho women were not literate, therefore, they used stick to measure the length, width, height, circumference, and distance of Tema and distance between Litema. A woman will draw a pattern on the floor using a stick, then she will transfer Litema design onto the walls. As she draws Litema, she will step back to ensure that she is getting the design right. However, with experience, she will use both thumbs to measure. Litema were not applied all over the front wall of a house, rather, they were focused on sefahleho. Litema had a belt like design based on the repetition of one Tema. (Figure 4.16)



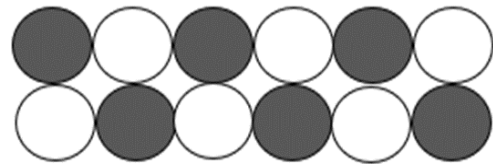
Figure 4.16: Applied Tema on the wall (2 Dimension)

When Litema are applied, they can form a sequence of patterns which look like a belt. Mme Lieketseng explained how the belt pattern is achieved:

A woman would use a cardboard cut in a diamond shape and it is used as a template and repeated in a line ensuring that they are attached by side corners. That results in a continuous belt. If you continue drawing that diamond shape, this time draw the second line and attach the bottom of the first line to the top corner of the second line and continue with that shape in a line. Now, when the diamonds meet, the first and second lines, they form another diamond shape within the 'belt'. Am telling you that Basotho were intelligent! To draw these diamonds, a woman would take a stick, wrap it with a cloth and dip in a coloured paste and continue drawing. If she wanted to add another line with a different colour, she would mix that colour separately and use a different stick. At times, a woman would use a cardboard, a metal plate, or the cover of a three-legged pot as a template to draw circular pattern of Litema. This method of enhancing Litema is called Paterole. (Figure 4.17)



a. Tema made of diamond shapes that combine to make more diamond shapes



b. Tema made of cycle shapes that combine to make more diamond shapes in-between

Figure 4.17: Tema made of diamond and cycle shapes

According to Beyer (2014: 59), "Litema takes a number of forms, namely, painted Litema, engraved Litema, relief sculpting and imbedded stonework or mosaic".

The mosaic or pebble stones can be painted or be left as they are (Figure 4.18). Other illustrations of Litema are “motif of dots, stripes, scallops, half-circles, zigzags and scallops” (Van Wyk 1998: 89).



Figure 4.18: Litema made of pebble stones

4.6.4 House interior design

Litema are also applied in the interior spaces of the house. A woman would build Moholoana (a mud build kitchen rack) which is 3-Dimension Tema. Moholoana is used for displaying her crockery. Moholoane has its roots or inspiration from litema designs. Women will use different techniques to design and to build moholoana (Figure 4.19). Sovré (1997: 36) explains moholoana as:

...wall shelves, made of mud, an interpretation of the European furniture in a traditional way, often elaborately decorated, they are the pride of the Sotho women, and are used to display plates and other valued household articles.



Figure 4.19: 3-Dimension Moholoana and (right) Litema on the interior wall (VisitLesotho 2021)

4.6.5 House exterior design

The exterior is a centre of attraction for the family, guests and passersby. Traditional houses often had very small opening, in place of modern-day windows. The opening is made for ventilation purposes since Basotho light an open fire to cook inside the house. As such, the opening will also serve as an outlet for smoke. Therefore, it has been imperative that window openings and doors be decorated to “enhance the eye of the home” (Beyer 2014: 63). There are also different techniques applied which are more 3Dimensional (Figure 4.20).



Figure 4.20: Design techniques which are also referred to as Litema, meant to enhance the look of the window opening

4.7 Balisana

Balisana are male herders. This study focused on Balisana’s life which impacts on their dress and grooming, which has its origins from male initiation school. In the past, it was imperative for every Mosotho boy to be initiated. However, with colonialization and widespread teachings and practices of the missionaries, initiation was no longer mandatory (Matobo, Makatsa and Obioha 2009: 105). Balisana who were not initiated learned aspects of dress, grooming and mannerisms from those who were initiated. Initiation training is a form of non-formal education. Pitikoe (2016: 20) points to “initiation schools as playing a pivotal role in the provision of traditional education. They were informal in nature aiming to facilitate an institutionalized form of learning”.

Ntate Tumisang (not his real name) is our informant and a respected community elder, who also initiates males. I interviewed Molapo, a university student who was initiated. Molapo made additions on few issues based on his background as a former initiate. Ntate Tumisang described the journey of becoming a Molisana (singular for Balisana):

A real Molisana oa Mosotho (Mosotho shepherd) starts off from the initiation school including the lifestyle and ways of dressing. Initiation is a legalised process that the owner of the initiation school applies for from the local village Chief and Principal Chief. Every man who wishes to initiate boys should also be someone who underwent initiation training. Only after the initiator has been issued with letters of approval, is it then that he can start with arrangements of initiation. He will be allocated a site to build his Mophato in the mountains, which is built far away from the villages.

4.7.1 Life of initiates: the basis of Balisana

As with female initiation, 'ho qacha' for males is a period when new initiates leave their respective homes to stay at the place owned by the initiation trainer. It is during this time that the new initiates gather wood daily. Wood is used for cooking purposes. When new initiates are going through 'ho qacha' they wear grey blankets and Mokhahla on top of grey blanket (Figures 4.21, 4.22).



Figure 4.21: Wood collection by the initiates during 'ho qacha' period (Brown 2014: x)



Figure 4.22: Balisana in traditional grey blankets (Help Lesotho 2018) and Mosotho man wearing Mokhahla blanket (Williams 2013)

Mokhahla serves the same purpose as it does with female 'ho qacha', to protect the backs and necks of new initiates.

a. The mountain training

Ntate Tumisang continued to share the activities that lead to the day that the new initiates leave for the mountain:

The day that the boys leave for the mountain starts with a feast. Throughout the feast, the initiates will sit close to one another, wearing just the blanket and no shoes

Young men who are initiated in the mountains or any secluded place are subjected tough situations as (Mabena 2005: 112) indicates that Ndebele initiates undergo a similar practice:

During their stay in initiation camps, Ndebele initiates are exposed to physical trials and sufferings through which the guardians test their endurance, and their physical and psychological maturity, as well as prepare them for the rigors of life. They are also made to engage in strenuous physical activities. This results in an increase in their physical strength and motor coordination due to the increase in muscular size, skeletal growth and body weight. These physical developments will enable them to develop positive body attitudes and see themselves as strong and masculine.

In Lesotho, such toughness is “expressed through a proverb that says: ‘Ngoan e

motona ke kabeloa manong' (a male child is food for the vultures). This proverb speaks to masculinity, toughness of the journey of life for a male who should be able to cope without complaining" (Pitikoe 2016: 74).

b. Coming out ('ho tsoa')

Now that the initiates have spent about three (3) months in the mountain undergoing training, the families are waiting in expectation of their sons and husbands. It is an exciting time for families when they receive back their sons. Ntate Tumisang concedes that death might occur:

We have spoken about Mokhahla and its purpose. Now comes the day of their coming out. From the mountain, they are still wearing their grey blanket only that they wore from the beginning of 'ho qacha'. When they get back, they stay outside the village, at times it could be at a ridge. When they get to the village, their families would have already brought a new Seanamarena blanket (a common colour of choice is red and black). Each blanket will be tacked with the name of the initiate to identify it and it should have a safety pin for wearability. They will wear the blanket and fasten with a safety pin. (Ntate Tumisang)

Molapo adds:

They are kept outside the village for most of the day, depending on the time that they arrive. While in the ridge their families gift them with new molamu (decorated stick), newly decorated koto (a stick with a head), which are brought along with a new blanket. They apply letsoku all over their bodies, from head to toe. Later in the afternoon, when the animals (they are herding) reach home, they also approach the village straight to khoaling/khotla, their lodging house.

This is a stage where a similarity with female initiation is identified. They apply Letsoku on their bodies as they come to the end of initiation. This marks the beginning of Balisana's life (Figure 4.23).

Molapo further clarifies the adornment as follows:

It is important that they are well adorned, it shows their families' support and appreciation. They will be adorned with any ornaments that the family can afford, namely: beaded necklace, beaded veils, earrings, mirrors, lots of safety pins, handkerchiefs, mesomi (strong black rubber rings which they wear around the arm, muscle, as anklets or as neckpiece). These are modern accessories. In the past beads and metal accessories were made for Makoloane. They cut theirs in a style called Motloenya (a cut around the head, leaving the hair in the

middle of the head or just a line cut towards the back). (Motloenya looks closer to a mohawk.)



Figure 4.23: Makoloane fully dressed and adorned during the graduation ceremony (Williams 2013)

Regarding the festivity of Makoloane, Ntate Tumisang explained:

On the sixth (6th) month since “ho qacha” period, they are released, often in December to January. During the celebration Makoloane are still wearing just a blanket only, besides other things which they are adorned with. They also have letsoku applied all over their bodies. (Figure 4.24)



Figure 4.24: Makoloane holding likoto while singing upon the end of the initiation training. They have applied letsoku (VisitLesotho 2023)

In modern times, Makoloane would change from an old grey blanket to a new grey blanket upon graduation if the family cannot afford Seanamarena.

4.7.2 Reincorporation into the community as men

Following the training at Mophatong in the mountain, the young men are ready to be incorporated back into the community as mature and strong men. Following the initiation training, they are perceived as grown-up men who can handle major community issues (Matobo, Makatsa and Obioha 2009:105). When Makoloane are incorporated back into the community, they are no longer seen as boys or maqai (a man who is not initiated whom the initiated men treat as inferior, whose opinion cannot be considered as important when men sit to communicate issues pertaining to community) as Ntate Tumisang explained:

Due to the training that they have undergone, they are expected to carry themselves responsibly and they are treated as mature men, ready to start a family, they are also taught to take care of animals for the wellbeing of the families.

Gumboots, balaclava and socks are not part of Basotho's cultural dress, even though Balisana have been wearing them for ages. The dress was introduced to Basotho through colonization. I asked Ntate Tumisang if he knew about the type of attire that Basotho initiates wore back in Moshoeshoe's time or thereafter, and Ntate Tumisang explained as follows:

Basotho used to wear animal skins and hides. Young men wore Tse'ea which was made of sheep skin. It had to cover the front part. It was cut in a triangle shape which covered the lower part of the torso and had a thick strap to cover at the back. Following colonialism and the introduction of cotton fabrics, Ts'ee has been made of loin cotton cloth worn around the lower part of the body as pants and fastened and decorated with safety pins on one side (Figure 4.25). Often Basotho men would not cover the upper body, especially in summer months, otherwise they would wear a blanket made of animal skins. They wore leather shoes which were called Lifatla (leather shoes made from softened cow hide). They also wore katiba ea kuoane (hat made of fur from a wild animal). It's true that these items (gumboots, socks and balaclava hat) are not part of the Basotho culture, however, they have been used as Makoloane's' attire following the graduation from initiation training since colonisation period. They were introduced into the Basotho culture by Basotho men who worked in the mines in South Africa. For many years, Basotho men have been working in the mines to sustain their families. Men would leave their livestock with their sons or any man who is a family member. When the miners come home, they would be seen wearing gumboots with more than one pair of knee-high socks. The miners would also buy gumboots, balaclava

and socks for their sons, who would be shepherding family animals or the miners shepherd when they come home. Apparently, this has been a uniform for miners and it has been Balisana's attire to this day.



Figure 4.25: Molisana wearing ts'eea and holding a stick (Alamy 2023)

According to Mokorosi (2017: 25) The upper body of King Moshoeshoe 1 “was completely naked, only a great cloak or leopard skin as supple as finest cloth, which was allowed to fall negligently about his waist, in folds, covering his knees and feet”, agreeing that Basotho men did not cover the upper bodies. I wondered if it would have been worthwhile to sustain the culture of wearing animal skins down to this day. However, Ntate Tumisang argued that:

It wasn't going to be that easy, since the missionaries first changed King Moshoeshoe 1's attire. As such it became easy for the rest of Basotho to buy machine produced products than tanning the skins. Working at the mines made it even easier to buy products from the mines or sold at Frasers supermarkets locally.

Mokorosi (2017: 26) mentions that in 1860 King Moshoeshoe 1 was presented with a blanket by European traders. Then he started to wear European clothes when he attended a church and in 1854 the king and his son, Letsie, wore European army uniform to a special meeting (Mokorosi 2017: 37). In 1880 and in 1886 Basotho men started working in the gold mines in Johannesburg, and in “Kimberley diamond mines where they earned money and bought blankets for

their families” (Mokorosi 2017: 37). This record shows how far back colonisation changed Basotho’s fashion from cultural dress to European dress.

Balisana who have been initiated have a smooth transition into the life of herding. Culturally a real Mosotho man’s wealth was seen in the number of animals he owes and “livestock ownership elevated family’s status” (Mokorosi 2017: 15). Livestock for Basotho men has been seen as safety net or bank. The owners of livestock benefited from selling the livestock or from selling wool. His sons would be responsible for looking after the family’s animals (Pitokoe 2016: 128). In the early days following the initiation, after being incorporated back into the community, the most common role a young man plays in the family is to take care of the family livestock as Molisana.

4.7.3 Dress and grooming of Balisana

Lesotho has lowlands and highlands which are mainly in mountainous districts, and it is mostly cool to cold throughout the year. Thus, the weather patterns have a bearing on how Balisana dress. During the early days of Molisana, following the initiation training, he wears the attire that indicates his position in a society, namely, that he is newly initiate. The attire consists of blanket, woollen hat, a beaded necklace, gumboots, socks and leqapha (a red front skirt which is embellished). A Molisana wears leqapha for a stipulated period (Figure 4:26).



Figure 4.26: Molisana following the initiation training, wearing: a) a beaded necklace and b) Leqapha embellished with safety pins (Help Lesotho 2018)

a. Blanket(s)

Ntate Tumisang and Molapo explained the dress and grooming of Balisana (Figure 4.27).



Figure 4.27: (left) Balisana wearing (a) balaclavas, (b) gumboots, (c) multiple blankets and (d) multiple pairs of socks (Dithabeng Travel & Tours 2021) and (right) Leraba (2020)

Balisana wear a blanket from the time when they graduate from initiation school until their shepherding days. Molisana wears a blanket until it is Letairi (a thin old blanket). Am sure you have seen that around. Instead of putting the blanket away when it is old, they pile two (2) or more blankets on it. This is also due to cold weather in Lesotho. So, being out in the open most of the time, it is imperative for Balisana to ensure their warmth. They wear the blanket in different styles, some of which they learn or copy from others during the initiation training. (Ntate Tumisang)

Molapo added:

Balisana fasten the blankets with a safety pin, or one can make lefito (a big knot) from the side of the shoulder or with just a sharp metal pin that they often make. Balisana spend a lot time doing almost nothing, so they get to be creative with available and accessible resources.

b. Balaclava

A balaclava is a hat which covers the head, face and neck and leaves an opening for the eyes. Balaclava has been introduced by the miners to Balisana's attire. According to Molapo:

Balisana wear a balaclava to protect themselves against harsh weather conditions while herding.

In summer months, the herders can fold the balaclava and wear it like a normal hat and in winter, they wear it to cover the whole head and face (Figure 4.27).

c. Gumboots and socks

As noted earlier in the writing, Balisana are gifted with gumboots and socks after completion of initiation training. They wear gumboots with knee high socks. Most of the time, Balisana wear multiple pairs of socks. This also they do to combat coldness. In winter months when there is snow, they must be out to ensure that their livestock is fed. In rainy weather, they still herd livestock in the open area. So, gumboots are very practical as part of their (Figure 4.27).

d. Herder's stick

From an age when a young boy starts herding calves, he takes molamu. Molapos explained the importance of molamu:

Molisana can't herd without the use of molamu (a thick wooden stick). He is gifted with molamu upon graduation with the intention to protect himself and to use it to guide the animals while herding. However, Balisana also make molamu from trees. Molisana works on his molamu until it's a smooth and thick stick which he decorates with wires. In this way Molisana's attire will be complete (Figure 4.28). In modern times, Balisana make melamu and sell them by main roads while herding. While Balisana are herding the animals, they meet with other men who have undergone the initiation, and therefore they are able to advise, exchange ideas, teach and build each other certain skills.



Figure 4.28: Molisana holding a decorated molamu (Leraba 2022)

4.8 Conclusion

This chapter discussed in detail the three design probes, namely, Litsoejane, Litema and Balisana. Regarding Litsoejane, the three stages of female initiation were discussed focusing mainly on dress and grooming, from 'ho qacha', to life as Bale and then later stage when they are referred to as Litsoejane towards the end of the of initiation training and upon graduation. Discussion on Litema started with the background of a Mosotho house, construction of the house, preparation of walls, interior and exterior, to the application of Litema. Lastly, the dress and grooming of Balisana is seen from the initiation training. Aspects of initiation training which influence how the initiates dress (and later, when they are referred to Makoloane, towards the graduation) and set the precedents for Balisana's dress and grooming, were also discussed.

Chapter 5: Students' interpretation of the probes

5.1 Introduction

The phases of Participatory Action Research involved an interpretation of the three design probes by participants, and this chapter deals with the students' interpretation of the three design probes. Firstly, a focus group interview was held with the aim of finding the out participants' background knowledge of Litsoejane, Litema and Balisana. Following the focus group interview, I shared the elders' data with the participants. They then used their background knowledge and the shared data to interpret the probes as working designs, first on moodboards and then in the actual garments produced. This process was categorized into the phases of Participatory Action Research, namely, Phase 1, Phase 2 and Phase 3, with each Phase guided by the 5-D Cycle of Appreciative Inquiry.

5.2 Phase 1: Planning - Defining and Discovery of 5-D Cycles

Phase 1 is called Planning and applies Defining and Discovery from the 5-D cycle. The Planning phase started with defining the research project and explaining to participants the importance of their involvement in the project. Jacobs (2016: 52) highlights the importance of Participatory Action Research as a collaborative and co-learning where a researcher and participants "both know some things and neither knows everything". Involving students in a Participatory Action Research project "assists students and teachers in articulating emerging problems and issues of concern, and to identify processes to find solutions" (Jacobs 2016: 52). Definition cycle of 5-D involves the engagement of participants in the process and selection of the area of study that might aid to establish the course for learning and transformation (Silbert and Silbert 2006: 11). This research project involved communicating the three design probes to participants so that they could find innovative solutions that would enable them to recreate innovative Basotho fashion. Following the Defining cycle, a Discovery Cycle was engaged, where learning was focused on discovering participants' prior knowledge of three chosen design probes. Discovery "involves conducting interviews and making meaning of what's been learned" (Silbert and Silbert 2006:

11). Participants were divided into two groups, group A and group B. The interviews were organised in a class setting during the lecture for History of Fashion. I asked participants how they attempted to continually improve their knowledge and skills as fashion students, besides attending classes. Participants responded by saying:

We conduct research. We also look up to celebrities and follow them.
(Participant A)

And we follow how they (celebrities) dress as well as their lifestyles.
(Participant B)

We are also active on social media to see what is happening in fashion. We also use the internet to access eBooks from the eLibrary.
(Participant C)

In my teaching experience, I have observed that the majority of students prefer to read digital material rather than visit the library to search for information from the printed material. As social media take the lead in providing the latest information, events, live activities and performances as they happen or just as they have taken place, it is no surprise that university students are relying more and more on social media to follow the latest trends. Students are keen on bloggers, online magazines and celebrities who are innovators. This is partly described under the term “mediatization”, which carries the notion that “the media have become increasingly central to the shaping and doing of institutions and agents, to their practices and experiences” (Rocamora 2016: 507). Chugh and Ruhi (2019: 1) define social media as “a web-based technological platform for online communication that enables users to connect and interact, share ideas and information, build and engage social networks, and develop online communities”.

Different platforms of social media have proven to be a basis for communication, sharing photographs and videos, as well as networking. Students type assignments with their mobile phones and exchange learning material that is shared by a lecturer using platforms like WhatsApp or SHAREit, to name just a few. YouTube, and lately TikTok are major contributors to self-learning and technical knowhow through posted videos. I have searched through YouTube,

TikTok and Instagram to access the latest visuals or trending videos pertaining to areas of learning that I deem appropriate to use as teaching aids or as examples with students. For this reason, I understand when students use digital space to navigate their learning.

It is also important to inquire from the participants how they view group work. This was in preparation for the project, since they were going to carry out the project in groups. Participants were asked how they managed group work:

I just don't like groups. (Participant D)

We often end up doing work because other members do not pitch for appointments. (Participant E)

Most of my colleagues have a problem with me. If they come up with excuses I continue with work and tell them that I'll submit and not include their names. (Participant D)

We assign each person a task to research a certain portion. Then we come together to put the assignment together. (Participant F)

I have realised that group assignments or projects which involve research often lack coordination. It appears that one person does his/her own part then one of the group members will put the information together without seeing whether it coordinates, follows a sequence or is even proof-read. This project required that students worked in groups of about five. I facilitated the project during lecture time to ensure that all members of the group contributed meaningfully, and that no member was left behind. One of the participants appreciated the fact that I facilitated the project from beginning to end. She said:

That's true. People just don't like to honour appointments to come together to work. But if you facilitate the project, that's good to hear. (Participant H)

Me and my groupmates work well together. We actually enjoy group work. (Participant B)

To bring to the attention of the participants the importance of sourcing information from Basotho culture, I inquired if they had included information about their culture in their visual diaries. I also asked if they had ever incorporated anything relating to their culture in their design work besides Seshoeshoe, Seanamarena

and Mokorotlo. If participants had explored Basotho culture, I asked what it was, and what was the outcome was:

I have done so. I redesigned a blanket into a medium-length poncho with a hood. I just designed it, but I did not construct it. (Participant D)

That is always the centre of our cultural projects. Have we done anything cultural that doesn't involve Seshoeshoe or Mokorotlo or Seanamarena? (Participant H)

I don't think so. Whenever we think of Basotho cultural fashion, we think along those three cultural aspects. (Participant I)

One time we designed garments inspired by different cultures around the world. The outcome was very interesting. (Participant C)

I have done a personal project on Basotho's cultural attire. Let me show you what have I done. I have pics on my phone. This is Thethana, mose-oa-khomo (dress made of softened cowhide), and brassiere. Well, it's not real leather and I do make some money out of them. (Participant E)

5.2.1 Student interviews on Litsoejane

When the background had been laid down, I asked participants about their knowledge of the three design probes. I posed a question about Litsoejane, and the participants shared their knowledge. However, there was a silence until I asked them to volunteer to speak. They then responded as follows:

I know that they wear a dress made of grass. (Participant J)

They apply white clay. (Participant I)

They decorate themselves around the arms and legs. (Participant F)

They start initiation from the age of 12. They also start the initiation ('ba kena) when there's a full moon from October to December. (Participant G)

I noted a difference between some of the knowledge from Participant G and that obtained from the elders. Mme Maseabata stated that females are initiated from the age of 18 and upwards. Mme Maseabata and Mme Lieketseng indicated that initiation starts around the month of July/August. The students continued:

They wear animal skins. (Participant J)

Ba tebuka (to walk slowly in a rhythm and in sequence.) Litsoejane walk very slowly holding their long sticks (demonstrating the movement holding a pencil). At that time, they come out of Seotloana (straw fence of Mophato which is built closer to the owner of the initiation school), Litsoejane are nicely adorned, and they look beautiful. So, Tsoejane will give a stick to a man that she likes. If the young man accepts it, that one becomes her future husband (participants laugh). (Participant A)

At night, initiated men make a bonfire and Litsojane sing and go around the fire. If a man holds Tsoejane from the circle, that one becomes his wife. (Participant K)

I asked the students what happened if Tsoejane was not chosen, and their response were:

If no man removes Tsoejane from the fire, that means she is not chosen, and she will have to dance around the fire the whole night. (Participant K)

I heard that during their release, unmarried men attend the ceremony to choose women that they like. When they attend, men buy gifts for Litsoejane and when they choose their prospective wives, they will tie a neckpiece or bracelet on chosen Tsoejane. If a brother(s) of a chosen Tsoejane do not like a gentleman who chose his/her sister, they will take off the gift off their sister's body and give it back to its owner (a group laughs). But if the brother(s) like the gentleman, they will leave the gift with their sister. Also, on the night of their graduation, some cultures or clans are said that 'ba leta thojane' (they stay alert the whole night). On the night of 'ho leta thojane', Litsoejane apply a lot of letsoku around the inner elbow and they are expected to stretch their arms for hours during the night. If they bend their elbows and letsoku shows that there was a movement of arms, they are expected to repeat that movement until they have passed that part. This is the practice of other clans. This is meant to teach them to be resilient, strong, and faithful. Again Litsoejane 'lia tebuka'. They must listen to a drum beat that beats once. With every beat of a drum, they move a step forward, taking one step at a time, sticking to a drum rhythm. They can walk in that rhythm for a long time. (Participant L)

I found the students' background knowledge to be interesting. I learned that they were also not aware of the different stages of initiation, especially at the stage where initiates are called Bale, and the dress at that stage and the last stage, when they are called Litsoejane. This is mainly because initiates are presented to the public only during the last stage of the graduation. I have heard of Maleta thojane (people who stay the whole night watching over something). The term

can also be used by people who work night shifts. I asked the students what role they thought Litsoejane played in our culture:

I don't know if they play any role. Am not used to Litsoejane because I've feared them since childhood. (Participant I)

Me too. I've never made any attempt to get close to them or find out about their initiation and benefits thereof, if any. (Participant B)

Bale have always been a no-go area. I've seen them chasing people. I don't usually come any closer to where they are. So, I lost interest in them. (Participant D)

Maybe their importance is keeping the culture of women initiation going. (Participant L)

Bale have been feared for generations, so much so, that some people, including the participants, never took the initiative to learn anything from them and their importance in terms of contribution to Basotho culture. I asked the participants if there was anything that we could learn from Litsoejane's lifestyle and the way of dressing which could be incorporated in their designs in the future:

I can use Lesira, innovate it, and use it as sunglasses. (Participant D)

Further, I asked the students about aspects of Bale's dress which they had not commented on, namely, Likhlokoane, Setea and mose-oa-khomo. There was a silence, which indicated that participants did not have opinions about those aspects. I suggested to the students that perhaps they might not see the bigger picture now regarding the incorporation of aspects of culture into their day-to-day design. I shared with them how I followed a few major fashion designers from overseas and that, from around mid-January up to early March, they hold fashion shows. I said I had been amazed to see how such designers incorporated cultural elements from Africa, among other nations. I shared with students the related visuals which had caught my attention and which I could easily relate to. I suggested to them that they could design around Likhlokoana without necessarily using them as they naturally are, and said that I had also seen how one local designer remodelled Lesira as part of a collection. I was in this way encouraging students to break the stereotypes associated with Basotho culture. We moved on then and talked about Litema.

5.2.2 Student interviews on Litema

I inquired about the students' background knowledge of Litema. Their answers were as follows:

Back in the day, Basotho's houses were decorated with Litema. Inside the house, they build meholoana (clay display units) and they will make Litema on meholoana. (Participant E)

They drew heart shapes, for instance, four heart shapes all touching at the pointed parts. So, they formed a cross-like shape. Then they will use a fork to decorate the inside of the hearts, maybe in different colours. (Participant C)

Mme Lieketseng indicated that the fork had been used by Basotho in South Africa to make Litema. Basotho women from Lesotho used different hand techniques. However, they later adopted the use of a fork; hence, Participant C knew that Litema were made using a fork. I asked participants whether Litema had inspired any different design products in Lesotho, and to share if they had seen any product where one can clearly identify the design of Litema:

Seshoeshoe and Seanamarena mostly. (Participant M)

Nkho ea Sesotho (a clay vase that holds the liquids like sour porridge, sour milk, etc.) is decorated with Litema around its mouth. And other household utensils. (Participant I)

I asked the participants if that was all that they knew and could share about Litema. There was a total silence, which suggested that participants did not know much about Litema. As a result, I shared with them the fact that Litema was a valuable Basotho art which was dying (Beyer 2014: 1). I asked the participants the following questions in order to revive this cultural practice:

- How can you revive Litema as design students?
- How can you bring them back, even if Litema cannot beautify our houses anymore?
- How can you incorporate them into your design projects, now and in the future?

They answered as follows:

We can use them as sources of inspiration, as part of fabric designs. Instead of having flowers and other designs on fabrics. Am thinking more of fabrics that are used for upholstery. (Participant L)

A follow-up question to participants was: Do you think Litema have any relevance in contemporary Lesotho?

We can also use them to come up with jewellery and apply them on t-shirt graphics or prints. (Participant A)

After some silence there were no other comments or opinions. As a result, we moved on to talk about Balisana's dress and grooming.

5.2.3 Student interviews on Balisana

I inquired about the students' background knowledge of dress and grooming of Balisana. Their answers were as follows:

They wear socks, gumboots, and wear blankets. (Participant M)
They hardly bath. (Participant A)

Balisana from Mants'onyane in Thaba-tseka district are very dark in complexion. However, one can see that they are well-fed. They look healthy. They apply charcoal around their bodies. (Participant E)

(Talking at the same time). Those Balisana do not apply charcoal, they are not clean, and they stay in the sun for a long hence a dark complexion. (All Participants)

Pitikoe (2016: 175) states that the public view herders with a generally negative image due to their uncleanness and not being hygienic. However, it is noteworthy that their manner of life and personal hygiene are largely influenced by the harsh environmental conditions under which they live. Some herders view poor hygiene as a coping mechanism against harsh weather, labouring under the belief that the unclean dark skin is a layer that shields them from cold or hot weather. In addition, the herders intentionally remain unclean in order to be identified as cattle post herders (Pitikoe 2016: 176).

Balisana stay at Motebong (at the cattle post). So Motebo is not a big house, it is not so well built. It's mostly a pile of stones, the height of Motebo is about 1.5m at most. So, they bend when they enter the Motebo. The door is made of thick sticks tied together with grass ropes. It is loosely thatch roofed. Balisana use a three-legged pot for

cooking, and it is hung from the roof. In winter they cook inside the Motebo but in summer they cook outside. Motebo is fenced by the kraal of animals. The door of Motebo faces the animals and the animals are in view of Balisana. They are expected to sleep lightly so that they guard the animals against thieves or wild animals. (Participant L)

The design of the doors of Motebo can be a diagonal line or any pattern. Some of them take time to ensure that their Motebo is habitable. Otherwise, they sleep on a pile of wood. (Participant E)

The knowledge of Participant L agrees with the account of Pitikoe (2016: 208) where she states that inside Motebo the “three-legged pot is suspended by a wire tied on the handle to a thick metal rod hanging a few centimetres above the ground. The pot is also suspended to keep the food away from the dogs”.

Balisana have a desire to form relationships with young women as well, with a prospect of marrying in the future. However, the prevalent perception of them, as being unclean, uneducated and associated with animals only, makes it a challenge for them to form relationships with young women. The extract below indicates this:

Where I come from, the church is far from the village. So, on our way to church, they would stop us, usually surrounded by their dogs. They will draw a line and they will not allow us to cross that line. We would stand on the other side of the line, and they stand on the other side. They would tell us that if we want to pass, we have to kiss them first. When we look at the distance that we would've covered from the village, we would kiss them, mostly on the cheeks, just a baby kiss. (Participant L)

(Laughing and talking together at the same time). What? No ways! You should've returned home. (All Participants)

You can't win against Balisana. If you turn back, they're likely to send dogs after you. That's the scariest part. For them, it's another form of entertainment. And we also knew that they are just excited to see girls. (Participant L)

This means the 'girls' did not see the herders as part of 'normal' Basotho society when it came to building relationships. Even when they tried to 'fit in' the girls still rejected them (Pitikoe 2016: 172). Pitikoe adds that sometimes when Balisana go home, they become aggressive because they believe that everybody does not

like them, and then they scare their girlfriends away. However, Balisana find ways to entertain themselves, when they see young girls or when they are by themselves. The discussion below communicates how Balisana entertain themselves and how participants understand Balisana's dress and grooming.

In the summer months, Balisana wear just a grey blanket, ts'eea, and gumboots while herding animals. Their ts'eea covers the front part and it is twisted at the back to cover their butt slightly and it is tied around the waist. When they see females, they turn back and open the blanket so that girls can see their buttocks. Girls will run away, which serves as a form of entertainment for them. Sometimes they cover the back with wide animal tails so that when they dance the tails move. They usually do not mean any harm. When they are away from the villages, it is said that they stay completely naked. (Participant E)

Balisana also decorate their blankets with wool stitches. They either write their names or they make a pattern on a blanket. (Participant N)
They decorate their gumboots. When a boot is torn, they build another gumboot with the soles of old boots. (Participant O)

Yah. They make a platform Gumboot. I think they patch them together by melting the soles of old gumboots because they often do not have glue. (Participant E)

They are good at making musical instruments and composing songs. They learn that from initiation training. (Participant L)

During the initiation training, time is spent teaching the initiates to compose songs and poems. When the initiates are Balisana, they learn to make musical instruments that they play along with the songs they have composed and continue composing. Usually, Balisana make musical instruments with available natural resources like wood and string or thin steel wire. When Balisana are herding, they have an arrangement of hierarchy. The older Molisana, who has been herding for years, and has wisdom to navigate the herding process is called Mampoli. The extract below indicates this:

While herding the animals, there is a Molisana who is called Mampoli (Boss). Other younger Balisana bring him food and take care of his animals, they steal a maize from the fields, braai it and give it to him.

He is feared. More often Mampoli is good with stick fighting. (Participant P)

According to Pitikoe (2016: 219), the hierarchy of Balisana exists owing to the

nature of the environment in which they live. Mampoli's role is to protect other herders. I also heard of a story on radio of one white lady who was traveling, by foot, in the mountain areas, and she came across Motebo and Balisana kept her. I don't remember the details, but apparently, she stayed at Motebong for some time and that Molisana was saying he eloped with her:

I know the story. Molisana who kept her is from my area. He kept her and instructed other Balisana not to disclose the presence of that lady. I heard that he took good care of her, cooking for her and preparing a bed for her. The lady knew Sesotho but pretended as if she doesn't understand anything. So, the police came to their Motebo looking for the lady, but they couldn't find her because she was hidden. So, days later, another Molisana tipped the police about the lady's presence at Motebong. When the police got back, they found her and arrested that Molisana. He stayed in prison for a long time. Am not sure if he is still arrested or released. (Participant E)

5.3 Phase 2: Action - dream and design of 5-D cycle

Phase 2 was focused on Action. This is the stage where two parts of 5-D Cycle, Dream and Design, were explored. Dreams involved collective visioning of Basotho fashion, group dialogues, and portrayal of positive images of a desired future of the project. The Dream "uses the interview stories from the Discovery step to elicit the key themes" (Silbert and Silbert 2006: 11; Cooperrider, Whitney and Stavros 2008: 44). Following the interview based on Phase 1, I shared information about the three design probes which was collected through interviews with the community elders. The information shared with participants inspired the design and development of moodboards and the design of the garments that were later constructed. Silbert and Silbert (2006: 11) and Cooperrider, Whitney and Stavros (2008: 45) indicate that Design draws on choosing the design elements that will support and develop the project structures to bring the dream to life.

Lawson *et al.* (2015: x) state that Participatory Action Research can be implemented with participants to express "local knowledge for locally tailored solutions". Working in this Phase, participants constructed patterns and garments and the collection was showcased to Limkokwing community as locally tailored solutions for Basotho Fashion. The moodboards and illustrations designed by

participants as interpretation of the information about the three design probes shared with them following the interviews with the Community Elders are presented and discussed in section 5.3.1.

The student/participants were divided into two major groups that formed class A and class B and which were timetabled as such. In each class, students were further divided into groups of four and five people, and were named Group 1 to Group 13. In each class, the group were allocated one of the three design probes. There were four more participants who were not part of the class of History of Fashion and who took part during the initial stage of the project in 2022. The thirteen groups and the four participants were given the first task of designing a moodboard per group, whereas the four participants did one moodboard per participant. The second task was that each member of the group should come up with at least two sketches which were based on each of the design probes allocated to their group. Each group's sketches were combined and, where possible, the sketches were juxtaposed into one illustration for the group. The four participants came up with three sketches, and together we selected the best idea or juxtaposed the ideas into one idea. The illustrations were further developed into a pattern for each group, and later, the patterns were used to cut the fabric, and garments were constructed.

5.3.1 Moodboards and illustrated designs

In this section, the moodboards designed by the groups are discussed in terms of their interpretation of the design probes in modern fashion styles

a. Litsoejane moodboards

Students designed the garments in the moodboard in Figure 5.1 by skilfully blending Litsoejane cultural elements with modern fabrics that resemble cowhide. The moodboard inspired the design that incorporated the concept of Afrofuturism into the modernised Basotho fashion aesthetic. The creative design of the garments embraces contemporary styles, cuts and accessories that will appeal to young Basotho.

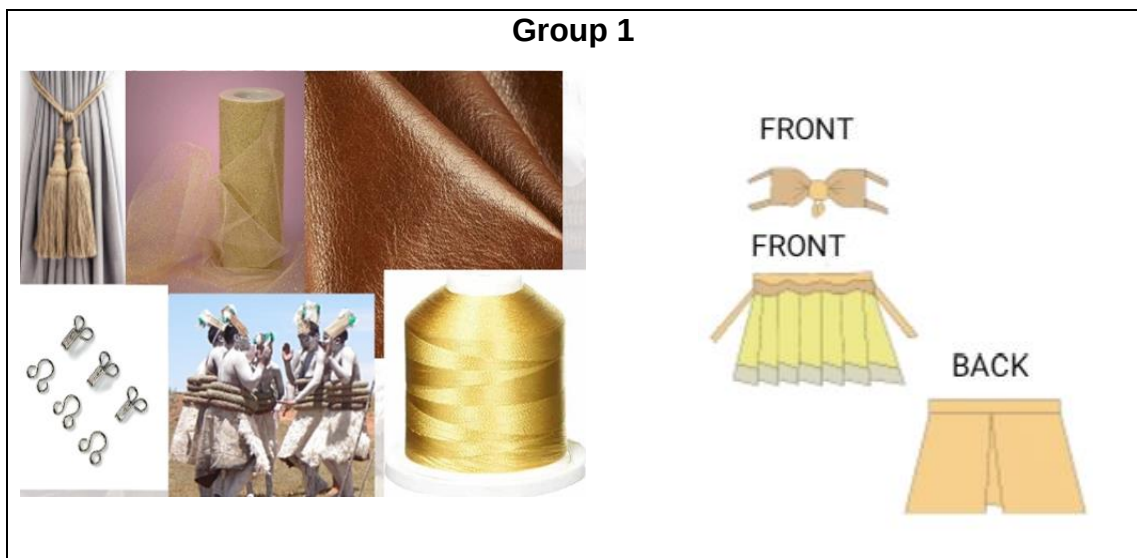


Figure 5.1: Group 1 moodboard and technical drawings, back and front

In Figure 5.2, students used geometric patterns of Litema designs to inspire innovative and contemporary Litsoejane attire in the moodboard. Colours used are gold and royal blue and neon which are meant to deviate from the earthly colours that Litsoejane wear to more vibrant and exciting colours. The creative approach to fashion demonstrates the harmonious coexistence of tradition of Basotho fashion with contemporary styles.

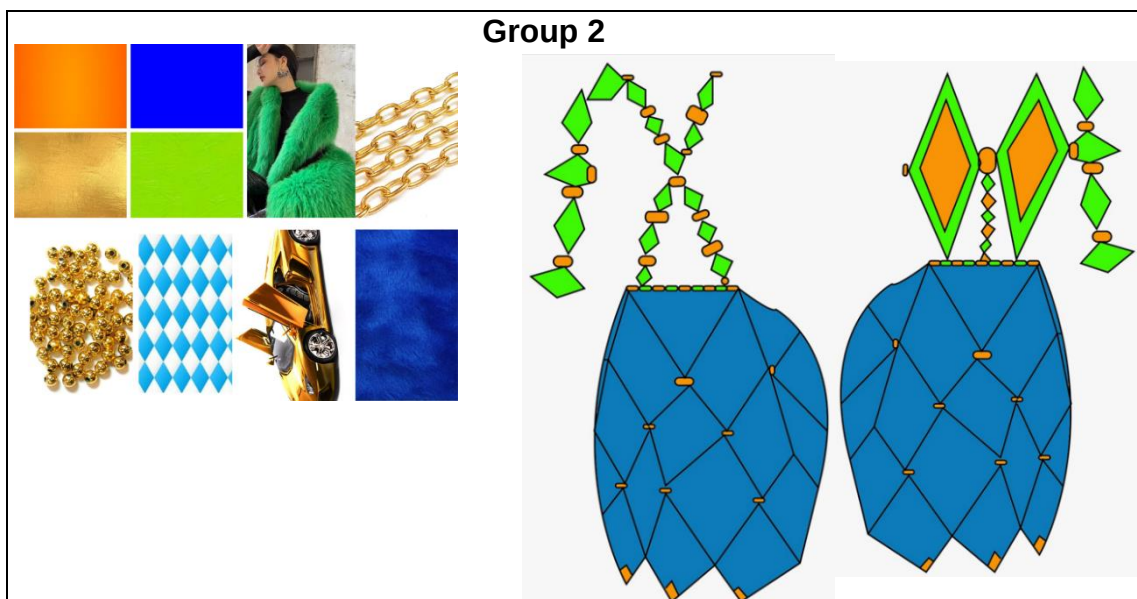


Figure 5.2: Group 2 moodboard and illustration, back and front

The moodboard in Figure 5.3 exemplifies the life of Balisana to inspire contemporary apparel based on Litsoejane. The colours from the moodboard were used to brighten the garments instead of using the traditional earthy colours. Thethana is a fringed skirt, and the back of the skirt was inspired by Thethana, with fringes proposed to be made of beads. In this way, cultural elements were used so that traditional Basotho fashion elements were not lost in the modern fashion garments.

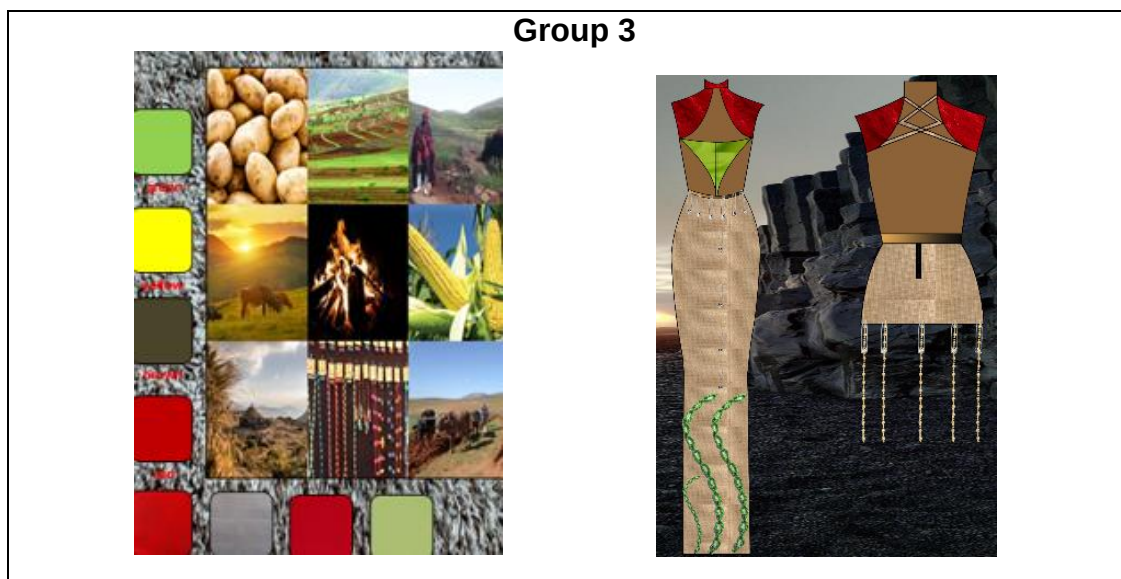


Figure 5.3: Group 3 moodboard and illustration, back and front

The moodboard in Figure 5.4 was inspired by the activities of Litsoejane during the stage of Bale. The designs of the garments push the boundaries of cultural attire by experimenting with eccentric silhouettes to create a modernised Basotho fashion. The skirt takes its inspiration from Seobi and Setea skirts, but the skirt is designed to be made up of vinyl synthetic leather instead of cowhide and sheepskin. The group innovated on the use of Likholoane by making them thinner and worn to cover the bust instead worn around the stomach and letting the breasts rest on them. A modern Mosotho girl and the maiden do not bare their breasts due to the influence of colonialism in terms of reflecting Western inhibitions about exposing the female upper body.

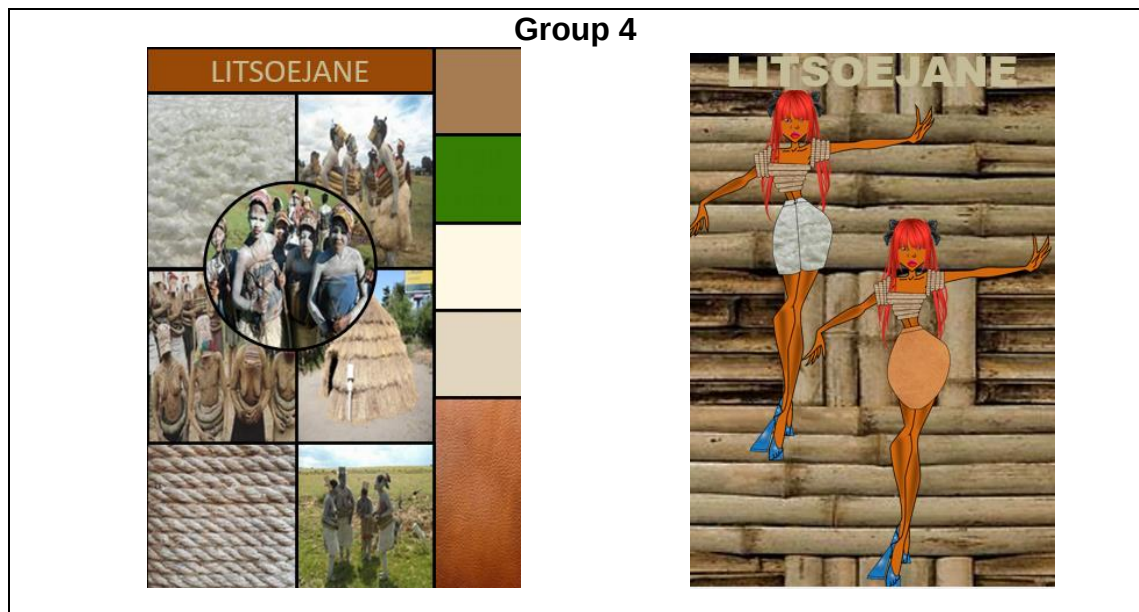


Figure 5.4: Group 4 moodboard and illustration, back and front

The moodboard in Figure 5.5 is inspired by the life of Litsoejane, the artifacts of Basotho and the practice of body painting. The students of this group have used earthy colours to stay connected to Basotho culture. The group's design blended elements of Thethana around the skirt and innovated on Lesira to resemble the fringes of Thethana.

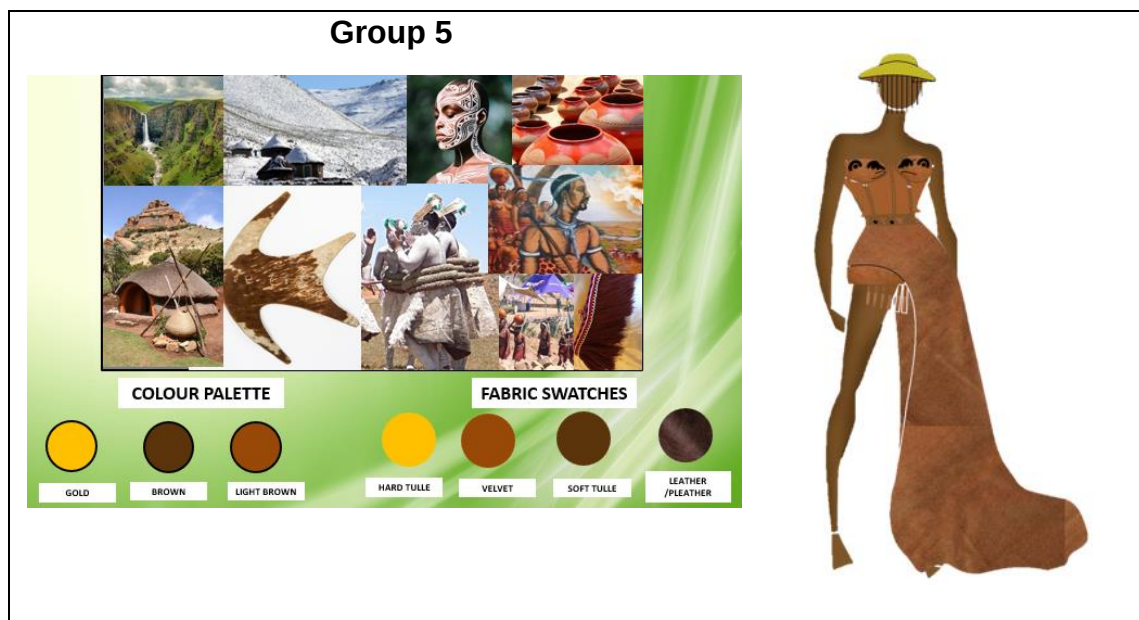


Figure 5.5: Group 5 moodboard and illustration

The moodboard in Figure 5.6 illustrates the inspiration of Litema for Litsoejane's modernised attire. The colours demonstrate how cultural aspects can be celebrated in an evolving fashion.

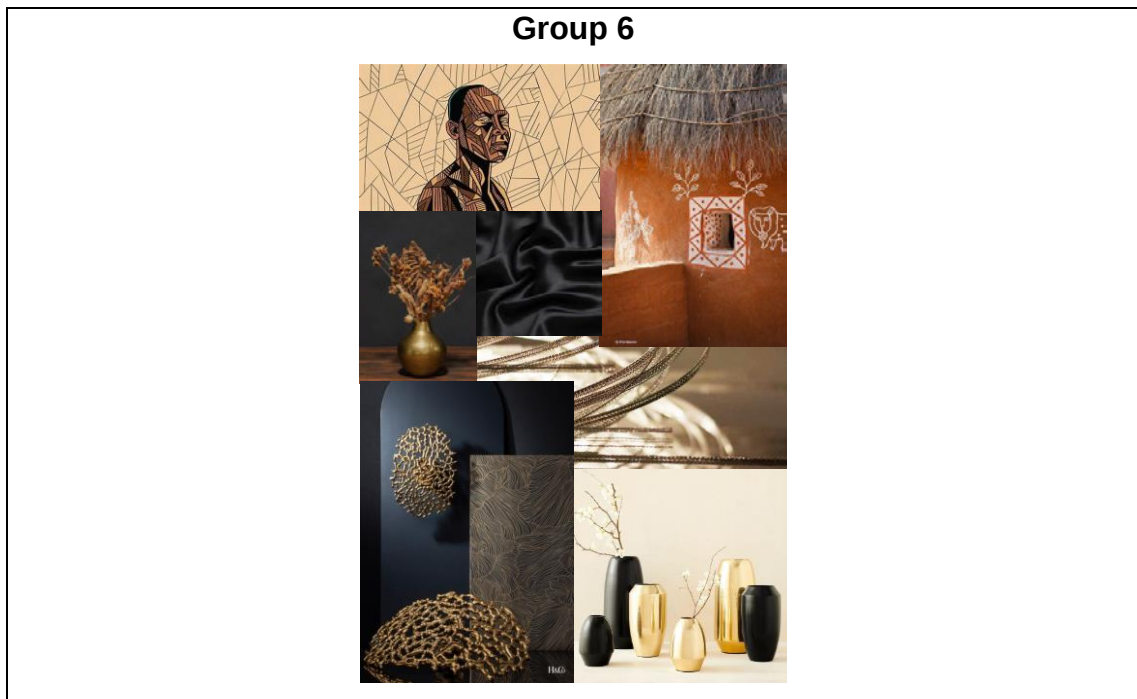


Figure 5.6: Group 6 moodboard

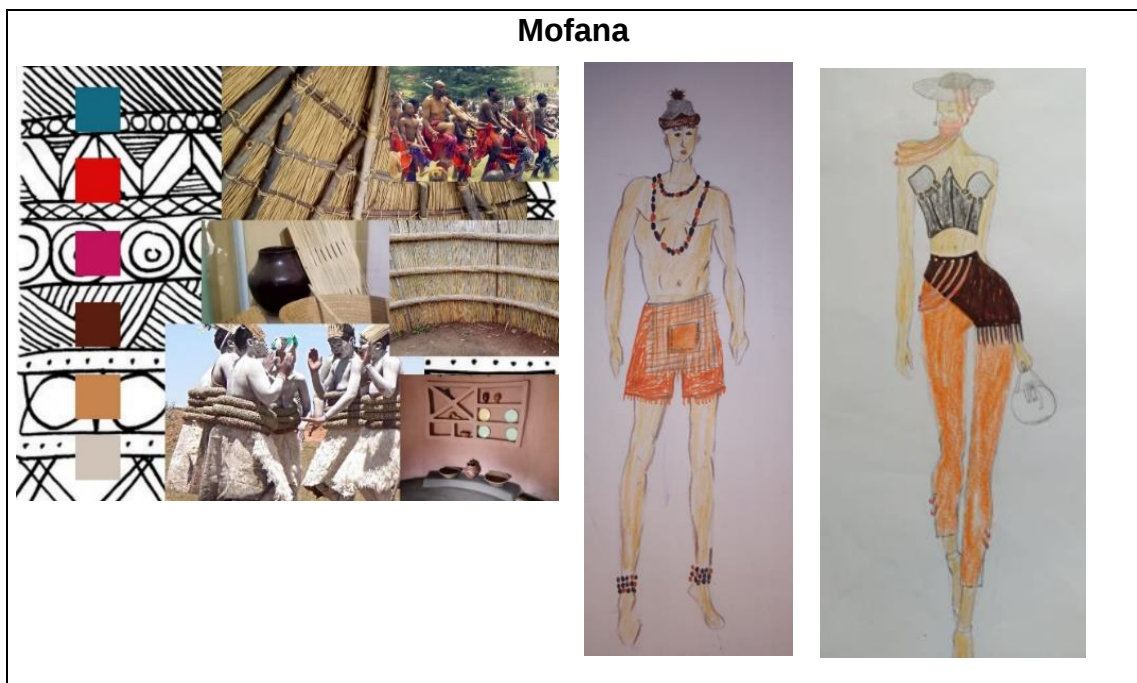


Figure 5.7: Mofana's moodboard and illustration, male and female

The moodboard in Figure 5.7 demonstrates the celebration of different cultural activities that focus on Bale. It draws attention to the line, as an element of art formed out of Likholokoana. The designs of Litsoejane's attire are inspired by Likholokoana and Thethana. The moodboard was also inspired by Balisana's attire, which is simple and incorporates Leqapha. The designs are an indication of how cultural aspects can be futuristic while they are seamlessly integrated into Basotho fashion.

b. Litema moodboards

Litema designs are seen on walls and artefacts. The moodboard design in Figure 5.8 is inspired by elements where Litema are mostly applied. The design of the apparel is the interpretation of layering of the traditional thatched roof and layers of paste which are applied on the wall in preparation for the application of Litema. The design uses earthly colours to reflect the colour of the traditional house. However, the Afrocentric design proposes to use faux leather in place of the cowhides that were used for clothing in the past.



Figure 5.8: Group 7 moodboard and illustration, front and back

The moodboard in Figure 5.9 is inspired by the application of Litema on various artefacts. The fabric is printed with Litema and the skirt blends aspects of Litema and Thethana. The design of the apparel is youthful, playful and shows much skin, as young maidens used to show most of their skin.

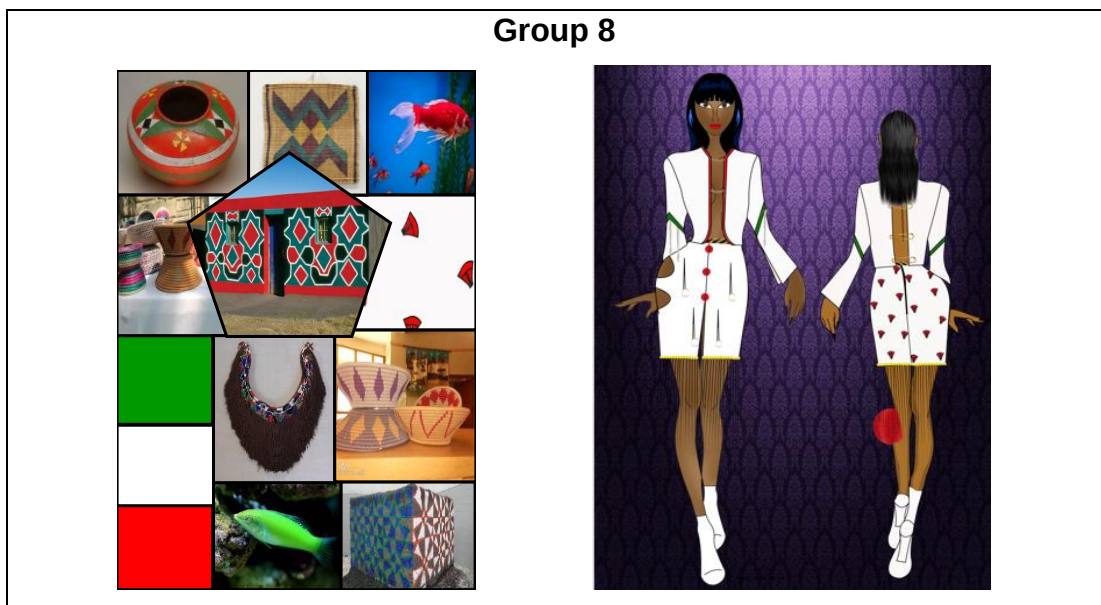


Figure 5.9: Group 8 moodboard and illustration, front and back

The moodboard in Figure 5.10 is inspired by various elements of Liteima design and other mural paintings from different regions. The fabric proposed to make the garment was printed Liteima in a beltline shape. Denim fabric was be used for this design, making it appealing to fashion-conscious youth who prefer contemporary cultural garments.

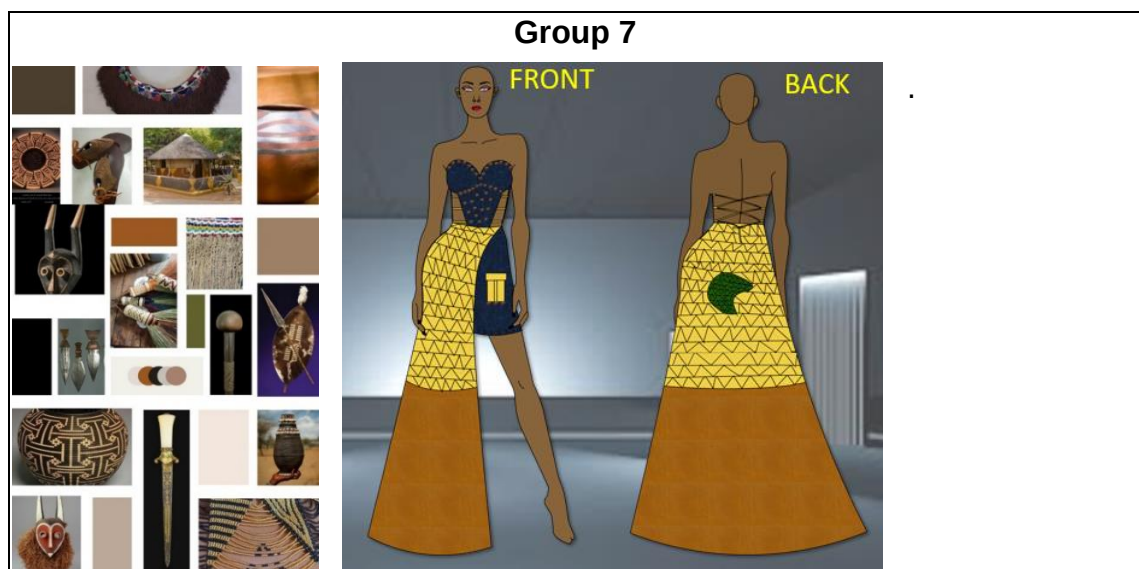


Figure 5.10: Group 7 moodboard and illustration, front and back

The moodboard in Figure 5.11 reflects the origins of the dress of a Mosotho woman. It incorporates various Litema designs and activities of the stages of Bale and Litsoejane. The design of the apparel demonstrates creativity and innovation in the use of Lesira, Likhologoane and the skirt with Litema print. This is a good example of how Basotho fashion could be decolonised.

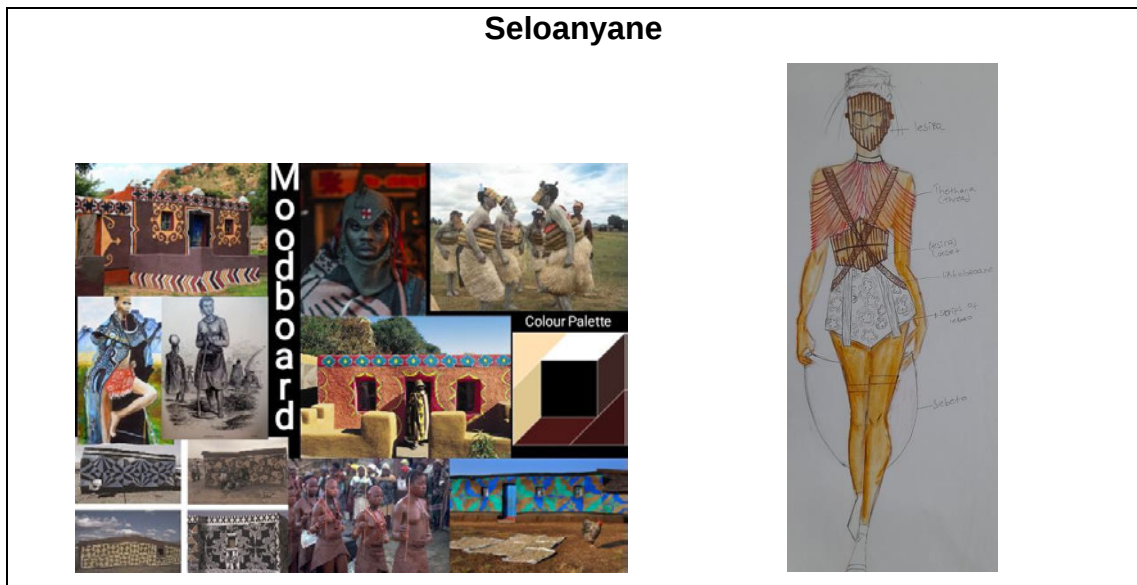


Figure 5.11: Seloanyane moodboard and illustration

The moodboard in Figure 5.12 is a demonstration of the inspiration of Basotho's cultural lifestyles. The designs show how Litsojane and Balisana can wear Afrofuturistic apparel while staying true to Basotho culture and fashion. The designs are based on the innovative use of Lesira and Likhologoane, and the use of safety pins on Balisana attire as a means for fastening the pants.

The moodboard in Figure 5.13 emphasises the life of a Mosotho woman and that of Litsoejane during the stage of Bale. It is inspired by earthy as well as modern vibrant colours. The design of the apparel pioneers the application of contemporary Litema in a very creative approach. The colours of Litema would appeal to a Mosotho youth who wanted to stay true to the culture of Basotho.

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Figure 5.12: Motelle moodboard and illustration, male and female

Makhalane

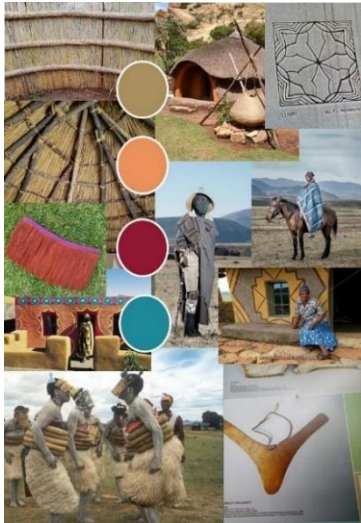


Figure 5.13: Makhalane moodboard and illustration, male and female

c. *Balisana* moodboards

The moodboard in Figure 5.14 exhibits the life of Molisana during the time when he is being incorporated back into the community. The design draws inspiration from the embellished Leqapha, the blanket and beaded neckpieces. Balisana wear gumboots, socks and Leqapha is worn over Ts'ee, but the group has creatively modernised the look in that Leqapha is designed to be worn over short pants. The outfit is well-accessorised so that the look communicates evolving Basotho fashion.

Group 10



Figure 5.14: Group 10 moodboard and illustration

The fact that Balisana's life is mainly in the open has prompted the group whose work is displayed in Figure 5.15 to design a moodboard that depicts the diverse life of Molisana. The colour story blends well with nature, which is where Molisana spends most of his life. The design of the apparel also portrays the culturally inspired clothing of Balisana by incorporating modernised elements of Balisana's attire, therefore presenting the richness of Basotho's traditional culture to Limkokwing Community.

[illegible]

Figure 5.15: Group 11 moodboard and illustration, front and back

The moodboard in Figure 5.16 represents the life of Molisana and his work of herding animals, the colours being inspired by Balisana's attire during the stages undergone in initiation training. The women's apparel design is centred around

the initiates' grey blanket, leqhapa and mesomi, and demonstrates that traditional elements can be fused into evolving wearable contemporary Basotho fashion.

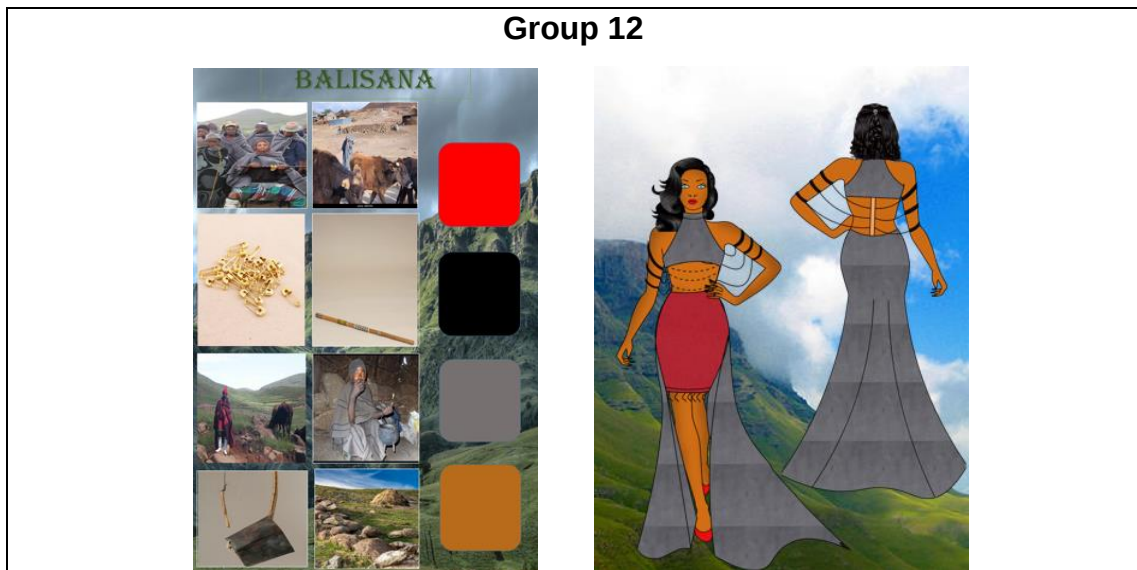


Figure 5.16: Group 12 moodboard and illustration, front and back

Balisana take care of domestic animals, which has inspired the design of the moodboard in Figure 5.17. It presents activities which make up Balisana's life. The design of the garments is inspired by Balisana's grey blanket and Litsoejane's attire, which mostly shows the skin. The design is Afrofuturistic and celebrates the diversity of Basotho culture.

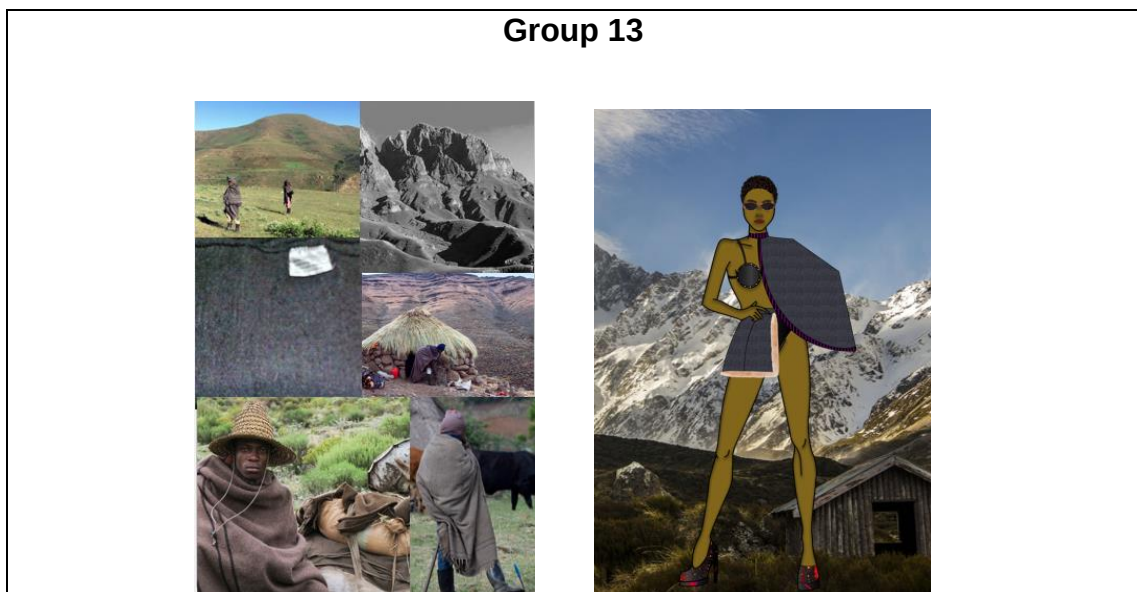


Figure 5.17: Group 13 moodboard and illustration

5.3.2 Litema designs

Participants also designed Litema. These Litema are innovative, digitalised and portray Afrofuturistic Litema in a similar way to the ones that National Teachers Training College students designed in the year 1976. As in 1976, facilitators and co-designer named each tema according to its source of inspiration. The Litema which participants designed are given in this section, as the next section deals with the actual garments arising from the moodboard designs.

The use of various software programs aimed at producing innovative cultural artworks is rapidly growing within the field of digital Design. In this project, students used digital tools to recreate traditional artworks into innovative and modernised Litema based on traditional cultural sources. The use of digital tools helped students to produce complex and advanced Litema with a high level of detail and accuracy. This can also assist in sharing Litema digitally, to multiply and reproduce them for different uses. The digitalised Litema can either be printed to be draped on the walls or they can be viewed digitally at art galleries or museums. Alice X. Zhang (who uses the Instagram handle '@alicexz') is the epitome of a designer and illustrator who uses Adobe Photoshop to produce digital artworks which clients can buy and print for themselves (Figure 5.18).

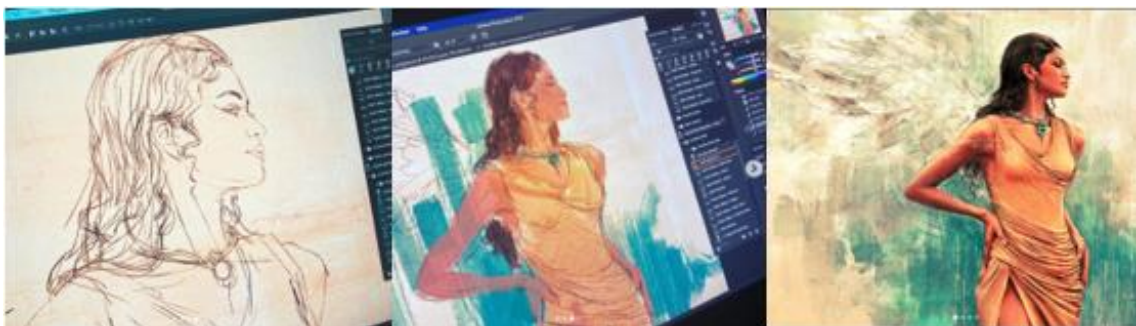


Figure 5.18: Digital painting (alicexz, in Zhang 2021)

Basotho women were inspired by different objects when they were designing Litema. Mofoka has innovated on the Poone (maize) print, which was one of the earliest prints that were mostly popular on the Seanamarena blanket (Figure 5.19).

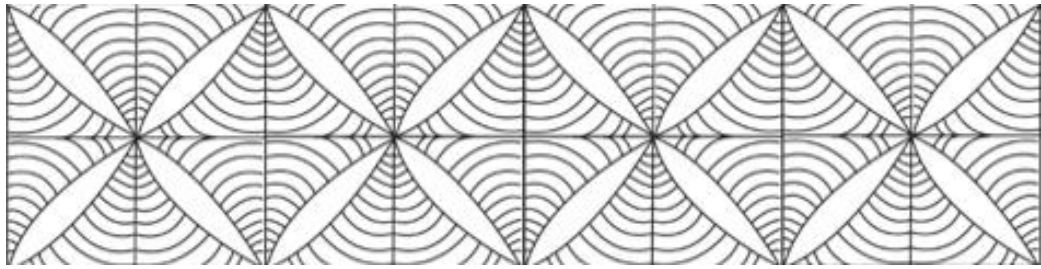


Figure 5.19: Poone (Maize) by K. Mofoka

In the past, King Moshoeshoe I wore a blanket made of softened Leopard skin. Mofoka was inspired by this blanket to design tema based on the Leopard's print (Figure 5.20). The student used digital tools to capture the print such that it forms diamonds as was the case with Basotho women when they created Litema in the past. The student's appreciation of Basotho's cultural attire has led her to juxtapose the King's blanket with the innovative Litema design.

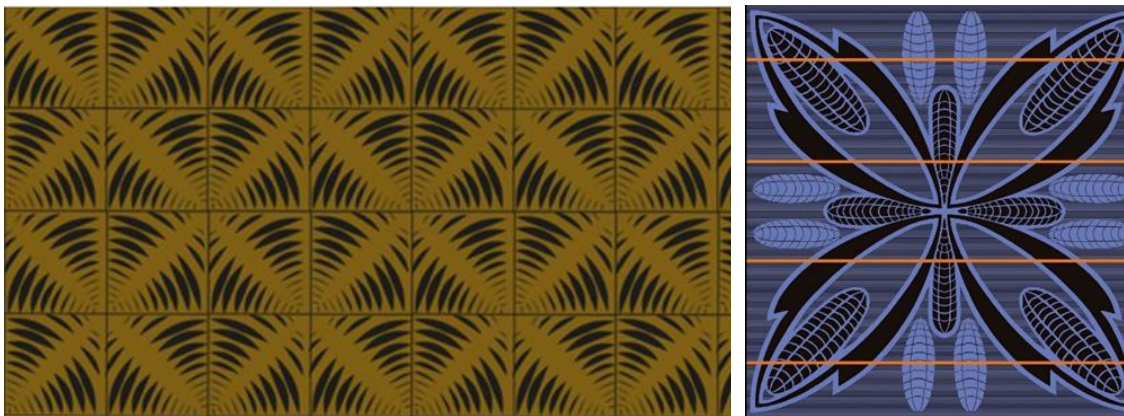


Figure 5.20: (left) Lengau (Leopard) (right) Poone print on Seanamarena blanket, by K. Mofoka

Manthele (Figure 5.21) is a fresh approach to Litema design. Mofoka has explored bold colours to create a new Tema idea. Women in the past were did not explore colour much, as Mofoka has done, owing due to the unavailability of colourful soil. The use of digital tools has enabled her to create a unique and exciting Litema to which young people can relate. Malepa and Lesaka Litema designs (Figure 5.22) are a typical exploration of cultural design into digitalised artworks. Ntlhakana was inspired by the 1976 master artists of Litema to create more complex and Afrofuturistic designs. The revival of Litema can easily be preserved, viewed and appreciated by a wider public when digital techniques are used.

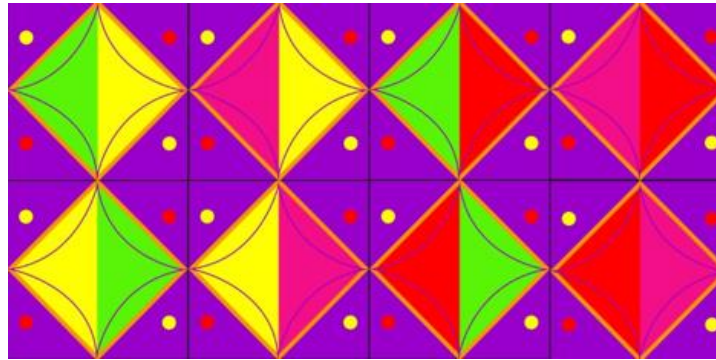


Figure 5.21: Manthele by K. Mofoka

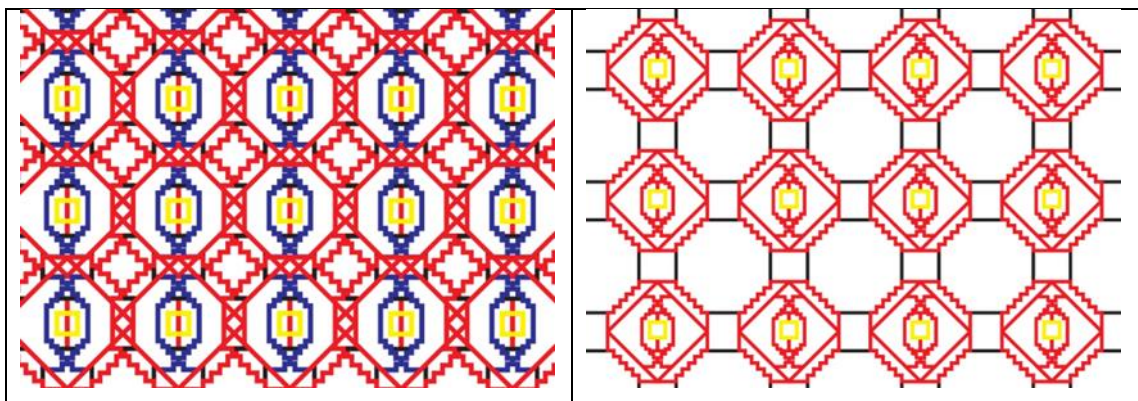


Figure 5.22: (left) Malepa (Cat's Cradle) and (right) Lesaka (Kraal) by S. Ntlhakana

Khoeli and Lekhala (Figure 5.23) draw inspiration from everyday objects that a Mosotho woman could see and encounter when carrying out household chores or collecting cow dung for smudging. Ntlhakana digitally created Liteima out of the aloe which is a very common plant in Lesotho. The Khoeli Tema maintained the famous diamond shape that Basotho women would strive to produce as they designed their Liteima. The digital technique that Ntlhakana explored in creating Liteima can promote an appreciation of Basotho cultural design. Sekhametsi (Figure 5.24) is a Tema that speaks to the cleanness and simplicity of the Liteima. Basotho women took time and attention to detail when creating Liteima. Makhalane created a Tema that interprets the innovation of Liteima. The colours and design are calm, traditional yet Afrofuturistic, and thought-provoking.

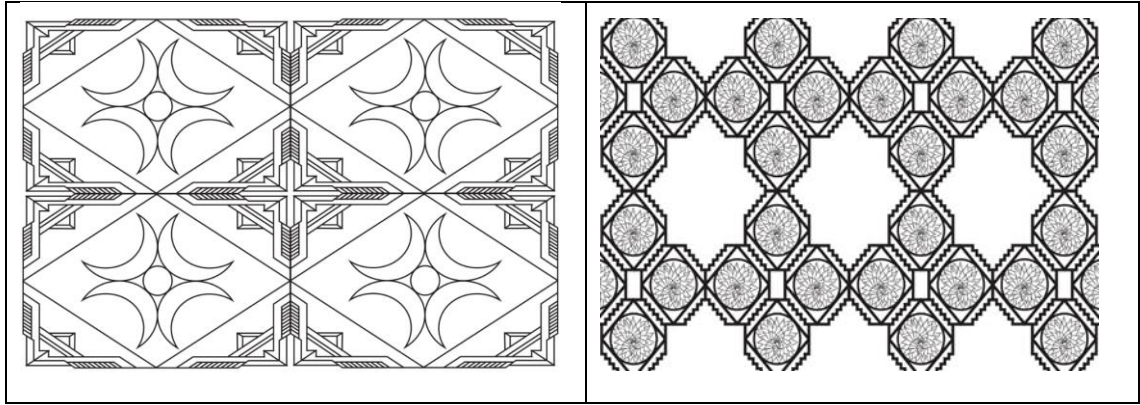


Figure 5.23: (left) Khoeli (Moon) and (right) Lekhala (Aloe) by S. Ntlhakana

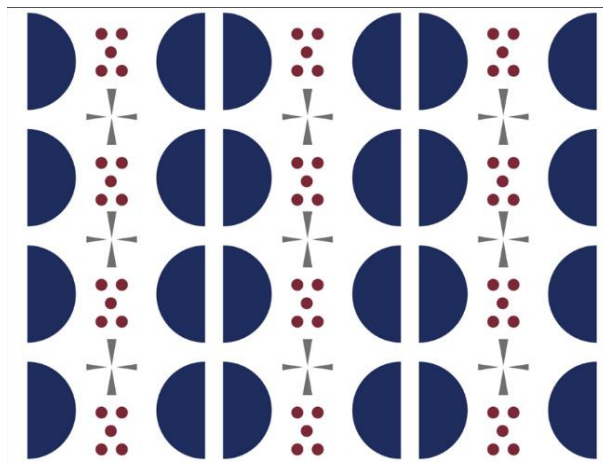


Figure 5.24: Sekhametsi (one who draws water) by K. Makhalane

5.4 Phase 2: Action - semi-structured interviews with participants

During the progress of Phase 2, a second round of interviews was held to establish whether the participants had acquired any new knowledge from the three design probes. Sokhanvar and Salehi (2019: 26) indicate that when instructors prioritise involvement of learners in classroom, students convey their feelings about different characteristics of the classroom and their experiences about their daily school life. Participants were asked to convey their feelings, thus far, about their experiences with the project. The first question focused on how satisfied participants were with facilitation of the project, and whether they felt that such facilitation had assisted them to fulfil the requirements of the project. Participants answered as follows:

There is more to it. I think it would be helpful is if it was a final project. That would be helpful to focus on the project only without worrying about the mid-term examination and final examinations at the end of the semester. (Participant O)

We see the benefits, but we are unable to give it our all because we have assignments from other courses, including the upcoming mid-term examination. (Participant N)

Participants were also asked to comment on the timeline or schedule set to finish the project:

The timeline is okay especially because we work as a group. If it was individual, it would have been hectic. (Participant A)

I agree. The group has made it easy. (Participant F)

We all agree. Hahaha!! (laughing). (Participant I)

Based on the progress of the project, the participants were asked to share their opinion on how they felt about the project thus far, and if there were any lessons which they were learning. As participants in Participatory Action Research, their opinion mattered if there was anything that they liked or disliked that they would like us to improve on:

I really like the project a lot. It has been an eye opener for me. I also didn't know that my colleagues are so knowledgeable about these three aspects. We never discuss them. I'm amazed! (Participant N)

I like how we go step-by-step with the project. But why is it not a final project? (Participant B)

I laughed and explained that it would be a final project if every person was doing all that work alone. In this project a group produces one moodboard, one final sketch and eventually make one garment. The project has been designed to ease off the load, hence the reason it is an assignment which carries 25% of the overall weight of the semester assessment.

The project was really an eye opener as we have neglected our own heritage on so many levels. Being part of the project really connected me to my roots and made me take pride in these three aspects as a Mosotho. It made me realise that as a nation Basotho do not have proper documentation of our own writings and artifacts. I learned a lot about our fashion history and I had more clarity into the everyday life

of a Mosotho, how and why they dressed in a particular way. What was quite interesting was the history behind the Seanamarena blanket and how it became a national treasure for us as a nation. (Participant S)

This project helped me to learn the parts of Basotho culture that we do not often talk or learn about. The project gives a fresh insight into these areas and makes it clear why some of the cultural accessories were designed in a particular manner. I also learned that Basotho are more than just Seshoeshoe fabrics and Seanamarena blanket. (Participant T)

This project is really important and eye-opening. I didn't know a lot of Basotho's garments and the way Basotho used to live before taking part in this project. It really helped me to see and become aware of many Basotho household items and weapons. The project has made me more attentive towards the Basotho culture. I have also learned how Basotho really dressed, even though we were told different stories from childhood. (Participant U)

The project is an effective way of embracing and educating us about Basotho's least recognised ethnicity, culture and traditions. The project helped me become more attentive to the smallest details centred around Basotho's culture. I also learned that Basotho are amongst the most creative people but they lacked the resources to advance their creativity based on their culture. (Participant V)

As much as I love the idea of modernisation but I see the importance of not forgetting our culture and tradition. The project encouraged me to look back, study and have knowledge of how our great grandparents lived and how they dressed; as a result, I was able to understand where we come from and used that information as an inspiration for the project. I love the project. (Participant W)

In my opinion this project came to be quite interesting and educational. I am a Lesotho citizen and a Mosotho but there are parts of the culture which I have not been aware of but I was introduced to those aspects through the project. I have learned that there is a lot of effort put before the final product as Litsoajane/Bale and grooming of Balisana showed that every piece of clothing or accessory is used for a certain reason or a purpose. (Participant X)

Following a short interview, the participants continued with pattern drafting and garment construction (Figure 5.25). They then constructed the garments, and fitted them onto dress forms, participants and their models (Figure 5.26).



Figure 5.25: Participants constructing the patterns



Figure 5.26: Participants constructing garments and fitting them onto dress forms, participants and their models

5.5 The garments produced for showcasing

This section deals with the constructed garments which were showcased to Limkokwing community on the 24th of April 2023 at Limkokwing campus. Each group focused on the construction of one garment. The inspiration and fabrics used for each garment are explained. To sum up, the students have displayed an understating of the research project. This is evident from the moodboards previously discussed, which served to introduce the interpretation of Basotho culture visually. Students used software to revolutionise the design probes effectively while demonstrating a sense of appreciation for Basotho traditional culture. With an understanding of the role that they occupy in decolonisation of Basotho culture and the need to employ their techno-savvy skills, students digitised their designs, thereby aligning Basotho fashion with the concept of Afrofuturism.

5.5.1 Garments inspired by dress and grooming of Bale and Litsoejane

In Figures 5.27a-b, the group has designed garments that speak to Basotho fashion with the use of contemporary fabrics that have the appearance of animal skins. The group was therefore able to capture the design that reflects Basotho fashion in terms of mirroring traditional garment materials. Figure 5.27b is also in the manner of a contemporary dress for modern-day Litsojane, designed for a maiden in the 21st century. The maiden would understand and comply with traditional activities but would be conscious of covering her bust with Likhlokane but leaving her waist uncovered. This garment is not only based on traditional Basotho apparel, but is considered suitable for modern-day initiation dress.

It has been a marvel to observe how students responded positively to undertaking the cultural project beyond Seshoeshoe and Seanamarena. In Figures 5.27a and 5.27b the group explored the Afrofuturism concept by using vinyl synthetic leather for garments with traditionally inspired designs.

Garments inspired by the dress and grooming of Bale and Litsoejane



Group: 4

Fabrics used: Likhologoane, seobi (softened sheep skin) and linen.

Inspiration: Bale wear likholokoane around the waist, this design used likholokoane across the bust. Seobi dyed and worn as a back skirt instead of a front skirt. Likhologoane cover the bust to respond to dress of modern Mosotho maiden. The look is pre-colonialist and Afrocentric.

Figure 5.27a: The constructed garment by Group 4, front and back of Bale's dress.



Group: 4

Fabrics used: Vinyl synthetic leather and Likhologoane.

Inspiration: This design used Likhologoane across the chest, covering the bust and they are embellished in the way that Litsoejane adorn themselves upon graduation. The look is pre-colonialist and Afrocentric.

Figure 5.27b: The constructed garment by Group 4, front and back of Bale's dress



Group: 6

Fabrics used: Suede, Vinyl synthetic leather and toil tassels made of toil used for making Thethana.

Inspiration: The design is inspired by Litsoejane upon graduation. A veiled hat draws its inspiration from Thethana and represent Lesira that is used by Bale. A suede fabric has been used in place of soften mose oa khomo. The look celebrates a modern Mosotho woman who has a keen eye on futures of fashion while remaining true to culture.

Figure 5.27c: The front of a modern Litsoejane's dress garment

Designs inspired by the dress and grooming of Bale and Litsoejane



Group: 6

Fabrics used: Maroon Vinyl synthetic leather.

Inspiration: This design is an Afrofuturistic Litsoejane's dress. Maroon Vinyl synthetic leather with a round bustier represents the attire for the unmarried modern Tsoejane.

Figure 5.27d: A futuristic Tsoejane's dress



Student: Mofana

Fabrics used: Black Vinyl synthetic leather, mosea bustier, linen and Likhologoane.

Inspiration: the design is inspired by Likhologoane as part of Bale's dress. Safety pins are used to embellish the garment, which custom is derived from Balisana's dress. A waist accessory represents kholokoane and the bustier is inspired but the way Basotho women dress, The look is an integration of culture, modern elegance, fashionable and it is Afrofuturistic.

Figure 5.27.e: Another futuristic Tsoejane's dress

Figure 5.27: Garments inspired by dress and grooming of Bale and Litsoejane

Synthetic fabrics have been used very effectively to replicate the appearance of traditional natural materials, but the design of the garments transcends the traditional effect in terms of being striking and trendy. Moreover, the features which inspired modesty and privacy in traditional initiation ceremonies, now flaunt and tease provocatively. Masks and veils suggests mystery rather than secrecy, and the brassieres are bold (Figure 5.27c, Figure 5.27e, Figure 5.28g).

5.5.2 Garments inspired by Litema

The next section shows garments inspired by Litema.

Garments inspired by Litema



Group: 7

Fabrics used: Vinyl synthetic leather and tulle.

Inspiration:

Litema are formed by drawing similar shapes that tie together to formulate a new Tema. The dress has been layered to communicate the roofing of a traditional hut and of the paste applied on the walls in preparation of Litema. This look elevates traditional attire to modern runway status.

Figure 5.28a: A dress that is inspired by Litema



Group: 8

Fabrics used: Printed Twill and tassels.

Inspiration: The design explored the art of colouration on a fabric, inspired by Litema. However, the look exemplified Balisana's blanket. When a blanket gets older, Balisana fray the ends into tassels, hence the tassled skirt. The garment is playful and appeals to young Basotho who are conscious of their culture yet modern and fashionable in their dress.

Figure 5.28b: A fringed garment inspired by Litema



Group: 9

Fabrics used: Twill printed Litema, and Denim.

Inspiration: The design is inspired by Litema. It is a revival of a dying Litema art, merging the past with the current trends. The dress demonstrates a rich culture that is modernised.

Figure 5.28c: The Litema printed dress

Garments inspired by Litema



Participant: Seloanyane

Fabrics used: Twill printed with Litema art, linen and Vinyl synthetic leather.

Inspiration: The design of the garment is based on Litema but the dress is inspired by Litsoejane's dress. The garment is designed for Litsoejane's married women, post-initiation. The neckpiece is inspired by Balisana's lifestyle. The look incorporates the design probes in a contemporary fashion.

Figure 5.28e: The Litema printed dress



Participant: Motelle

Fabrics used: Twill printed Litema art and Vinyl synthetic leather.

Inspiration: The design (left) is inspired by Litema but it is designed for maiden Litsoejane upon graduation. A neck piece is inspired by mohlehlo. The look is an indication of how Afrofuturistic Litsoejane's dress can be.

Fabrics used: Vinyl synthetic leather and twill printed Litema art and linen.

Inspiration: (Right) the male look is inspired by Balisana and signifies the livestock that Balisana take care of. The look incorporates Litema, a reminder of a warm home while they spend most of their lives staying at Motebong. The looks are contemporary while appreciating culture.

Figure 5.28f: The garments inspired by Litema and Balisana as design probes

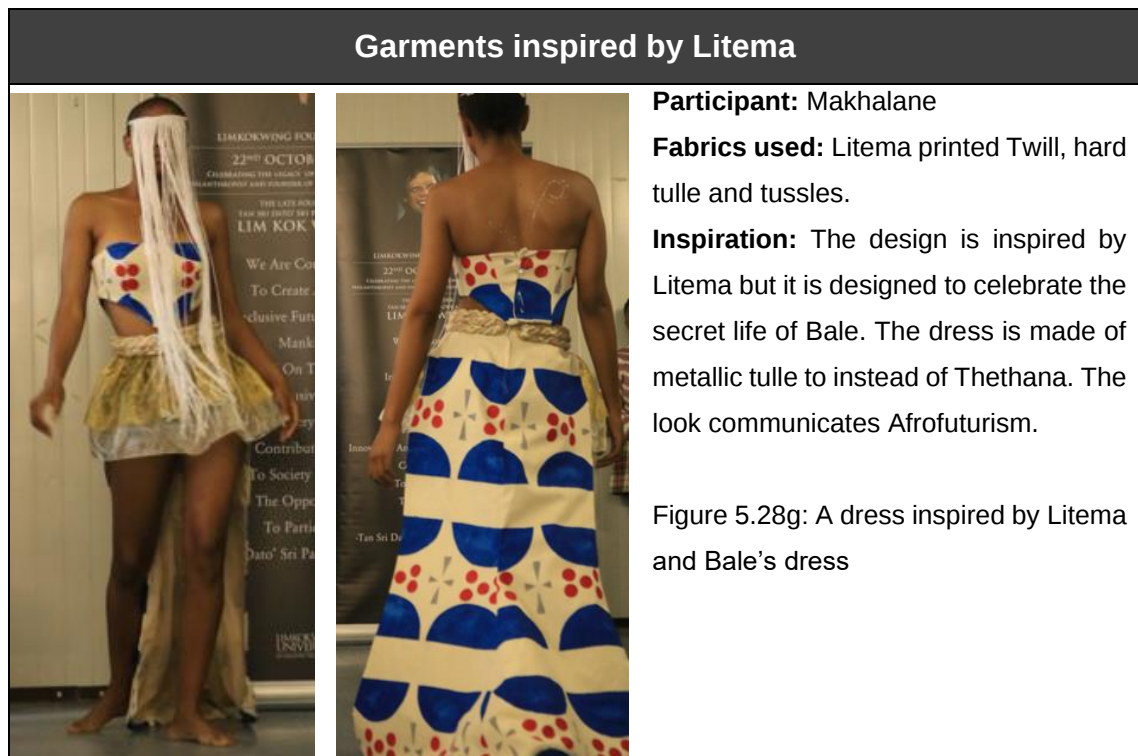


Figure 5.28: Garments inspired by Litema

In addition to the interpretation of the design probes, the groups experimented with techniques of incorporating Litsoejane body painting and artwork in a fashion that young people can relate to (Figure 5.28c and Figure 5.29b). Significantly, the students have decolonised Litema and approached the design innovatively and differently from how they were applied by Basotho women (Figures 5.28c and Figure 5.28g).

5.5.3 Garments inspired by the dress and grooming of Balisana

Students went further to demonstrate that what is commonly male Balisana's dress can inspire a modernised and Afrofuturistic Basotho female fashion (Figure 5.30). The groups explored, not just Balisana's dress as an inspirational source, but the animals that Balisana take care of. In Figures 5.28f and 5.29b the students demonstrated out-of-the-box thinking when they incorporated faux fur that speaks to sheep and goat skins. Balisana are known 'to do and make with what is available', tearing garments further into tassels or roughly hand-stitching them with bits of string, using handmade sewing needles.

Garments inspired by the dress and grooming of Balisana



Group: 10

Fabrics used: Twill, Umbhaco Acrylic and tussles.

Inspiration: The design is inspired by Balisana. Upon graduation, some Makoloane wear Leqapha. Leqapha is embellished with safety pins and steel jingle balls. The group has pushed the boundaries of cultural attire by experimenting with unconventional silhouettes.

Figure 5.29a: A garment inspired Balisana's dress



Group: 11

Fabrics used: Denim, check fabric and jersey knit.

Inspiration: The design is inspired by Balisana. The Afrocentric look celebrates the transition of Balisana from Makoloane to manhood.

Figure 5.29b: A garment that celebrates Balisana's life and dress



Participant: Mofana

Fabrics used: Linen.

Inspiration: The design is inspired by Morena Leraba, a former Molisana. The attire is innovative and appeals to youth who love to blend traditional clothing with modern fashion elements. The attire celebrates Balisana's carefree life while they are herding, especially in the summer months.

Figure 5.29c: Molisana's attire

Figure 5.29: Menswear inspired by dress and grooming of Balisana

Figure 5.29b epitomises the purposely torn garments of Balisana. The garment also signifies the lifestyle and attire of a modern Molisana. The students reflected on the appreciation of Basotho culture and they have demonstrated this in their artworks. They were also keen on decolonising Basotho fashion however, they saw the need to utilise technology in their designs as this can help to preserve the culture digitally.

Garments inspired by the dress and grooming of Balisana	
	Group: 12 Fabrics used: Cotton and felt. Inspiration: The design is inspired by Balisana's dress following the initiation. The look shows traditional menswear inspires Afrofuturistic womenswear. Figure 5.30a: Womenswear inspired by traditional menswear
	Group: 13 Fabrics used: Boucle and faux fur trimmings. Inspiration: The design is inspired by Balisana. The group has skilfully blended cultural elements with modern fashion aesthetics. The attire is designed for a modern maiden Litsoejane upon graduation. Figure 5.30b: Womenswear inspired by Balisana's lifestyle.

Figure 5.30: Womenswear inspired by the dress and grooming of Balisana

What is interesting about the garments in Figure 5.30 is that traditional Balisana dress, that is, menswear, has been used to inspire Afrofuturistic womenswear.

This is an extension of the trend shown in Figure 5.28f, where designs inspired by Litema have been used for both men's and women's apparel. This follows modern unisex fashion trends in designing garments which appeal to both men and women.

5.6 Phase 3 Reflection and Evaluation- Destination of 5-D Cycle

Silbert and Silbert (2006: 10) note that engagement of Appreciative Inquiry can involve small "focused working groups which need to generate new knowledge, innovations and implementation plans". The last stage of the project reflects on the working out of the entire project by myself and participants, upon the show of the collection to Limkokwing community. Silbert and Silbert (2006: 11) state that Destiny cycle builds a capacity of participants to continue with the process of the project themselves. Cooperrider, Whitney and Stavros (2008: 46) add that Destiny is the time of "continuous learning, adjustment, and improvisation, all in the service of shared ideals". Together, we reflected on whether there was any new knowledge that had been generated and which participants felt that they have gained.

5.6.1 Third semi-structured interview with participants

Participants were asked if the project assisted them to probe further into knowledge about Basotho culture and whether participants had discovered any other less-explored cultural aspects of Basotho. The participants answered:

It has enlightened some of us who didn't know much about our culture, especially those three aspects. I never thought much about the dress and grooming of Balisana, but now I have a different view of their dress and grooming. (Participant O)

Most of us in here, grew up in modern times. We were taught certain things about our culture in schools, but I never gave myself a chance to really learn deeper about our culture as I am doing now. Also, I see its importance now, as you made an example with the MaXhoza brand. Had I not participated in this project, I wouldn't have learned so much about my culture. Now, I know that I have to dig deeper into the culture in order to package myself as a unique brand inspired by Basotho's culture. (Participant C)

Participants were asked if they had learned any lessons or acquired any skills during this project, especially from working as a team with their colleagues in groups:

I have learned that there is more that I can create if I incorporate my culture in my designs. (Participant Q)

Participants were further asked if they would participate in similar projects in the future:

I would love to. In the future I would love to be more hands-on, maybe come up with a collection inspired by certain cultural item. Maybe Lesaka (a kraal), Basotho's traditional wedding dress or use artefacts as sources of inspiration. The project has shown that there is more to be discovered about us as Basotho than meets the eye. (Participant A)

Since participating in the project, I have appreciated Basotho's culture even more. You made an example with MaXhoza, and that made me realise the importance of making a success out of my culture. (Participant Q)

Participants were asked whether they had been inspired to use other sources of Lesotho's historical resources as inspiration in their future collections or if they saw themselves creating a range of garments inspired by Balisana's dress and grooming, Litema or drawing from aspects of Litsoejane's dress and grooming.

I knew about the three themes (design probes) but I never gave them much attention or see their importance in my life. Now I know that I can print Litema on a fabric to make a garment, I can take parts of Litsoejane's dress, like Likholokoane, and design around them, I can re-design balaclava. I believe there is more that I can do about the three themes going forward. (Participant R)

Definitely and particularly Litema as I did fall in love with the art and geometric design behind them, so much so that I have applied for Aranda class of 2023 blanket competition. I have been purely inspired by what I have learned about Litema and realising that there is still a long way to go in exploring such elements that exist or existed within our culture. (Participant S)

Yes. I am most definitely considering using these three elements in my design journey. They portray who we are as Basotho and I hope that sometime soon I will find a chance to design a range around these elements. (Participant T)

I do see myself using the three elements in my design journey because they are part of my culture. As a Mosotho designer, I have to create clothes that reflect my culture. This will help promote our country and our culture and to be recognized by the world. It is my responsibility as a Mosotho fashion designer to make my culture to be seen and recognised in the fashion industry. It is important to use traditional attire in our designs as Basotho designers. It is always good to always remember where we come from. (Participant U)

In my design journey, I feel that Litsoejane's grooming can be incorporated in other fashion categories, for instance, in bridal collection. I can use the cow hide for the bridal wear and likholokoane as well as other elements on the attire. Basotho are normally known for Seshoeshoe, however new fabric prints can be adapted from Litema to be added under the umbrella of Basotho's famous fabrics. (Participant V)

I think I will come up with great designs inspired by the dressing and grooming of Litsoejane. (Participant W)

Not only are these three aspects art, they are also a great deal for Basotho's heritage. So, as a Mosotho designer, it would be a privilege to introduce them in my designs. (Participant X)

Going forward, I do see a lot of cultural influence in my designs from the three elements as the world is looking for something new and rich in culture and history. As a nation we have hardly explored our own heritage as sources of fashion inspiration, particularly Litema. I just fell in love with Litema. I see a potential in digitalised Litema used anywhere else except on the houses. (Participant S)

I was more drawn to Litsoejane/Bale because it is a topic less spoken of. I realised that the topic contains a lot of dress and grooming that I never knew the meaning of, let alone the attires. I see myself using Bale/Litsoejane as my sources of inspiration for any garments that I would design going forward. We discussed a lot of things about Basotho's culture and it has made me go back and research further with the aim of discovering more about our culture. (Participant T)

It was good to hear how participants were inspired to think and design around their culture especially the three design probes. I inquired from the participants if there was anything else that they had discovered during this project regarding Basotho culture:

I am mostly interested in the dress and grooming of Bale/Litsoejane and Litema. I have discovered how the Basotho women used to dress, especially the dress made of lekoko (cow hide) and how women used to cover their breasts with mokorotlo (a cone-shaped brassiere) as

opposed to a culture where I knew that Basotho women were bare breasted most of the time. I have discovered the dressing of a warrior Mosotho in a woman. (Participant U)

Thetana (fringed skirt). I saw how the modern tassels concept came from Thethana, the only difference being the type of thread used. I also see Thethana used for more purposes such as decorative elements within a garment or as an accessory. I have also learned to come up with Litema and print them on fabric and the fabric looks amazing. (Participant U)

The dress and grooming of Litsoejane captured my interest since it is a topic less spoken about. I discovered a lot about cultural elements, namely; kitchen utensils decorated with Litema' and architectural styles and decorations. I also learned about Basotho norms and values, including how different age groups used to dress, entertain themselves and how they lived, which influenced their dress. (Participant V)

Litema are like modern-day tattoos on houses. The effort that Basotho took to find the right places to obtain good quality raw materials to paint them was amazing! I've learned that I can also go an extra mile to colour fabrics in my desired colours and make surface designs to produce hand-made jewellery and many other uses. (Participant X)

I took time to learn about male initiates' dress. I became interested in Leqapha, how it's made and embellished. (Participant L)

Taking the participants' contributions from the focus group semi-structured interviews, one can conclude that they have benefited from participating in this research project. It is my hope that participants have learned the importance of appreciating Basotho culture and will use the information to inspire their designs going forward. When the project started, Participants were very enthusiastic about their participation; as the project progressed, the energy lowered; and at the end of the project, especially during the collection show, participants were very excited and exclaimed that they would love to undertake another project of a similar nature. Participants were incorporated as models as well as designers and dressmakers, and formed the majority of the models. That contributed to their joy and allowed them to take ownership of the designs, as they could see their worth within the project.

5.6.2 Contributions emerging from spectators and participants

This section looks at some of the remarks from the audience who attended the showcasing of the collection, as well as the comments from the participants. These comments show that spectators as well as participants were enthralled and captivated by the collection:

I love how the students brought out the cultural aspects in a modern and exciting manner. This show indicates that young designers can accomplish a lot in fashion if they dig deeper in their culture. (Viewer A)

Thanks for inviting us, we were hoping to see garments made from Seshoeshoe and the blankets. This was unexpected! I was sitting there amazed that young Basotho can interpret their culture so beautifully. Well done and your students. I loved their collection. (Viewer B)

I see the results of hard work and the reason you were working on weekends. Well done and your team of students! We hope that when we request students to produce designs inspired by culture, they will have a point of reference. It is good that you involve them so that they understand how to interpret the information into working designs. I loved their designs. Amazing!! (Viewer C)

Woow!! I am speechless! That was beautiful! I didn't expect to see so many designs. I am working on a project based on Litema. I feel inspired and see a different angle that you took. However, I feel that there was more that you and your team could have done with Litema. But well done. Please make students to come up with more of similar projects. (Viewer D)

They are in their second year of study, but they were able to come up with such collection!! They are already coming up with such incredible work! I loved their work even though one can see that other garments needed a finer workmanship. (Viewer E)

They have worked hard. I loved how they have interpreted Litsoejane, that is amazing! I was wondering whether they will really grasp the culture and interpret it in a way that still speak to Basotho. They did that so well. (One of the elders)

Participants were excited by the response, and commented by saying:

I would love to be involved in a similar project in the future! I couldn't believe that the collection came out so well. (Participant- A)

This project ignited the artist in me. From now onwards I will strive to design my fabric and make garments out of them. In fact, that is what I will do for my final year collection. (Participant T)

Thank you for including me in this project. I learned so much. I asked my employer to release me to come for the show and to see how my garments are. She is expecting the photos tomorrow. I will show her without hesitation. Thank you! (Participant O)

I learned a lot about our culture and how to interpret the information into designs. Some were feeling that the project adds a lot of work, but now we are all so happy with outcome. (Participant E)

5.7 Conclusion

This chapter has shown how the phases of Participatory Action Research in which the three design probes were interpreted by participants led to innovative designs with their roots deep in the cultural traditions and ceremonies of the Basotho, yet springing afresh in bold new forms celebrating creative youthful fashion. The potential as an expression of Afrofuturism and decolonisation of the design syllabus became clear in the excitement of the participants and what they had achieved, as well as the rapt responses from their audience in the fashion show. The next chapter will draw conclusions as to how such designs contribute towards changing pedagogies in the creative design education field, striving for an inclusive education that embraces cultural diversity, and will make recommendation for further research and curriculum change.

Chapter 6: Conclusions and recommendations

6.1 Introduction

This chapter deals with the conclusions and recommendations of the research. It focuses on the key themes involved in the research, namely, how the three design probes were implemented and interpreted by participants throughout the project. The chapter discusses the extent to which the aims and objectives of the research were achieved in terms of the findings of the design probes and the implementation of the 5-D Cycle of Appreciative Inquiry in the phases of Participatory Action Research. In addition, the challenges that were encountered during data collection and the progression of the research project are discussed. The conceptual framework of appreciative inquiry and participatory action research is shown to have been instrumental in guiding and shaping the project. The implications of the results for future research and design education are presented, and recommendations are suggested for both future research and design education. The chapter concludes with the researcher's reflections on carrying out the research project.

6.2 The extent to which the research aim and objectives were achieved

To achieve the aim and objectives, the research was designed to be a collaborative project that involved a participatory approach with students as participants and myself as both lecturer and researcher. The project incorporated the theoretical framework of appreciative inquiry and participatory action research. These two elements were instrumental in guiding the research project in designing the moodboards and illustrations and constructing the patterns and garments. The findings on the three design probes informed the research project that students undertook (1.4.3: i and ii).

6.2.1 Key findings on the design probes

From the findings, it was concluded that the study revealed the following regarding the design probes:

a. Findings on Litsoejane

The practice has been in existence for many years. The style of dress has not been influenced much by colonisation since it has been practiced in secrecy. The challenges met with the collection of data about Litsoejane were mainly the availability of photographs to support the information the elders shared. However, the sourced visuals were used to relay the information visually to participants. Participants were eager to learn more about this cultural aspect that is seldom explored. Participants designed moodboards and illustrations that portrayed decolonised Litsoejane based on different stages of initiation.

b. Findings on Litema

The findings revealed that the house is subjected to different phases prior to the application of Litema. During data collection, it was again a challenge to locate houses that were decorated with colourful Litema. Thus, visuals from secondary sources were used to communicate the colourful art of Litema. Participants were amazed at the intricacy and creativity that Litema designers displayed, especially taking into consideration the fact that Basotho women were not educated, but they were able to measure and produce Litema accurately. Participants were inspired to design the moodboards, the illustrations and finally produce garments that communicate Litema art.

c. Findings on Balisana

During the project, Balisana were still often seen around herding the animals. Participants were fascinated to learn about the background of the Balisana, the different stages that lead one to be the Molisana, and the attire that is attached to each stage. Even though participants were familiar with the dress and grooming of Balisana, participants were encouraged to deepen their understanding of the cultural significance behind each garment. Participants were asked to design moodboards and illustrations and were eventually able to construct garments that portrayed the dress and lifestyle of Balisana.

6.2.2 Conclusions on the key findings of the design probes

It was concluded that the three design probes ignited a desire in participants to explore their culture to be more creative and innovative in creating the culturally inspired collection. For that reason, the project yielded positive results when students demonstrated a deeper understanding and sense of appreciation for the design probes. The students also expressed an appreciation for the role that their culture can play in their field of design. The Fashion curriculum at Limkokwing University in Lesotho campus has Computerised Fashion and CAD as modules that “equip students with highly contextual and innovative cross-disciplinary engagement” (Faern 2015: 190). This enabled the students to utilize their knowledge and skills of Adobe Photoshop and Illustrator to digitally generate Afrofuturistic designs inspired by the three design probes, which enhanced their designs. The comments that arose from participants and attendees of the show indicated the success of decolonisation and creative interpretation of design probes. For instance, Viewers A, B and E were highly impressed with the way students were able to interpret the design probes as exciting new designs. One of the interviewed elders was keen to see on how students would interpret Litsoejane, and she was enthralled at the outcome of the design. Viewers wished that students could tap more into their culture to produce designs that represented Basotho fashion. Participants themselves were in a state of amazed disbelief at the outcome of their hard work. They expressed the desire to probe further into Basotho traditions and culture as the basis for further designs going (Participants A, T and E).

6.2.3 Application of 5-D Cycle and Participatory Action Research

The 5-D Cycle of appreciative inquiry and three phases of participatory action research were integrated to guide the research project for designing the moodboards and the illustrations, and the construction of garments. The aim was to assess the extend at which the two methods contributed to decolonise the three design probes and to create garments that indicate how Basotho’s fashion could be Afrofuturistic. The use of 5-D Cycle and participatory action research were helpful in the design and construction of garments and contributed to a well-structured project that participants were able to follow with ease. With each phase

of PAR, there were interviews that were meant to engage participants and encourage them to develop a deeper understanding of the design probes. The interviews also assisted in the exchange of ideas and information that led to the identification of positive aspects of the probes. Corcoran and Sim (2009: 9) assert that evidence from the interviews allows participants to express their understanding of what they have learned, the confidence gained and their ability to plan and to solve problems while the project is progressing. This was indeed the case, in my experience.

The theoretical framework played a pivotal role in steering the project towards the appreciation of the culture and traditions of Basotho. The garments reflected the strong cultural variations that feature and celebrate the richness and aesthetics of Basotho culture. As such, participants were able to take ownership of the design process and took pride in cultural probes that had hitherto not seemed significant (Corcoran and Sim 2009: 9).

Use of appreciative inquiry and participatory action research ensured that participants took charge during the progression of the project and had ownership of the outcome of the project. It also allowed incorporation of the voice of participants as key subjects. The collaborative nature of the project paved the way for open discussion, inclusive decision making and hands-on participation. This was more apparent when participants were choosing and buying the fabrics and trimmings, fabric paints, netting and moseha grass to make innovated likholokoane, making the accessories, and painting Litema onto the fabrics. On the day of the show, participants were involved in choosing the models and dressing them (the majority of the models were participants) and applying the face and body painting. The involvement of participants allowed them to shape the design process to claim back the colonised aspects of the Basotho culture embedded in design processes and the outcomes.

During the interviews, participants narrated their knowledge of the Litsoejane, Litema and Balisana, and their cultural narratives were embedded in their designs. Their existing knowledge of the three design probes and knowledge shared with them from the elders was explored in depth and was interpreted

creatively and well-reflected in participants' designs and constructed garments. The framework assisted myself as a researcher and participants to acknowledge the importance of continuing with decolonisation journey of the Basotho culture and traditions as well as appreciation of cultural diversity with the Basotho nation.

It was therefore concluded that the application of the two methods had yielded positive results, as participants were given a priority while participating in design project (Sokhanvar and Salehi 2019: 26). The successful integration of the frames has paved the way for students to be fully aware of the pivotal role that culture plays in their lives as creative and innovative designers. The project and the journey that participants were actively involved in sensitised them to their environment, culture and traditions. These were reflected in cultural garments that participants produced, resulting in appreciation for culture and the need to decolonised fashion for Basotho. In the beginning of the project, it was a challenge for participants to understand the role of the two methods and to see how they themselves could fit in with the phases of participatory action research and 5-D Cycle of appreciative inquiry. For that reason, it was communicated as a schedule for the project, for ease of understanding by the participants.

6.3 Limitations of the research

While the research was considered to be successful, there were some limitations that were encountered during data collection and through the development of the research project. Owing to COVID-19 restrictions, community elders were not practising the initiation training and the identified community elders were going on with other businesses. As such, it was a challenge to locate elders who were available for interviews. Moreover, initiation training is very private and confidential, and information cannot be shared with people who are not initiated. The scope of questions for initiation training was restricted to the dress and grooming of both Litsoejane and Balisana. Some follow-up questions that were meant to clarify certain issues could not be addressed as they would lead to information that I should not be privy to. For that reason, it required considerable effort, learning, and understanding on my part to acquire the necessary knowledge and perspective around issues pertaining to initiation training. It also

required some intellectual ability to demarcate the interview questions to avoid infringing on the confidentiality nature of initiation training. Due to the privacy and confidentiality of initiation training, the elders who were interviewed did not possess photographs of initiates from 'ho qacha' period to the end of the training. I therefore relied mostly on the Internet and books for visuals that supported the interviews of the elders.

Data collection started during the COVID-19 pandemic, which meant that students were available on campus only when they had classes, and I could not fully access them as participants. Some of the students withdrew from the project due to assignments and project workload. Funds were limited for fulfilling the requirements of the project as envisioned and planned from inception to showcasing of the project, namely, funds for patterns and garment construction and dedicated funds for the show. Even though the project was approved to be run within the premises of Limkokwing University, the project was not allocated space in the pattern and sewing studios, therefore we had to utilize the weekends to run the project, and that required additional funds for transport and lunch for participants. There was also some resistance from participants when the project was on the go, so much so, that a few of the groups worked under pressure to complete the work.

6.4 Implications of the results

The research has far-reaching implications. The implementation of appreciative inquiry paired with participatory action research has suggested that it can be applied in a classroom setting to empower students to take ownership of their work. The 5-D Cycle might also be used to facilitate progressive projects where members of the community are involved, towards achieving a common goal.

6.4.1 Implications for further research

This research has also indicated that the framework, appreciative inquiry and phases of participatory action research can be used in conjunction to guide a research project. This serves as an example of how effectively the framework might be used in the context of design education. Future researchers could this

approach as a basis for further exploration in research that has a design project and involves participants. Students who would like to undertake research of a similar nature would learn from this research in terms of ways that one might approach sensitive cultural information, namely, a need to acquire information without compromising the privacy of the practice, respect for and sensitivity towards culture. A sensitive approach to cultural practices has demonstrated that one can acquire knowledge by involving appropriate community members, which can lead to getting trustworthy and reliable information.

Participants were excited to have taken part in this research project. This was expressed by participants during the interviews under Phase 2 Action, where participants appreciated the opportunity of collaborating on the project. Their participation made the students to relate with me as a co-designer and co-participant rather than as their lecturer, therefore dismantling the power dynamics associated with traditional learning. Students' opinions and decision-making were valued and treated as credible. The research has laid the foundation for future researchers to perceive the value of involving students or young people who are future designers and stakeholders to decolonise and innovate the culture and traditions of Basotho.

6.4.2 Implications for Design Education

The research established a discussion on decolonisation and Afrofuturism which can be addressed within the realms of design education. A participatory research project allows for participants to be flexible in the lecture room where creative teaching is taking place. Participants were allowed to move freely, to make way for productive learning and collaboration (Corcoran and Sim 2009: 10). The research project has highlighted the need for dismantling the power-dynamics that are embedded in design processes resulting in the colonisation of design education. The research has triggered the need to explore the teaching based on complexities of culture, traditions and understanding of decolonisation and Afrofuturism and the impact that it has on creativity and design education. The outcome of the research project is a point of reference that it is feasible to conduct future research on inclusion of appreciative inquiry and participatory action

research framework in design curriculum. Including the framework in design curriculum would also afford students with teamwork skills, communication skills as well as critical thinking skills. Achi (2021:12) adds that traditional education influences the need for the development of life-long education that incorporates problem-solving curriculum. Students would be equipped with essential skills to approach sensitive cultural issues, have skills necessary to create unique designs that are inspired by a diverse cultural practices, knowledge and skills that will help them to evolve within the fashion industry.

It was concluded that the research has far-reaching implications for future researchers and design education. Decolonisation is an ongoing process that has not been explored or discussed much in the context of design education in Lesotho. This research gives future researchers leverage to contribute towards changing pedagogies in the creative design education field, to strive for an inclusive education that embraces cultural diversity. Afrofuturism is similarly a new concept that needs to be explored. If Afrofuturism is investigated, it can offer emerging cultural perspectives that align culture and tradition with technology, more especially in the world where Artificial Intelligence and virtual reality have become the norm.

6.5 Recommendations

In the light of the conclusions drawn, the following recommendations are made:

6.5.1 Recommendations for further research

The study has presented areas of research on which future researchers can focus. Female initiation is not a new practice in the context of Lesotho. However, this research has revealed that there is a need for further study into the practice of female initiation along with Bale-Litsoejane's dress and body art. The study of these aspects of female initiation and the publication of results will enable designers to access information that can be interpreted into decolonised and Afrofuturistic designs. In addition, the study has revealed that there is a need for proper documentation and preservation of the three design probes. To ensure that the art of Liteima continues to exist, there is a need for further research into

Litema and their preservation in digitized visuals. Beyer (2014: 178) has captured Litema and regenerated them through computer-aided design, although until now the visual images of Litema were applied to the wall as a public work of art. Beyer's use of Litema exemplifies other possible use of Litema to preserve the art in existence. The current museums can also be encouraged to host sections of the walls with various traditional Litema designs. Students could also learn to innovate and digitalise Litema for future use and innovations.

The people of Basotho are made up of various clans, and there are minor African population groups in Lesotho, as such the Xhosas, the Ndebeles and the Phutis (VNR 2022 Lesotho Report 2022: 25 and Lesotho - The World Factbook 2023). The minor African groups conduct their culture and traditions differently from how Basotho carry out their cultural practices. These groups also speak different languages besides Sesotho. The study could not reach these minority African groups available in Lesotho to discover the basis of the dress, grooming and body art for female initiates. Matobo and Obioha (2009: 109) mention that Matebele (Ndebele) females initiate are different from Basotho even though they are based in Lesotho. The study could not focus on the origins of dress and grooming of Xhosas, Ndebeles and Phuthis' Balisana. If different clans have certain cultural aspects different from other clans, the study did not explore such cultural aspects among the Basotho. This poses a future prospect for research. The study of the design probes could also encourage writing a book that might teach and inform young people about Basotho culture.

6.5.2 Recommendations for Design Education

Research into the three design probes has shown that community elders who are knowledgeable about the cultural aspects of Basotho can be engaged into design education for passing their knowledge and skills to students. One way that the community elders can be engaged with students is through guest lecturing and demonstrations on how certain artifacts are made. Demonstrations can include but not limited to Likhlokoane, 2D and 3D Litema and other cultural artifacts outside of the design probes. Traditional education offered by community leaders is practical and aimed at to address a specific situation. It is offered orally in one's

mother tongue, which make it easy for a learner to absorb the concepts being taught (Achi 2021: 10). The study has demonstrated how participatory action research can be utilised involving smaller and bigger groups, as in the case of this study, and that can produce positive and productive outcome.

When cultural designs are incorporated into contemporary projects by students, that can bridge the gap between past cultural practices and artifacts and modern innovation, therefore generating meaningful design projects based on culture. An emphasis can be fostered on interdisciplinary learning between cultural practices and design curricula. Students can use their social media skills to exchange their innovative cultural designs to promote the newly acquired knowledge rooted in the culture of Basotho (Chugh and Ruhi 2019: 5). Subsequent to students' use of social media, it can be incorporated into the pedagogies of design education to improve academic performances and enhance interaction among students and the community through sharing of students designs. Design students can benefit by learning skillsets from different disciplines and while they are empowered with the ability to critically analyse and appreciate cultural design education. Limkokwing University of Creative Technology stands to benefit if encouraged to learn from this study that the incorporation of appreciative inquiry and participatory action research in a lecture room setting can benefit design, architecture and possibly film students, in the creative design field,

6.6 Concluding thoughts

The research project has contributed to my gaining a depth of knowledge regarding the indigenous knowledge of cultural aspects of Basotho. The findings brought to light the different stages that Litsoejane go through and the dress, grooming and cultural practices that are attached to each stage. I have acquired knowledge about the different stages that a house is prepared prior to the application of Litema. I have learned of different techniques that women used when applying Litema, the use of different soil types for each stage, and the dyeing of soil in preparation for Litema decoration. I have also become knowledgeable about the origins of Balisana's dress, grooming and lifestyle. The knowledge gained about the three design probes has resulted in being more

informed as a lecturer and more equipped to pass the knowledge on to participants of this research project and to pass it further to more students and a wider public.

The use of appreciative inquiry and participatory action research has also enhanced my scholarship as a lifelong learner and a lecturer. It has allowed me to be actively involved, with student, as participants, to apply cultural knowledge with the aim of encouraging a deeper understanding of design probes. As a result, students developed an appreciation of their culture and its meanings. The research project has helped me to develop project management skills, from planning and facilitating the project through stages of participatory action research and 5-D Cycle of appreciative inquiry. I was able to interact closely with each group as they developed their designs to completion, while taking care to ensure that design form adhered to the design probes. As such, my critical thinking and problem-solving skills were also enhanced as I attempted to use a cooperative teaching approach in the lecture room during the research project (Sokhanvar and Salehi 2019: 26). Group work can pose challenges, but, through refined leadership skills, I was in the position of team leader as well as team member. I planned the working out of the research project, and delegated some of the tasks, while also allowing the group members to choose their tasks and manage conflict resolutions. Working with students on a cultural project brought uncertainty on whether they would take interest in their culture or not, and I had to deal with this.

Executing the project successfully with students brought a sense of achievement and personal fulfilment, not only to me but to the students as well. In my opinion, the use of appreciative inquiry and participatory action research strengthens creative thinking and methods of innovative problem solving of real-world problems. Successful implementation of appreciative inquiry and participatory action research in this research project can lead to publications and presentations at conferences. It can also present further opportunities to encourage the inclusion of cultural knowledge in the curriculum. The research and the participatory project has empowered me as a fashion lecturer to feel comfortable to learn and discover along with students, and provide timely and effective

feedback with a practical outcome in mind. It has enabled me to be a critical and quick thinker and to have the ability to solve various problems in a short space of time. This project then, was not just about research, but deepening my knowledge and developing my professional competence as a creative design lecturer.

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APPENDICES

Appendix A: Gatekeepers' letters / letters of information and consent: elders

Letter asking permission from Chief Tau Phohleli of Ha-Raphohleli village in Maseru to interview elders

Date: 02 December 2021

Masowe 3
P.O Box 10036
Maseru 100

Kopo ea Tumello ea ho Etsa Lipatlisiso ho Batho Baholo ka Hara Motse

Khotso Morena/Mofumahali

Lebitso la ka ke Nteboheleng Lepheana, moithuti sekolong se phahameng sa Durban University of Technology, moo teng ke etsang thuto ea Master of Applied Art in Fashion. Lipatlisiso tseo ke lakatsang ho li etsa bakeng sa lithuto tsaka tsa Masters li kenyelletsa: Tšebeliso ea Appreciative Inquiry ho fetola maemo a feshene Lesotho: Morero oa kopanelo oa baithuti le barupeli.

Ka hona ke kopa tumello ea ho buisana le batho ba baholo ba motse oa hao mona ba nang le tsebo e ngata ka setso sa Basotho, haholo-holo lintlheng tse khethiloeng e leng: moaparo oa Litsoejane, Litema le moaparo oa Balisana.

Batho bana ba baholo ba tla fuoa Lengolo la Boitsebiso bo qaqileng le amanang le mofuta oa thuto le ho kenya letsoho ha bona e le batho bao ho tla buisanoa le bona lipatlisisong. Ka mor'a hore ofisi ea hao e amohele kopo ena, le batho ba baholo le bona ba lumele ho nka karolo lipatlisisong tsena, ba tla fuoa Lengolo la Tumello leo ba tla le saena e le tumellano ea ho kopanela phuputsong.

Haeba u hloka lintlha tse eketsehileng, ka kopo u seke oa tsilatsila ho ikopanya le 'na ho: +266 63115188. Kapa ka email ho: ntebo.lepheana@gmail.com. Ke leboha haholo ka nako ea hau tabeng ena.

Ke ts'epa Morena/Mofumahali a tla sekehela kopo eaka tsebe.

Oa hau ka mohlanka,

Nteboheleng Lepheana (Ms)

Durban University of Technology

Letter of permission from Chief Tau Phohleli to interview elders

MORENA DA HA PHOHELELI
KOMO - KOSO
16 JAN 2022
P.O. BOX MOFOKA'S 182
MASERU 100, LESOTHO

Shomane
Ha-Phohleli
P.O. Mafokas 182
Maseru 100

16 January 2022

Research office
Durban University of Technology
P.O. Box 1334
Durban
4000

Re: Permission to conduct a research among
the elders in my village

As the chief of Ha-Phohleli I find no reason
to allow Htebsheleng lepheane to interview
members of my village with regard to stated
requirements, under REC No. 230/21

I believe that you will focus on the subjects
as requested. I also believe that you will
work harmoniously with members of my village

Yours in Government

Mr Tau Phohleli (contact: +266 62774364/58774364)
Chief of Ha-Phohleli

Letters of information and consent for elders in Sesotho



LENGOLO LA LITABA

Title of the Research Study: Appreciative Inquiry to create fashion: A student-lecturer participatory project.

Sehlooho sa Phuputso: Kananelo ho etsa feshene: Morero oa ho nka karolo oa moithuti-morupeli

Principal Investigator/s/researcher: Nteboheleng Lepheana. Bed Honors in Educational Management

Co-Investigator/s/supervisor/s: Professor Deirdre Pratt- DTech in Media Language and Commucocation, MTech in Visual Communication Design, MTech in Fashion and MTech in Chiropractic.

Mrs Sunthra Moodley- MTech in Entreprenueship

Kenyelletso e Khuts'oane le Morero oa Boithuto:

Lebitso la ka ke Nteboheleng Lepheana, moithuti oa feshene Unifesithing ea Theknoloji ea Durban (DUT). Ke ntse ke etsa boithuto bo shebang karolo eo boqapi le thuto ea feshene e ka e bapalang ho otlolla, ho nahana bocha le ho theha bocha boitsebahatso ba feshene ba Basotho. Nna, joalo ka moithuti le mofuputsi ke batlana le boitsebiso bo tla re tsoela molemo, nna hammoho le baithuti ba Unifesithi ea Limkokwing ba tllong ho nka karolo projekeng ena. Hammoho re tla rala le ho hlahisa liaparo tsa feshene tse fapaneng tse ka bang leshome le metso e 'meli (12) tse otlollang le ho nahanisisa botumo ba feshene maamong a Lesotho. Pokello ena ea feshene e tla susumetsoa ke meralo e khethiloeng e tsoang meetlong le bocha ba Basotho. Mekhoa ea meralo e khethiloeng bakeng sa thuto ena ke: Litsoejane, Litema le Balisana.

Tumeliso: Khotso Mme. Ke leboha haholo ka ho lumela ho nka karolo morerong oa ka oa lipatlisiso ea linthla tse amanang le Litsoejane le Litema.

Itsebise ho monka karolo: Ke moithuti oa DUT ea phehellang Masters ea tsa Bonono ke itsetlehile ka Feshene. Che nna ha kea bolla empa kena le khahleho ea ho tseba ka moaparo le litema tseo Litsoejane li itakang ka tsona.

Memo ho motho ea ka nkang karolo: Ke rata ho u mema le ho u kopa hore u nke karolo lipatlisong tse ipapisitseng le lihlooho tse tharo e leng: Litsoejane, Litema le moaparo oa Balisana joalokaha ho hlalositoe sefahlekeleng.

Patlisiso ke eng hantle: Patlisiso ke mokhoa o hlophisitsoeng oa ho batlisisa tsebo e ncha e akaretsang kapa e ka ba ketsahalo ea lipatlisiso tse hlophisitsoeng tse batlang likarabo tsa amanang le bothata bo itseng.

Sepheo sa Morero oa Patlisiso

Sepheo sa morero oa boithuto ke ho bontša mekhoa eo ka eona tsebo, mahlale le boits'oaro ba sechaba, tse fumanoang ho baholo-holo ba sechaba sa Basotho, li ka sebelisoang ho khetholla feshene ea Basotho. Lesotho joalo ka linaha tse ling, le bonahala le hlalile setso. meetlo le bochaba ka lebaka la hoba tla puso ea Bokolone. Patlisiso ena e na le morero oa ho ithuta le ho etela meetlong le bochaba ba Basotho pele ho linako tsa bokolone. Morero ke ho ithuta meetlong o joalo molemong oa ho theha bocha feshene e ncha ea Basotho.

Morero oa Morero oa Patlisiso

Morero oa patlisiso ena ke ho:

- Sebetsang 'moho le baithuti ba Unifesithi ea Theknoloji ea Limkokwing, ele barali-'moho le 'na ho nahana bocha le ho theha bocha feshene ea Basotho e ipapisitse le meralo: Litsojane, Balisana le Litema.
- Ho rala pokello e buang ka feshene e ncha ea Basotho.
- Ho bontša (ka mokhoa oa ho tebuka) lipahlo tse entsoeng bocha ho sechaba sa Univesithi ea Limkokwing.

Mekhoa ea ho kenyetseha le ho qhelela ka thoko ba nkang karolo patlisisong ena

U kopuo a ho nka karolo morerong ona motheong oa hore:

- U lumela ho nka karolo morerong ona.
- U letsoalloa la Lesotho mme u tseba bochaba le mmetlo ea Basotho hantle.
- Patlisiso ena ha e khethe hore na motho ke oa bong bo feng.
- Ho u feta lilemo tse 18 nakong ka nako ea patlisiso.

Kemiso ea Tsamaiso:

Mekhoa e lokelang ho lateloa phuputsong ena ke:

- Ke tla tsebisa Morena oa sebaka ka boteng ba ka ka hara motse oa hae, mme ke tla kopa tumello ho eena pele ke bua le uena.
- Ke tla rekota patlisiso ea hau molemong oa ho bokelletsa le ho akaretsa lintlha tseo u li phahamisitseng.
- Ke tla boloka lintlha tseo u li phahamisang ka bukaneng ha u ntse u bua.
- Patlisiso e tla nka letsatsi le le leng. Empa ha ho na le moo ke hlokang tlhakisetsa ke tla kopa ho khutlela ho uena. Nka khutlela ho uena ka mohala kapa lifahleho li shebane.
- Patlisiso e tla nka sebaka moo u fimanehang teng.
- U tla kupuoa ho fana ka lintlha ka tsela e nang le moelelo thutong ka ho sebelisa, hara tse ling, tsebo le bokhoni boo u nang le bona.

Ka kopo eelloa hore u na le bolokolohi ba ho isa lengolo lena la tihahisoleseling ho le bala, le ho batla tlhakisetsa le boeletsi ho litho tsa lelapa kapa mtsoalle eo u mo tšepang. Hape u lokolohile ho botsa lipotso tse ngata kamoo ho ka khonehang pele le nakong ea lipatlisiso. Hape hlokomela hore mothating ona ha u oa tlameha ho nka karolo morerong ona. Ke feela ha u nkile qeto ebe u saena foromo ea tumello moo u itlamang hore u tla nka karolo patlisisong ena. **(U tla fuoa foromo ea Tumello ha u lumela ho nka karolo lipatlisisong).**

Likotsi kapa mathata ho motho ea nkang karolo: Ha ho na likotsi tse ka hlahang kapa ho u utloisa bohloko nakong ea patlisiso ena. Leha ho le joalo, joalo ka mofuputsi ke tla hlokomela le ho netefatsa hore nakong ea patlisiso ena ha ho kotsi e ka hlahang. Nka thabela ho utloa ho uena hore na ebe hona le kotsi eo u nahang hore e ka hlaha, molemong oa hore re e thibele nako e sale teng.

Hlalosetsa monka-karolo ka mabaka a ka etsang hore a tlosoe ho nka karolo: Haeba u khetha ho ikhula patlisisong kapa u sa ikobele litumellano tsa patlisiso ena, kapa haeba u ka kula nako e telele re ka emisa ho tsoela pele ka patlisiso, empa hoo ha ho bolele hore ke tla u nka hampe kapa ho u qosa. Maemong ao ke hlokomelang hore re tlameha ho khaotsa patlisiso u tla tsebisoa ka lengolo le ngotsoeng, 'me le Morena os sebaka sa hao o tla tsebisoa ka mongolo hore ke emisitse patlisiso le uena le mabaka a ho khaotsa.

Melemo: O tla una molemo ka ho fumana monyetla oa ho ruta bacha ka bochaba le meetlo ea Basotho e le hore bacha ba fetole feshene ea Basotho.

Moputso: Ha ho na moputso o lefshoang ka ho nka karolo morerong ena.

Litšenyehelo tsa Thutong: Patlisiso ena ha e boanahale e na le lits'enyehelo ho uena. Ka hona le nna nkeke ka u kenya lits'ehelong ka patlisiso ena.

Lekunutu: Lekunutu le tla qala ka nna joalo ka mofuputsi ka ho ba le tsela ea tsebetso ea boleng e kenyelletsang lekunutu, botšepahi le tlhompheho ho batho ka kakaretso. Tsela ena ea tsebetso ea boleng e tla fetisetsoa ho uena joaloka monka-karolo. Maemong ao u tla lula u sa tsejoe le ho ba boinotšing mabapi le lintlha tsa hau tsa botho, ho akaretso boleng ba hao, lilemo le letsatsi la tsoalo. Ho se tsejoe le ho boloka makunutu ho tla sebetsa maemong ao u sa batleng hore lebitso la hau le boleloe u le mofani oa lipatlisiso haeba patlisiso e ka phatlalatsoa. Empa u ka kholiseha hore ha hona moo ho tla hloka hore boitsebiso ba hao bo phatlalatsoe

Liphetho: Liphetho tse hlahlobiloeng tsa morero oa lipatlisiso u tla li tsebisoa ka mongolo. Ha ho

Kotsi e amanang le lipatlisiso: Ha hona kotsi e bonahalang eka hlaha ka lebaka la patlisiso ena. Pele patlisiso e qala re tla buisana ka hore na ke likotsi tsa mofuta ofe tse ka u hlahelang. Empa ha kotsi e ka hlaha re tla tsebisa lelapa le hore ba ka fana ka keletso ea hore na u ka thusoa joang maemong a kotsi. Le ha hole joajo re tla latela mehato ea boits'ireletso le ho latela melao le melaoana e behiloeng ke Morena oa sebaka.

Poloko ea likopi tsohle tsa elektroniki le tse thata ho kenyeletsoa lirekoto tse rekotiloeng: Unifisithi ea Theknoloji ea Durban e tla boloka patlisiso ea hao ka hloko hore ho seke ha eba le ka mohla e ka oelang matsohong ao e sa ts'oanelang ho uela ho oona.

Batho bao ba u ka iteanyang le bona ketsahalong ea mathata kapa lipotso life kapa life: Professor Deirdre Pratt- 031 373 6003. Email: deep@dut.ac.za (Research and Postgraduate Support). Co-Supervisor- Ms Sunthra Moodley- 031 373 3711. Email: sunthram@dut.ac.za (Head of department). Please contact the researcher (+266 63115188), my or the Institutional Research Ethics Administrator on 031 373 2375. Complaints can be reported to the Director: Research and Postgraduate Support Dr L Liganiso on 031 373 2577 or researchdirector@dut.ac.za.



TUMELO

Sehlooho sa Phuputso: Ho botsa ka kananelo ka likarolo tsa moetlo oa Basotho ho iqapela feshene.

Lebitso la Mofuputsi: Nteboheleng Lepheana. Lengolo le phahameng la Tsamaiso ea Thuto

Polelo ea Tumellano ea ho Nka karolo lipatlisisong tsa Boithuto:

- Ke tiisa hore ke tsebisitsoe ke mofuputsi, Nteboheleng Lepheana, ka mofuta, boitsoaro, melemo le likotsi tsa phuputso ena - Nomoro ea Lipatlisiso ea Boitsoaro:
- _____
- Ke boetse ke amohetse, ka bala le ho utloisisa lintlha tse ngotsoeng ka holimo (Lengolo la Tlhahisoleseling) mabapi le boithuto bona.
- Kea tseba hore liphetho tsa phuputso ena, ho akaretsa lintlha tsa botho tse mabapi le bong ba ka, lilemo, letsatsi la tsoalo, lithaku tse qalang tsa mabitso aka le liphetho tsa tlhahlobo li tla sebetsoa ka mokhoa o ipatileng ka hara tlaleho ea boithuto.
- Ka lebaka la litlhoko tsa lipatlisiso, ke lumela hore lintlha tse bokeletsoeng nakong ea phuputso ena li ka sebetsoa ka mokhoa oa khomphutha ke mofuputsi.
- Boemong bofe kapa bofe, ntle le leeme, nka hula tumello ea ka le ho kenya letsoho boithutong bona.
- Ke bile le monyetla o lekaneng oa ho botsa lipotso le (ka boithatelo ba ka) ho bolela hore ke itokiselitse ho nka karolo boithutong bona.
- Ke utloisisa hore ho fumaneha ha tsebo e ncha ea bohlokoa e entsoeng nakong ea lipatlisiso tse amanang le ho nka karolo ha ka li tla fumaneha ho 'na.

Mabitso a feletseng a Monkakakoro/ Letsatsi

Nako

Tekeno / Lets'oao la Tsoeke

Khathiso ea Monoana

Nna, Nteboheleng Lepheana, (lebitso la mofuputsi) ke netefatsa hore monkakakoro ea ka holimo o tsebisitsoe ka botlalo mabapi le mofuta, boitsoaro le likotsi tsa boithuto bo ka holimo.

Nteboheleng Lepheana

Lebitso la Mofuputsi ka botlalo

Letsatsi

Tekeno

**Lebitso la Paki ka botlalo
(Haeba ho Hlokahala)**

Letsatsi

Tekeno

Letters of information and consent for elders in English



LETTER OF INFORMATION

Title of the Research Study: Appreciative Inquiry to create fashion: A student-lecturer participatory project.

Principal Investigator/s/researcher: Nteboheleng Lepheana, BEd|Honors in Educational Management

Co-Investigator/s/supervisor/s: Professor Deirdre Pratt (Adjunct Professor, Arts & Design, DTech: Language Practice, DUT) and Mrs Sunthra Moodley (Lecturer, Fashion Department, MTech: Entrepreneurship, DUT).

Brief Introduction and Purpose of the Study:

My name is Nteboheleng Lepheana, and I am a Masters student registered for an MAA in Fashion at the Durban University of Technology. I am conducting a study that looks at the role that creative problem-solving can play in designing innovative fashion which draws on the indigenous knowledge of the Basotho Nation. The research will involve a group of fashion designers, consisting of myself and a group of students. Together we will use a creative problem-solving method to design innovative fashion which reflects Basotho culture. We will then display this fashion collection to Limkokwing Community members, and you will of course be invited. The responses of the people viewing the collection will give us some idea of how successful the design process was in achieving its purpose.

If you agree to participate, your role in the research will be to share your indigenous knowledge with my group of researchers. As you respected elders are the keepers of tradition and cultural knowledge, I need to draw on your knowledge of these aspects of Basotho culture: Litsoejane (women initiates), Litema (motifs/geometric patterns) and Balisana (shepherds). These aspects will be used as inspiration for the group of researchers to create exciting new fashion designs based on the cultural heritage of the Basotho, thus celebrating the new and the old.

Greeting: Good day - I hope that you are all well, honoured Elders! In this letter, I will tell you the relevant details of my Masters research project.

Introduce yourself to the participant:

As I said, my name is Nteboheleng Lepheana, and I work as a lecturer at Limkokwing University of Creative Technology in the Faculty of Design Innovation. I studied Fashion and Education and I have spent fifteen years working as a lecturer in the field of fashion. I am also a member of different associations, namely, Lesotho Graphic Designers Association and Friends of Morija Art and Museum. I have been involved in various platforms and dialogues organised by various bodies such as UNESCO, Lesotho Fashion Designers Association, Ministry of Tourism, Environment and Culture, Ministry of Planning, Finance and Industry and Basotho Enterprise Development Corporation (BEDCO) and Alliance Française Lesotho, to name but a few. These platforms aim to address challenges facing designers and explore ways to elevate the creative industry in Lesotho.

I have registered for the MAA in Fashion at the Durban University of Technology because I believe that my experience, expertise and background will enable me to work with a group of students to explore the potential of the Basotho cultural forms as design motifs that might help to renew and revitalize fashion in Lesotho. These new designs will go beyond the bounds of Seshoeshoe and Seanamarena as the predominant cultural idioms to express Lesotho's fashion identity.

Invitation to the potential participant: As one of the keepers of tradition and cultural knowledge, you are respectfully invited to participate in the research, in order to assist me in telling students the origins and nature and purpose of these indigenous customs and practices, Litsoejane (women initiates), Litema (motifs/geometric patterns) and Balisana (shepherds). I will then be able to inform my students so that we can work together as a group to revitalize Basotho fashion, while paying tribute to indigenous customs.

What is Research? Research is a systematic search or inquiry for generalized new knowledge. The "new knowledge" sought here will be an insight into whether a creative problem-solving method ([i.e.](#) appreciative inquiry) can be applied to inspire innovative yet culturally relevant fashion, and what conclusions can be drawn from the results. You can ask as many questions as you wish about the process of inquiry, as it is important that you fully understand the study. You may also discuss the study with your family and friends and are under no obligation to commit at this stage. You may take a copy of the Letter of Information document home so as to think further about whether you wish to participate.

Outline of the Procedures:

Brief summary of the Research and its aims and objectives

The aim of this study is to investigate the use of appreciative inquiry to develop innovative fashion by probing aspects of Basotho culture at a deeper level than that of the stereotypical Basotho motifs currently used, that is, the Seshoeshoe fabric, the Seanamarena blanket and the Mokorotlo hat. The aspects of Basotho culture involved are Litsoejane (women initiates), Litema (motifs/geometric patterns) and Balisana (shepherds), which will be used as design probes to create a fashion collection showcasing examples of the innovative fashion items arising from the project.

The objectives are as follows:

1. To investigate how the 5-D Cycle of Appreciative Inquiry as applied to chosen design probes could be used by fashion students and their lecturer to produce innovative Basotho fashion designs.
[The "5-D Cycle of Appreciative Inquiry" is the name for the creative problem-solving method used in this project.].
2. In carrying out the 5-D Cycle of Appreciative Inquiry, to establish:
 - a) what indigenous knowledge about Litsoejane (women initiates), Litema (motifs/geometric patterns) and Balisana (shepherds) Basotho elders could provide for the design probes;
 - b) what typically Basotho fashion elements could be seen to emerge from the process of appreciative inquiry as applied to the design probes;
 - c) the result/s of incorporating these elements into a fashion collection in terms of producing innovative Basotho fashion designs;
 - d) the response of Limkokwing community members to showcasing the fashion collection.

Outline of the procedures to be followed

Eligibility to take part in the project:

- You will be identified as eligible to participate in the project based on your depth of knowledge about Basotho culture, especially Litsoejane, Litema and Balisana.
- You should be a citizen of Lesotho.
- You can be a Mosotho male or female.
- You should be over the age of 50.

If you agree to be involved, the procedure to be followed in this study will be as follows:

- I will first contact you and other community elders to see who will be willing to take part in the project.
- I will organise semi-structured Interviews with you and other community elders who agree to take part.
- The interviews will take place at your and the other the elders' respective homes.
- These will be arranged by telephone or in-person in the case where you or others may not have the means to be contacted.
- Visits will be arranged such that COVID19 protocols are observed, namely, ensuring that we are all wearing masks, that we sanitise our hands as soon as we arrive at the elder's home and that we maintain 1.5m social distancing during the interviews.
- Teleconferencing will be used to communicate with you, if the need arises.
- As guests of honour, you will be invited to the exhibition of the fashion collection held to showcase the fashion designs created in the project.

Risks or Discomforts to the Participant: There are no foreseeable risks or discomforts to you. However, as a researcher I will take care and ensure that I minimise possibility of risks as much as possible.

Explain to the participant the reasons he/she may be withdraw from the Study: You are entitled to withdraw from the study at any time, for any reason, should you wish to do so.

Benefits: You may benefit indirectly by gaining an opportunity to participate in a project with the potential to stimulate innovative yet culturally relevant Basotho fashion, and to be accorded the respect which is due to you as a keeper of tradition and cultural knowledge.

Remuneration: There is no remuneration, that is, you will not be paid for participating in the project.

Costs of the Study: No costs are involved as far as you are concerned. Community members will be asked to assist you if you have problems attending the exhibition of the fashion collection.

Confidentiality: Confidentiality will start with me as a researcher having a value system which incorporates confidentiality, honesty and respect for humans in general. The value system will be extended to you as a participant in the case where you will remain anonymous and private with regard to your personal details, including, but not limited to gender, age and date of birth. Anonymity and confidentiality will also be applicable in the case where you do not want your name to be mentioned as a research contributor if the research gets published. Pseudonyms (false names) will be used in the dissertation. All photographs published in the dissertation or articles will have identifying details of yourself removed, unless you should agree (in writing) to have these details revealed.

Results: The results of the research and conclusions drawn will be disseminated in the dissertation, subsequent journal articles and conference papers. Any significant new findings developed during the course of the research will be made known to participants, and electronic copies of the dissertation will be made available on request.

Storage of all Electronic and Hard Copies Including Tape Recordings: Upon the completion of this study, I will safely store soft copy data in my OneDrive folder and another soft copy will be kept safely by the Department of Fashion at Durban University of Technology. One hard copy will be safely stored by myself at home and another hard copy will be stored safely by the Department of Fashion. The Department of Fashion will safely store the soft and hard copies for a period of five years. In the period of five that the department will be storing my soft and hard copies of the data, if I do not publish any academic article or journal in relation to this study, the department of fashion will destroy my data. However, I will safely keep the soft and hard copies for myself.

Persons to Contact in the Event of Any Problems or Queries:

My supervisor: Prof Deirdre Pratt (Adjunct Professor, Arts & Design, DUT), on 082 4229570, email: deep@dut.ac.za; the researcher (+266 63115188); the Institutional Research Ethics Administrator on 031 373 2375. Complaints can be reported to the DVC: Research, Innovation and Engagement, Prof S Moyo, on 031 373 2577, email: moyos@dut.ac.za or the Institutional Research Ethics Administrator on 031 373 2375. Complaints can also be reported to the Director: Research and Postgraduate Support, Dr L Lignaniso, on 031 373 2577, email: researchdirector@dut.ac.za.



CONSENT

Statement of Agreement to Participate in the Research Study:

- I hereby confirm that I have been informed by the researcher, _____ (name of researcher), about the nature, conduct, benefits and risks of this study - Research Ethics Clearance Number: _____,
- I have also received, read and understood the above written information (Participant Letter of Information) regarding the study.
- I am aware that the results of the study, including personal details regarding my sex, age, date of birth, initials and diagnosis will be anonymously processed into a study report.
- In view of the requirements of research, I agree that the data collected during this study can be processed in a computerised system by the researcher.
- I may, at any stage, without prejudice, withdraw my consent and participation in the study.
- I have had sufficient opportunity to ask questions and (of my own free will) declare myself prepared to participate in the study.
- I understand that significant new findings developed during the course of this research which may relate to my participation will be made available to me.

_____	_____	_____	_____
Full Name of Participant	Date	Time	Signature / Right Thumbprint

I, _____ (name of researcher) herewith confirm that the above participant has been fully informed about the nature, conduct and risks of the above study.

_____	_____	_____
Full Name of Researcher	Date	Signature
_____	_____	_____
Full Name of Witness (If applicable)	Date	Signature
_____	_____	_____
Full Name of Legal Guardian (If applicable)	Date	Signature

Appendix B: Gatekeepers' letters / letters of information and consent: students

Letter asking permission from Director Academic Management, Limkokwing University of Creative Technology

Date: 10 January 2022

Masowe 3
P.O Box 10036
Maseru 100

Lesotho

Request for Permission to Conduct Research

Dear Director Academic Management

My name is Ntebohelong Lepheana, a Master of Applied Art in Fashion student at the Durban University of Technology. The research I wish to conduct for my Masters dissertation involves: The use of Appreciative Inquiry to revolutionise aspects of fashion in Lesotho: A student/lecturer participatory project

I am hereby seeking your consent to work with Bachelor of Art in Fashion Design and Retailing, Year 3 Semester 2 students as co-designers and research participants with me.

As a follow-up, I have provided you with a latest copy of my proposal which includes copies of the data collection tools and consent and/ or assent forms to be used in the research process.

If you require any further information, please do not hesitate to contact me on: +266 63115188. Email: ntebo.lepheana@gmail.com. Thank you for your time and consideration in this matter.

Yours sincerely,

Ntebohelong Lepheana

Durban University of Technology|

Letter from Director Academic Management giving permission

Australia • Iceland • Russia • Bangladesh • Italy • Spain • Bhutan • Kenya • Sudan • Bosnia & Herzegovina • South Korea • Switzerland • Canada • Mauritius • Thailand • China • Mongolia • Turkey • Costa Rica • Netherlands • Denmark • United Kingdom • New Zealand • USA • Germany • Nigeria • Vietnam • Greece • Oman • Yemen • India • Pakistan • Zimbabwe • Yugoslavia • Malaysia • Iran • Poland • Argentina • Australia • Belgium • Brunei • Brazil • Dominican Republic • France • Finland • Gibraltar • Greenland • Morocco • Malta • Norway • Portugal • Saudi Arabia • Singapore • Sweden • Scotland • United Arab Emirates • Cambodia • Bulgaria • Japan • Albania • Azerbaijan • Bahrain • Croatia • Colombia • Cyprus • Chile • El Salvador • Egypt • Fiji • Guinea • Guyana • Iceland • Cameroon •



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04 January 2022

Research, Innovation and Engagement
Durban University of Technology
P.O. Box 1334
Durban 4000

Dear Sir/Madam

RE: PERMISSION TO ALLOW RESEARCHER TO CONDUCT A STUDY

The above-captioned matter bears reference

This serves as an attestation that Nteboheleng Lepheana (student number 20200938) is a bonafide research student at Durban University of Technology while simultaneously an employee at Limkokwing University of Creative Technology, Lesotho Campus. Ms Lepheana is currently persuing masters degree in fashion in your prestigious university.

The candidate therefore requires permission from us to conduct a study on our campus. She also needs our permission for participation of our students in the Faculty of Design Innovation and Fashion and Lifestyle Design. This category of students will form core of Ms Lepheana's study. The students will be involved from commencement to the end of the project.

It is in view of this background that we would like to inform your good office that the candidate is allowed to make use of both our campus and students for this initiative, under the Ethical clearance number: **IREC 250/21**. We trust that attainment of the qualification will notably add value to our university. We wish to extend our best wishes to our colleague in this study and other future endeavours.

We believe your office will facilitate all other subsequent processes.

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Yours Faithfully

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Letter of information for students

(The same letter of consent was used for students as the one in English used for elders.)



LETTER OF INFORMATION

Title of the Research Study: Appreciative Inquiry to create fashion: A student-lecturer participatory project

Principal Investigator/s/researcher: Nteboheleng Lepheana, Bed Honors in Educational Management

Co-Investigator/s/supervisor/s: Professor Deirdre Pratt (Adjunct Professor, Arts & Design, DTech: Language Practice, DUT) le Mrs Sunthra Moodley (Lecturer, Fashion Department, MTech: Entrepreneurship, DUT).

Brief Introduction and Purpose of the Study:

My name is Nteboheleng Lepheana, MAA in Fashion student at the Durban University of Technology. I am conducting a study that looks at the role that creativity and fashion education can play in stretching, re-imagining and re-creating a fashion identity. The study is participatory in nature. I, as the researcher and your lecturer will serve as a co-designer and participant in this research project. In my capacity as your lecturer I will share my expertise, as well as guide and advise as the project proceeds. I have identified the module 'Fashion Design & Visualization and the Project Runway 2- Production', for this research study. Together we will design and produce a range of twelve (12) fashion outfits that stretches and re-imagines the fashion identity in the context of Lesotho. The collection will be inspired by selected design probes drawn from the culture of Basotho. The design probes selected for this study are: Litsoejane (women initiates), Litema (motifs/geometric patterns) and Balisana (Shepherds).

Outline of the Procedures:

The procedure to be followed in this study will be the following:

- You will participate in focus group interviews which will take place in three phases. The interviews will be held in order to find your background information about the design probes.
- The process will be observed by myself during the actions and activities of 5-D Cycle.
- The design process will be photographed
- I will keep a researcher's diary to note the activities and actions as they unfold and take place during the project and you will also keep a journal to note your activities and progression of the project.
- You will attend class and participate as per the timetable drawn for the project.
- You will be expected to contribute meaningfully in the study by using amongst others the knowledge and skills you acquired from the Fashion course at Limkokwing University.
- We will meet once a week as per your timetables and these meetings will be both face-to-face or through telecommunication platforms such as WhatsApp or Zoom
- The project will run for a semester, since Limkokwing academic calendar runs on a semester basis.
- The research project will be carried out within the Limkokwing premises and facilities, namely: drawing

studios, pattern drafting studio and fashion studio. We will also use the equipment, namely: tables, chairs, sewing machines, irons and drafting tables.

- The final range of garments will be showcased to the faculty management and possible the local community.

Risks or Discomforts to the Participant: There are no foreseeable risks or discomforts to you. However, as a researcher I will take care that and ensure that you adhere to Limkokwing University rules and regulations especially the ones pertaining to the use of labs and studios.

Benefits: You will benefit by gaining an opportunity of being part of research experience and acquire knowledge and skills. It is hoped that the processes involved in the research project will help you to discover more aspects of the Basotho culture as design probes which are less explored.

Reason/s why the Participant May Be Withdrawn from the Study: If you choose to withdraw from the research, you will not be discriminated against. Rather, you will still be subjected to processes of assessing your work in order for you to achieve your marks for the semester, but you will be excluded from group interviews, reflection and evaluation processes.

Remuneration:

You will not be paid for participating in the project.

There is no remuneration

Costs of the Study:

- With the limited budget available, the money will be equally split and you will be offered some funds to buy fabrics, threads and trims. Please note that this will not be enough to cover the entire costs of the project.
 - You will submit the receipts for every purchase.
1. **Confidentiality:** Confidentiality will start with me as a researcher by having a value system which incorporates confidentiality, honesty and respect for humans in general. The value system will be extended to you as a participant in the case where you will remain anonymous and private with regard to your personal details, including but not limited to sex, age and date of birth. Anonymity and confidentiality will also be applicable in the case where you do not want your name to be mentioned as research contributor if the research gets published.
 2. **Research-related Injury:** Limkokwing University has the insurance policy for students and staff who may encounter an injury while on campus. However, I will take care that you as students take precautionary measures and comply with rules and regulations set by Limkokwing University when you are using the university facilities to avoid or minimize any research related injury.

Persons to Contact in the Event of Any Problems or Queries:

My supervisor: Prof Deirdre Pratt (Adjunct Professor, Arts & Design, DUT), on 082 4229570, email: deep@dut.ac.za; the researcher (+266 63115188); the Institutional Research Ethics Administrator on 031 373 2375. Complaints can be reported to the DVC: Research, Innovation and Engagement, Prof S Moyo, on 031 373 2577, email: moyos@dut.ac.za or the Institutional Research Ethics Administrator on 031 373 2375. Complaints can also be reported to the Director: Research and Postgraduate Support, Dr L Liganiso, on 031 373 2577, email: researchdirector@dut.ac.za.

Appendix C: Interview questions for elders

1st Elder's Interview Questions regarding Litsoejane

The questions are based on dress and grooming and body painting of Lijoejane, not the entire initiation process-

- 1) Re kopa u ko re bolelle ka tsela eo Litsoajane li aparang ka eona.
- 2) Ke eng e susumetsang tsela ea bona ea ho apara?
- 3) Ebe tsela ea bona ea ho aparara e bohlokoa hakae?
- 4) Ho bonolo kapa ho thata hakae mehleng ee ho boloka moetlo oa ho apara oa lebollo o ntse o tsoela pele o sa fetohe?
- 5) Re kopa u ko re bolelle ka ho itaka ha Litsoajane.
- 6) Litsoejane li sebelisang eng ho taka 'mele ea bona?
- 7) Ho taka 'mele hoo ho na le melemo efe?
- 8) Na hona le seo re ka ithutang sona ka mokhoa oa ho apara le ho itaka bophelong mehleng ee?

Translation of the questions to English

- 1) Please tell us about Litsoejane's way of dress.
- 2) What inspired the way they dress?
- 3) What is significant about their attire? (Attire mentioned in question 1).
- 4) How easy is it nowadays to keep the tradition of dress and grooming going for Litsoejane?
- 5) Please explain their body painting.
- 6) What do Litsoejane use to paint their bodies and why?
- 7) What is significant about the body painting?
- 8) Do you think Litsoejane's lifestyle, way of dressing and body painting can inspire a modern way of dressing and lifestyle?

2nd Elder's Interview Questions regarding Litema

- 1) Re kopa u re bolelle ka moetlo oa etsa Litema.
- 2) Litema li ne li le bapala karolo ekae bophelong ba Mosotho?
- 3) Ho no ho hlokahala eng hore motho a tsebe ho taka litema? Na ho ne ho ena le lithupelo?
- 4) Na u bona eka litema li sa le bohlokoa haholo mehleng ee hona hobaneng? Na hona le molomm oo re ka o unang haeba re ka tsoeellisa ho ithuta ka litema?
- 5) Moetlo oa Litema oa timela, Bacha le likolo ba ka etsang ho boloka moetlo oo o phela?

Translation of the questions to English

- 1) Please tell us about the tradition of mural painting Litema.
- 2) What role does Litema play in the life of a Mosotho?
- 3) What was needed for one to master the art of Litema? Was there training that a person would undergo?
- 4) Do you think that Litema hold some significance in today's society? Is there anything that we can benefit from if we pursue learning about litema.
- 5) Litema is a dying craft. What can youth and academic institutions do to preserve this craft?

3rd Elders' Interview Questions regarding the Life, dress and grooming of Balisana

- a) Ke kopa u hlalose ka botebo ka tsela ea bophelo ea Balisana, ho tloha ha ba qala ho lisa ha ba sale tlaase lilemong ho isa ha e se ele banna batiileng.
- b) Ebe ke eng e susumetsang tsela eo ba a parang ka eona? Mona ke kopa hore utlo manolle moaparo oa bona, ho akaretsa; likatiba, liphahlo tsa

mmeleng, kobo, litopo, likausi, le malikhoie kapa ts'eele le molamu.
Mohlomong le hore na ba apara joang ka linako tsa seleng ka seng?

Translation of the questions to English

- a) Please explain Balisana's way of life from the time when they start shepherding at an early age to the time when they are grown men in detail.
- b) What influences Balisana's dress and grooming? Please detail their dress, namely: hats, clothes (tops and pants), ts'eele (a woven cotton cloth worn as both underpants and short pants and traditionally worn by boys and young men) blankets, gumboots worn with a pair of socks and a molamu (thick, long and rounded stick). Please also indicate how Balisana dresses for each season.

Appendix D: Interview questions for students

Focus Group Interview Questions for Student Participants

Phase 1 Discovery cycle of 5-D Cycle- Project Preparatory Questions

1. Besides attending classes, how do you continually improve your knowledge and skills as a fashion student?
2. What is your take on group projects?
3. How you do approach research-based assignments or projects?
4. Have you undertaken a design project based on or inspired by culture? If yes, what was it and what was the outcome?
5. **Litsoejane:**
 - a) Please relate your knowledge of Litsoejane.
 - b) What role do you think Litsoejane play in our culture?
 - c) Do you think there is anything we can learn from Litsoejane's lifestyle and the way of dressing?
6. **Litema**
 - a) What do you know about Litema?
 - b) How has Litema inspired different design products in Lesotho?
 - c) Do you think Litema have any relevance in contemporary Lesotho? If so, why? If not, why not?
7. **Balisana**
 - a) Please relate what you know about Balisana
 - b) What can you say about their dress and grooming?
 - c) Do you see Balisana's way of dressing as a source of inspiration for fashion?

Phase 2- Discovery cycle of 5-D Cycle

1. Is there anything you think will be helpful in facilitating this project?

2. Do you think the timeline or schedule set to finish the project is suitable?
If no, please raise your opinion.
3. How do you feel about the project thus far?
4. Is there anything you like or dislike that you would us to work on?
5. Do you think the project is assisting you to probe further into our culture
and to discover other less explored cultural aspects of Basotho?
6. Are there any challenges you have faced so far? If yes, what are they
and what do we can do to counteract them?

Phase 3- Discovery cycle of 5-D Cycle

1. Do you think the project has assisted you to broaden your appreciation of
culture in your field of study? If yes, how so? If no, why not?
2. Have you learnt any lessons and skills during this project? Explain.
3. Have you learned anything from working in a team with your colleagues
and myself?
4. Do you see yourself participating in a similar project in the future?
5. Do you see yourself using other sources of Lesotho's historical
resources as inspiration in your future collections?
6. Do you think this way of designing has a place in the future in Lesotho?
7. Is there any other thing that you would like to add about this project that
you were involved in? Any concluding thoughts?

Appendix E: Transcriptions of elders' responses

Interview transcription for community elders based on dress and grooming of Litsoejane

Interview with an Elder 1- *Mme Maseabata (Mme Maseabata was with her son at the time of the interview and he was adding to the information. Mme (Mrs or Ms) is a formal and respectful way of addressing females in Sesotho).

Time allocated for the interview: 1 hour

Interviewer/Researcher: Nteboheleng Lepheana

Notetaker: Nteboheleng Lepheana

Greetings Mme Maseabata. My name is Nteboheleng Lepheana, a registered student at Durban University of Technology. I am pursuing Master of Applied Art in Fashion. I am conducting a study that looks at the role that creative problem solving can play in designing innovative fashion which draws on the indigenous knowledge of the Basotho nation, especially the dress and grooming of Litsoejane. I have been referred to you by local people as someone who is involved in initiating the Basotho women. I could not find the area Chief in order to seek permission to interview you. The information gathered from you will be used by myself and a group of fashion students. Together we will use a creative problem-solving method to design innovative fashion which reflects Basotho culture. We will then display this fashion collection to members of Limkokwing University community, and you will of course be invited. The responses of the people viewing the collection will give us some idea of how successful the design process was in achieving its purpose. Please note that I am not looking into critical details of the initiation process, rather, my focus is dress and grooming including the inspiration behind that. I could not find the area Chief in order to seek permission to interview you. Do I need to wait for his permission before I can talk to you? If you allow me, may I please record this information?

Mme Maseabata: Okay. I understand. You don't necessarily need permission to talk to me. People usually come to my house to talk to me. I've never heard anyone who seeks permission from our area Chief.

Interviewer: I appreciate that. If you allow me, may I please record this information?

***Footnote-** Names have been changed. Some of the information was not so easy to follow, so I had to find another person who could elaborate further on dress and grooming of Litsoejane clearer.

Mme Maseabata: There is no problem, you can record.

Interviewer: Please tell me about Litsoejane's way of dressing.

Mme Maseabata: You know, for you to understand the motive behind Litsoejane's way of dressing, you first have to understand their way of life. Because Litsoejane's life is a progress which goes in stages.

Interviewer: Ooh okay. I was not aware. Let's start from where Litsoejane begin.

Mme Maseabata: The initiation is a legalised process which involves the approvals of the local head Chief, Principal Chief and the guardians of women who are to be initiated. This means that the family should approve that their daughter can proceed with initiation and that the family will be responsible for all the cost to be incurred during for the initiation. When the approvals have been concluded with the chiefs, the head of initiation school is allocated a place to initiate women, called Mophato (a house where part of initiation training takes place).

Interviewer: So where do you build mophato?

Mme Maseabata: There are two mephato for initiates. One is that house (pointing at the house which is about 15-20m away from her house), you see that it is not far from my house?

Interviewer: I see. So, the house is reserved strictly to house the initiates?

Mme Maseabata: Exactly! The second mophato is built inside the gorge away from the village. The first one is their home, the second one is where the actual training takes place. Since the initiation is very private and

confidential, its activities have to take place away from the public, hence the gorge. Here (pointing at the same house), they also play different games. Both Mephatho are fenced with Sentloujane (a reed fence made of straw).

Interviewer: So, who built the second mophato, the one in the gorge?

Mme Maseabata: Mophato is built by men and women who have undergone the initiation training. You know that Basotho houses were fenced with a straw reed and had 'belts like' part which holds the reed straw together. That fencing is called Lekhoakhoa and the same fencing for mephatho is called Sentloujane.

Interviewer: Ooh! I see.

Mme Maseabata: I said that the life of Tsoejane (singular for Litsoejane) starts off as Ngoale (singular for Bale). Bale are women initiates from the ages of 18 upward. In the first two-three (2-3) months of initiation they start with the process called 'ho-qacha'. 'Ho-qacha' is the time when they wear their regular clothing and fetch wood daily and they also learn the rules and regulations of initiation. From the time when they start with 'ho qacha' they apply **Pilo** (oil mixed with an ash of a burned grass to make into a black oil). At the end of 'ho qacha' they apply **Phepha** (white ochre) on their bodies and face. At that stage they are referred to as Bale.

Interviewer: As someone who has been initiating Basotho women, what would you say inspired the way Bale/Litsoejane dress?

Mme Maseabata: That's a difficult one. I'll say it has been a practice over the years. I was initiated in this fashion. Some of the traditions associated with initiation training have changed over time. And such changes are brought about by modernity and unavailability of natural resources as well family's availability and affordability of domestic animals, which are mostly used to complete the entire training. But unlike majority of Basotho cultural things, the dress and body painting of Bale/Litsoejane have stayed the

relatively the same. If you were initiated, I'll go deeper to tabulate the changes.

(We both laughed)

Interviewer: Since my interest is their dress, please elaborate more.

Mme Maseabata: During the period of 'ho qacha' they wear **Mokhahla**. Mokhahla is a blanket made of soften cow hide. Mokhahla is used to protect them while fetching firewood. Litsoejane carry wood on their backs instead of carrying it on their heads. Mokhahla is used to protect Bales' backs and necks against scratches and discomforts which may be caused by carrying firewood on their backs. Prior to initiation, the family of the initiate would cook and brew a traditional beer, then invite men from the community to assist to soften cow hide by scrapping the inside of it and turning it using sefalo (tool used to scarp the inside of a hide).

Interviewer: What do they wear underneath Mokhahla?

Mme Maseabata: They just wear their day-to-day clothes including a blanket or tjale. Nothing out of ordinary. Again, they wear **Likholokoane** (grass hoops). Likholokoane are made of moseha grass ((Merxmuellera macowanii). Moseha is wrapped with a thick thread called Kholokoane to hold the grass together and to protect the wearer against any protruding grass. Likholokoane were made by older men who have undergone the initiation process to ensure that they are strong enough to last the initiation process, however, of late Bale make their own Likholokoane during the period of 'ho-qacha'. Older women, who would have undergone the initiation process, measure the body of each Bale, from under bust to a waist, in order to make Likholokoane which are enough to cover the stomach.

Interviewer: So, are they made as a circular hoop or are they fastened for ease of wearing on and off?

Mme Maseabata: They are a circular hoop, measured to leave a room for ease of wearing and taking them off. They are made such that the breasts rest on them. For a skirt, they wear **Setea**. Setea is a back skirt made of softened cow hide and dyed red. In the front they a softened goat's skin.

Interviewer: How big is Setea and how is it worn?

Mme Maseabata: Setea is worn from the back to the side along the hips and fastened with leather string around the stomach. Remember that skin hides are not so big. So only so much can be made from the hides as clothes. Let's go inside the house do that you can see the video of my previous Litsoajane, prior to Covid 19. My phone is clearer in a darker space. This is Setea (pointing at the video which we kept pausing) For a front skirt, Bale wear lekoko la poli or la nku (softened goat skin or softened sheep skin).

Interviewer: Do you have photographs?

Mme Maseabata: No. Even this video was shared by one of the people who attended the graduation ceremony here at home. Litsoejane also wear litjale (small fringed blanket) to hold Likhholokoana together. See here? This is **Lesira** (a woven grass veil).

Interviewer: I see that it has beads.

Mme Maseabata: Litsoejane are at liberty to be as creative as possible. They decorate their attires however they want. Graduation is an exciting time for them. During graduation (ha ba tsoa) they wear **Thethana** (a fringed skirt), worn at the front. Thethana is also dyed red with letsoku. Married women wear a longer one whereas the maidens wear a shorter one. During the period when they are applying Phepha, they hold long stick. The sticks are used for entertainment purposes. They also hold the same stick upon graduation. Also, they wear **mohlehlo** as a neck piece (mohlehlo is a hard fat layering the inside a belly of a sheep or goat. It is folded and gathered to make into a neck piece). A family of each tsoejane brings a sheep or goat which is slaughtered as part of food that is prepared for the initiation graduation and so mohlehlo is set aside, prepared and used as a necklace around each tsoejane. During the graduation, they are adorned with colourful objects that their family gift them with. Then 'ba tebuka' (they walk slowly following a rhythm in a sequence) while covering their navel with another hand. The whole time from 'ho qacha' up to graduation day, they walk bare feet.

Interviewer: What is significant about of their attire?

Mme Maseabata: I'll say its importance is tied in with the way the tradition of initiation has been carried out. In those days, Basotho had lots of animals and clothing was made from animal skins. As I have said, we grew up with this tradition. And in those days, as a girl, we didn't question our elders, we did everything that we were told, that it is the way a tradition was carried out. We just adopted the culture.

Interviewer: Please explain the body painting of Bale/Litsoejane and what they used to paint their bodies?

Mme Maseabata: During the period of 'ho qacha' they apply a black oil called Pilo as part of the initiation rites. Pilo is applied for two months. In the third month they paint their bodies white with Phepha.

Interviewer: How is Phepha made?

Interviewer: Phepha is a soft white soil which is ground, the kind of soil that some women smooth on. So Phepha is mixed with oil or petroleum jelly to make it into a soft paste that is easy to apply on one's body.

Interviewer: For clarification, when do they apply Phepha?

Mme Maseabata: Phepha is applied at the end of 'ho qacha', which is at the end of second or third month. Phepha is applied on their faces, exposed upper body, arms and around the legs.

Interviewer: They draw or write on their bodies. How do they go about that and what is the significance of writing the names?

Mme Maseabata: Once Phepha is mixed, it is easy to draw Litema or write the names of their heroes or certain members of the community or their family members on their bodies.

Interviewer: When do they apply Letsoku?

Mme Maseabata: Upon their 'graduation' at the end of the initiation rite, they are now referred to as Litsoejane. And during that time, they apply Letsoku (a red powder mixed with fat to make into red ochre). Letsoku is applied on the entire body, including the head. Letsoku goes with its attire.

Interviewer: Do you think it is easy nowadays to keep the tradition of dress and grooming for Litsoejane?

Mme Maseabata: Hei! Today's youth are not interested in their culture, they see it as merely old fashioned. Unless you teach them at your school so that they keep the culture going. It is a challenge. We keep practicing as long as there are Basotho women who are willing to undergo the initiation.

Interviewer: Mme Maseabata I thank you very much. I deeply appreciate your time and the information you shared with me. I can assure that I will pass it over to students who are going to take part in this project.

Mme Maseabata: Am also thankful that there are Basotho women like you who have the keen interest in this unpopular tradition. Anytime you need more information or clarification just call or come.

Interviewer: I will do that. Thank you very much Mme Maseabata.

Interview transcription for community elder based on dress and grooming of Litsoejane and Litema

Interview with an Elder 2- Mme Malieketseng (Mme Malieketseng is said to be an older Mosotho woman who is very knowledgeable about the culture of Basotho. The interview was telephonic because Mrs Malieketseng stays in another District called Leribe).

Time allocated for the interview: 48:22 minutes

Interviewer/Researcher: Nteboheleng Lepheana

Notetaker: Nteboheleng Lepheana

Greetings Mme Malieketseng. My name is Nteboheleng Lepheana, a registered student at Durban University of Technology. I am pursuing Master of Applied Art in Fashion. I am conducting a study that looks at the role that creative problem solving can play in designing innovative fashion which draws on the indigenous knowledge of the Basotho nation,

especially the dress and grooming of Litsoejane. I have been referred to you by a lady from the Ministry of Tourism, Environment and Culture. I understand that you are very knowledgeable the Basotho Culture. By right I was supposed to have come to Leribe and first seek a permission from the Chief of your local arear to interview you. The information gathered from you will be used by myself and a group of fashion students. Together we will use a creative problem-solving method to design innovative fashion which reflects Basotho culture. We will then display this fashion collection to members of Limkokwing University community, and you will of course be invited. The responses of the people viewing the collection will give us some idea of how successful the design process was in achieving its purpose. Please note that I am not looking into critical details of the initiation process, rather, my focus is dress and grooming including the inspiration behind that. If you allow me, may I please record this information?

Mme Malieketseng. Okay. They know me very well at the Ministry. I have work with them on few occasions. I have also assisted another lady who was studying in Kwa-Zulu Natal. There is no problem you can record.

Interviewer: She is the one who gave me your contacts. As I have explained, my focus is on dress and grooming of Bale/Litsoejane not the initiation details.

What is the difference between the time when they are Bale and when they are Litsoejane

Mme Malieketseng: They are referred to as Bale when they are still applying Phepha and wearing Likhholokoane, Seobi, Lesira and back skirt made of softened cow's hide.

Interviewer: I see. Please elaborate on these aspects of their dress. I have interviewed a lady who initiates women and there are pieces of information that I need further clarity on.

Mme Malieketseng: They wear Seobi (a skirt made of soften goat or sheep skirt). Seobi is worn as a front skirt. When Bale sing, they beat on Seobi to make a drum beat sound. This type of dress has long been worn over the

centuries for as long as women initiation has been in practice. The purpose of Seobi is to warm and protect a women's lower body. They wear Likhholokoane.

Interviewer: What is the major purpose of Likhholokoane besides covering the stomach of Ngoale?

Mme Malieketseng: When we go deeper, you will realise that Basotho were very intelligent. **Kholokoana** (kholokoana is singular for Likhholokoana) looks like a woman's womb, and kharetsa (part of roofing of traditional house which holds and strengthened the grass used for roofing) as well as lekhoakhoa (a reed fence which also had a belt like part that looks like Kholokoana. It is also used to strengthen the fence). Likhholokoana were used by Bale in order to teach them to wrap and tighten the waist after birth. There is a lot of resemblance with the roofing of a house, its fence and Likhholokoana. Since a Mosotho woman is expected to get married and give birth, Likhholokoane are made to tighten and to protect a woman's stomach which is said to represent ntlo (a house for an unborn child). Bale further wrap their waists with Tjale to hold Likhholokoane together once they are worn. They cover their faces with Lesira

Interviewer: What is the purpose of Lesira?

Mme Malieketseng: Basotho liked people who were humble. **Lesira** is worn when they leave their initiation places. Lesira hides them so that they are not recognizable from onlookers up until the day when they are officially revealed upon graduation and to prevent Bale's eyes from roving about, perhaps looking at men.

Interviewer: Among others they also draw and design Litema on their bodies.

Mme Malieketseng: Yes. They decorate their bodies with Litema and choose the names of passed Basotho men who were outstanding or deemed heroes in the country. Sometimes they write the names of current chiefs or outstanding men in their communities or from their families. The purpose of selecting the names of such men is that, at the end of the initiation they are also said to be the heroness of their own communities.

Then they hold sticks. A **stick** gives a woman power to choose the man one would like to marry. Initially, molalu (a thick stick which is a man's accessory) and by holding it and giving it to a man during a game called Selia-lia, that serves as an indication that a woman has a power to choose a husband and to propose marriage, as opposed to normal way where a man is the one who confronts a woman.

Interviewer: This is so interesting. And Bale are well known for chasing people to whip them with those sticks.

Mme Malieketseng: They chase people as part of entertainment. They don't mean any harm. Now they are nearing the day of 'ho tsoa' (graduation or the end of the initiation training). They are now referred to as Litsoejane and they are still holding their sticks. They wear **Setea** (a skirt made of softened cow hide). The softened cowhide is prepared the same way as Mokhahla blanket. Setea is dyed red colour with Letsoku. The dress is worn from the back and ends just by the side thighs and tied at the front. Setea differs in size and shape depending on whether it is worn by a maiden or a married woman. A maiden wears a pointed and shorter setea that shows the back of the knees, to signify purity and married women wear setea that is round at back and covers the back knees. Setea is worn inside out, in that, the part of the hide with fur is an inside of the skirt whereas the skin part is the one that is dyed red with Letsoku and it is the outer part. Since animal skins are not as wide as any woven or knitted fabric, Seteaa was made to ensure that a woman is well covered at the back. Setea can be decorated with copper on top of it and along the edges. However, due to economic changes, people do not use cowskin hides as often as they used to. Lately Bale/Litsoejane buy softened skin hides which are readily available or any red leather fabric.

Litsoejane wear **Thethana** as well. Traditional thethana was made of Tsikitlana (Gazania krebsiana Less), a flower leave which is twined together and made stiff. Thethana is also dyed red with letsoku (red ochre). A modern day thethana is made of a twine which is twisted together, fringed and dyed red with letsoku to resemble original one. The readymade red twine is also available which resemble the one dyed with letsoku. To

cover the front lower part of the body, married women wear a longer Thethana whereas unmarried women wear a shorter one in length. Married women cover their breast with leather brassiere or Thatsana (fringed top that covers the breasts. It looks exactly like Thethana). The maidens' breasts remain uncovered. Litsoejane wear senyepa, which is a beaded belt to embellish Thethana and it is attached around the front waist of Thethana.

Post the Initiation training, traditionally, married women wore Mose-oa-khomo (a skirt made of softened cowhide) which is a two-part dress that allows for a movement. One part of the dress is worn from the back to the front, and it is longer, whereas the front part is worn from the front to the side and it is shorter in length. Mose-oa-Khomo was two-part for ease of movement, especially during the war times when people had to run. Mose-oa-khomo has been replaced by traditional Seshoeshe dress. There are restrictions that a woman would have to observe following the initiation. A period was stipulated based on her clan. A period of restrictions could last between a month to six (6) months. For a maiden, there is a possibility that at the end of the initiation she is already engaged to be married soon. A married woman is expected to take up her marital duties not long after the initiation. As such the restrictions take a woman's circumstances in mind. Mose-oa-khomo has been replaced by traditional Seshoeshe dress.

Interviewer: I understand when you say our culture is deeper than meets the eye! Do you think Litsoejane's lifestyle, the way of dressing and body painting can inspire modern way of dressing and lifestyle?

Mme Malieketseng: It can if it is taught to young Basotho at high schools and at higher education Institution. Basotho have depth of culture but majority of our traditional practices have been eroded by colonialisation. There was another gentleman who was knowledgeable about our traditions, but he has passed on. There are people who work at Radio Lesotho who used to interview him. You can visit them and find out more.

Interviewer: Okay Mme. I would do so if time permits. Now can we talk about the tradition of mural painting Litema and its importance?

Discussion on Litema

Mme Malieketseng: Okay. Following the marriage of a son, his family build him and his bride a small house called Leqatha. Leqatha is a roughly build house and not very tidy. Leqatha is built with tree poles and stones and it is thatched roofed. Leqatha is built in a way that the newly married couple see the need to build a proper house soonest. As such, it is the responsibility of a husband to collect all building materials and to build a house for his family. On the other hand, a woman's responsibility is to collect mohlomo (thatching grass/*Hyparrhenia hirta*) which she will sickle together with other women, tie it in bundles and bring it home in preparation for roofing. Once the thatching grass is collected, a man together with other village men will gather to assist the house owner to roof the new house. When the building and roofing are completed, a women would start to beautify the house focusing on exterior and exterior walls as well as the interior floor and to build exterior porch and decorate with Litema. This is the brief background of Litema.

Interviewer: What was needed for one to master the art of Litema? Was there any training offered to a young woman?

Mme Malieketseng: I assure you that education has always been the backbone of our culture. Young men and women were taught a lot of things which would equip them later in their adulthood life. A young Mosotho is guided by her mother to teach her household chores that a woman is expected to undertake. In the same manner, a young woman will learn ho-lila (to smudge) from her mother or the closest woman in her life or a woman who is a prominent community member. At times there will be other women who were experts in smudging or certain household chores that a young woman could learn from. I mentioned that a young couple would build their own house following a house called Leqatha that their parents build for them. Now, when they have built themselves a proper house, firstly, the floors have to be smoothed out. The floor is made compact and smooth by allowing young boys and girls (mostly the teenagers) to sing and dance in a new house before it is ready to be smudged. Secondly, the walls have to be prepared. A woman will mix Lekoetje soil with horse or

donkey dung and water to make a thick paste. The paste will be applied onto the wall of the house, as if it is being thrown. The process is called 'ho phara'. The paste is slightly smudged with fingers to fill areas where a paste did not reach. A Mosotho woman would then seal the paste by smearing the wall very hard to remove grass and any protruding lumps, while adding some water to achieve the smoothness (as if plastering with a hand). Once this process is complete, the walls are ready for 'ho liloa' (to be smudge) and to apply Litema. This topic makes me so happy! It drives me crazy!

Interviewer: (Laughing). Am also very happy. I wish I could drive and sit with you as we discuss about this.

Mme Malieketseng: A woman would prepare either a Loam or Lekoetje soil and mixed it with a soft cow dung and water to make it into a soft paste which slides easily from right to left for smudging. While smudging with this paste, moving from left to right, Tema will be formed. This is more visible on smudged floor or walls without any finish.

Interviewer: (Litema will look like the original Tema from the fields. When the fields are ploughed, they form a pattern and that pattern is called Tema. Since Litema are patterns, they are named from that Tema).

Mme Malieketseng (continues): Now that the house is ready for Litema, women will walk a distance to quarry the soil from the area called Khatampi. Khatampi is an identified area where women get a desired type of soils for colouring the smudged walls (mobu o betang).

Interviewer: Let me get it clear. The soil from Khathampi is not mixed with a cow dung?

Mme Malieketseng: No. You should listen carefully. I don't want people who will read your work to laugh at us. The soil is used as is, because the purpose of using the coloured soils is to make Litema in different colours. Khatampi has different colours of soil, namely; red, light green, white, cream white, grey and purple. Sometimes young women will travel even further to quarry a certain colour that is not easily found in their area. The coloured soil will be mixed with water to make it into a flowing paste (a

paint like paste). To achieve a different shade/tint natural dyes are used. For instance; crushed red berries or prickly pear or roots of a certain plant are mixed with water and added to a coloured soil paste. The coloured paste will be applied with a piece of sheep skin, the hairy part, that process is called 'ho beta' (to paint). In modern times the soil that women used to quarry has been replaced by water paints and applied with a roller. There are also colour mixers which are sold, mixed with water paint to achieve better colours than the use of natural plants.

Interviewer: I had forgotten what 'ho beta' is. This is interesting.

Mme Malieketseng: We don't practice Litema anymore, that is why it is easy to forget. There are different types of Litema for Basotho in Lesotho and Basotho in South Africa (specifically at Qwaqwa). In Lesotho, Basotho women use hand techniques whereas in Qwaqwa, Basotho women use fork to attain a desired Tema. I want us to focus on Litema made by the local Basotho Women.

1st technique: (Given instructions on hand techniques)- make a fist with your hand, open your fist slightly to make an oval shape like an egg.

Interviewer: Okay Mme. Let me try it.

Mme Malieketseng: With this technique, use your small finger together with the side of your hand. Use both hands, make sure that at the top of the folded fingers both hands meet and also that the bottom sides of your hands meet. If you repeat this technique to make a pattern, it will result in a diamond shape.

Interviewer: Wooow!! This is interesting.

Mme Malieketseng: Let's do the second technique. Open your hand wide and use the base of the fingers. This one is simple, but it should be done repeatedly to form a pattern and this Tema is called Ngoloane.

The third technique, open your hand and stretch it, now raise the fingers. So, you can use both palms repeatedly to form a pattern that forms Tema.

Interviewer: Okay Mme. Let me do it. I have discovered something very interesting.

Mme Malieketseng: The fourth technique. Open your hand wide and fingers open as well. Rise the palm and use the fingers to make Litema. Use both hands to achieve a desired Tema.

Interviewer: I see. I will practice.

Mme Malieketseng: With all these hand techniques, just make the repetitive shape or a pattern to make thought out Tema. Usually when patterns meet they will come out as either a diamond or any shape. But the favourite shape has always been a diamond. Another pattern is achieved by drawing triangles that meet at the corners or squares which also meet to form a diamond shape. The technique of squares and triangles needs someone who is quite good with it.

Interviewer: I see. What did Basotho women use to measure Litema to get accurate shapes?

Mme Malieketseng: Basotho women were not literate, therefore, they used stick to measure the length, width, height, circumference, and distance of Tema and between Litema. A woman will draw a pattern on the floor using a stick, then she will transfer Litema design onto the walls. As she draws Litema, she will step back to ensure that she is getting the design right. However, with experience, she will use both thumbs to measure. Litema were not applied all over the front wall of a house, rather, they were applied on the area called sefahleho (face), which is the area on both sides of the door and around the window opening. It is referred to as sefahleho because it faces oncoming people. Litema had a belt like design based on the repetition of one Tema.

Interviewer: Please repeat the Tema which make a belt.

Mme Malieketseng: Okay. Let's take a diamond shape, for instance, and repeated it in a line ensuring that they are attached by side corners. That results in a continuous belt. Continue drawing that diamond shape this time drawing the second line and make the bottom of the first line to attach to the top corner of the second line to and continue with that shape in a line. Now when the diamonds meet, the first and second lines, they form another diamond shape within the 'belt'. Can you see it? Am telling you

that Basotho were intelligent! To draw these diamonds, they would take a stick, wrap it with a cloth and dip in a coloured paste. If they wanted to add another line with a different colour, they would mix that colour separately and use a different stick. At times they would use a cardboard as a template. This method of enhancing Litema is called Paterole.

Interviewer: But cardboard is modern. In the olden times it did not exist.

Mme Malieketseng: That's true. They would use objects like plates (steel plates) or a cover of a small three-legged pot or any artefacts that they possessed to obtain a desired design. Again, draw the circles in a line which are attached, draw a second line of circle, also attaching at the top and bottom. Can you see that in the middle of the circles there is a diamond shape formed?

Interviewer: I see. Hmmm!

Mme Malieketseng: Exactly. Also, Litema were given names based on their source of inspiration. For instance, there was a song about a bird called Lehaqasi (and it was composed by old people with the purpose of sourcing inspiration from Lehaqasi's wings (she sings the song about Lehaqasi). There is Tema that is based on its wings and it is applied to the floor. Litema do not take major designs to form, it takes about four of the repeated patterns to form Tema. For the interior of the house, Litema were made on the walls. A woman would also build Moholoana (clay cabinet) to display her crockery. The way moholoane was built has its roots or inspiration from Litema designs, though it is built with a clay soil. A woman would still start her design on the floor, when she is satisfied, she will continue to build moholoana. Women use different techniques to design and to build moholoana and care was taken to build it since it stays for a longer time before the design is changed.

Interviewer: Okay. So, they named Litema after things which they used daily or their cultural artifacts?

Mme Malieketseng: Yes. Basotho named their Litema based on their lifestyle, food, daily work, animals and birds, cooking objects, areas and traditional artifacts. For instance, some of the names are; Ketane (chain

used to tie animals), Lekoko (cow hide), Lesira (veil), Poone (Maize) and Makhoarane (the area around Maseru), to name but the few.

Interviewer: Thank you very much Mme Malieketseng. You really have so much information about our culture. I will visit you to discover more about Basotho. Perhaps even invite you to have a talk with the students. Until then, thank you Mme.

Mme Malieketseng: You are welcome. I will tell you when I come to Maseru. And I would also love to share my knowledge with your students.

Interview transcription for community elder based on dress and grooming of Balisana

Interview with an Elder 3- Ntate Tumisang* (Ntate Tumisang is an older Mosotho man who initiates young Basotho men. Due to nature of confidentiality of initiation training, Ntate Tumisang did not agree to voice recording of the interview).

Time allocated for the interview: 1:40 minutes

Interviewer/Researcher: Nteboheleng Lepheana

Notetaker: Nteboheleng Lepheana

Greetings Ntate Tumisang. My name is Nteboheleng Lepheana, a registered student at Durban University of Technology. I am pursuing Master of Applied Art in Fashion. I am conducting a study that looks at the role that creative problem solving can play in designing innovative fashion which draws on the indigenous knowledge of the Basotho nation, especially the dress and grooming of Litsoejane. I came to this village and spoke with the Chief of this area to assist me with someone I can interview regarding male initiation. My interest is basically to find information about dress and grooming of Balisana. However, I am aware that such training originates from dress and grooming of male initiates. When the Chief pointed me to you, I formally asked the Chief for permission to proceed

with interviewing you. The information gathered from you will be used by myself and a group of fashion students. Together we will use a creative problem-solving method to design innovative fashion which reflects Basotho culture. We will then display this fashion collection to members of Limkokwing University community, and you will of course be invited. The responses of the people viewing the collection will give us some idea of how successful the design process was in achieving its purpose. Please note that I am not looking into critical details of the initiation process, rather, my focus is dress and grooming including the inspiration behind that. If you allow me, may I please record this information?

Ntate Tumisang: Okay Mme. I get your message. If you have spoken to the chief that is good. Hei I am a respected person in this village especially a role that I play in initiation training. I prefer that we go ahead without recording me. Do you have a pen and paper?

Interviewer: I appreciate that Ntate Tumisang. I only wanted to record to ensure that I capture all the points resulting from this conversation. But I truly understand you. I have a pen and paper. Please let's go ahead.

Interviewer: Please explain in detail the way of life of Balisana, from when they start shepherding at an early age until the time when they are grown men.

Ntate Tumisang: You have rightly said that life of springs from the initiation training. I will detail their background so that you understand their way of life. A real Molisana oa Mosotho (Mosotho shepherd) starts off from the initiation school. It is believed that the initiation toughens up a boy into a strong person who can endure harsh and hard conditions, not just the weathers. So Balisana's lie and ways of dressing stems from the initiation training. Initiation is a legalised process that the owner of the initiation school applies for from the local village Chief and Principal Chief. No one can wake up wanting to initiate boys without following proper channels. Every man who wishes to initiate boys should also be someone who underwent initiation training. Only after the initiator has been issued with letters of approval, is it then that he can start with arrangements of initiation. He will be allocated a site to build his Mophato in the mountains,

it is built far away from the villages. Mophato is a simple house built in just three (3) days before the initiates arrive. It is meant to be a home of the initiates during the time when they are undergoing the initiation training.

***Footnote-** Names have been changed. Ntate is a word used to address a male, denoting father or Mr.

Interviewer: Who builds Mophato?

Ntate Tumisang: Mophato is built by men who have undergone the initiation training. Men who are not initiated and women are not allowed to come into the vicinity of Mophato. Now, the owner of initiation training will announce to local men and men in nearby villages of his intention to initiate boys. Parents will release their kids to be initiated once the date of initiation are made known. Men are initiated from the ages of 18 upwards. There are people who visit Mephato to check that there are no under 18s who are initiated and to see to it that the owner of initiation adheres to terms and conditions stipulated in the approved documents from the Principal Chief. Even though the owner of initiation has the approval, boys cannot come to him without the approval of their parents/guardians. No! The family should approve that their son be initiated, since the family will be responsible for all the costs to be incurred during for the initiation training.

Interviewer: Hmmm!! I understand. So, what happens when the boy 'a titimela' (just comes to the owner of the initiation without the approval of his parents)?

Ntate Tumisang: Boys do, especially, when it was never discussed at home prior to inception of initiation. Or in the case where the boy's parents have made it clear that they do not want their son to be initiated but the boy wants to be initiated. In that case, the owner of initiation training will send the representative to inform the parents of the boy's presence at his place and his intention to be initiated. If the parents agree and confirm that they allow their son to be initiated, the family will send mokhahla and grey

blanket for the boy. The family will also confirm that they will be responsible for providing necessary things, namely; food and any stipulated fees which needs to be paid. If they do not agree, the owner of initiation training will return him. Depending on the amount of time he stayed, there can be a payment imposed on the family in the form of an animal. At times a boy can go back even after he has been returned to his parents. If the boy's parents insists that they still do not allow him to be initiated, the owner of initiation training can lodge a case with the local chief against the parents on behalf of the boy. A Chief can rule for the for the boy and instruct the parents to pay what is required, so the boy can be initiated.

Interviewer: I can imagine especially in the case where parents' religion contradicts with the initiation training.

Ntate Tumisang: Yah! These things happen. However, things have changed. In the past, it was common knowledge that a young man must be initiated. That is why a young man who was not initiated was called names or mocked while men are herding animals. Initially, a boy will request a permission from his parents to be initiated. If the parents agree, they will talk to the owner of initiation training and the agreement will be reached. The day before he goes away to owner of Initiation training place, he will collect wood for his family and at night some local men, who also have been initiated, will gather to hold a small celebration for him throughout the night and at sunrise he will be accompanied to owner of Initiation training's place.

Interviewer: There are married men who are being initiated. Do they also request a permission to be initiated?

Ntate Tumisang: Yes. He will send senior men from his family who are also initiated to request permission on his behalf. They can't just pitch at the place of the owner of the initiation training. When he is granted the permission to join, on the day that he is going, he will be accompanied by male family members who are initiated. Their initiation process starts off with 'ho qacha'.

Interviewer: For real? This is similar to female initiation.

Ntate Tumisang: There are similarities here and there, only 'ho qacha' period is quite similar and maybe some processes surrounding their graduation. 'Ho qacha' is a time period when boys or men show an interest in being initiated and the period takes two to three months (2-3). Once they have started with this process, they stay in the village at khoaling/khotla (the initiates house), which is not far from the house of the owner of initiation training where they are under the guardian of selected men who have also been initiated, Mesuoe (the instructors). During this period even initiated men are not allowed to be in the space where the initiates are.

Interviewer: What could be the reason behind that?

Ntate Tumisang: It has to do with their protection. So, at the end of 3rd month, they are said that "ba kena" (they enter the actual initiation, or they are now starting the actual process of initiation). This is the night of Lelingoana, a night of big feast where the owner of the initiation training slaughters a bull for the boys. Parents would have been informed of how they will contribute towards the initiates' food before the feast takes place. Food is brought by initiates' parents, already cooked. Every parent brings food that is enough to be eaten by all the initiates, not just his son or a husband, in the case where one's husband is part of the initiation team. The feast takes place on Friday. Most men who have also been initiated are present and they are fully dressed for the occasion.

Interviewer: So, on this night other men are allowed around the initiates?

Ntate Tumisang: Not really. It's a feast but the boys are seated together and closer to them are Mesuoe. Men will sing mekorotlo (songs sung by men who have undergone the initiation training, sometime referred to as hymns) from when the feast starts up until the midnight. At night men make a bonfire and in the early hours of morning the initiates will secretly leave for the mountain.

Interviewer: Okay, so one notices when they leave?

Ntate Tumisang: Men who are initiated know the process involved in secret leaving. So, they distract the attendants by keeping them entertained so that they are not aware of the exit. Attendants of the feast will assume that

the boys are still in their midst since the singing and the fire continues. They will only learn when the sun has risen that the boys have long left for the mountain. The initiates take about three months in the mountain, undergoing the initiation training. While at mophatong, time is spend teaching new initiates to be responsible community members, family men, about their culture and or traditions of the Basotho nation. In the past they were also trained to fight in order to be incorporated in the army. In modern times they are still taught the art of ho kalla (stick fighting) in order to protect themselves, their families and their communities, as it has been a practice centuries back. They are also taught to create and recite lithoko and mangae (different poems/hymns based on the past heroes of the Basotho nation and about the initiates' own personal backgrounds or any theme/topic that they can choose to create their poems on). They are subjected to conditions which are said to toughen them into strong men who can endure pain, who can manage frustration and who do not cry. As a result, there is a Sesotho saying/idiom that says "monna ke nku ha a lle" (a man does not cry, he is resilient and tough when subjected or faced with a painful or trying situation).

Interviewer: This is interesting. I have heard that they are toughen up, though I never knew the details.

Ntate Tumisang: That's the way things take place. The initiates are in the company of their instructors, who are experienced and are initiated. No one is allowed to visit the initiates, not even the initiated father whose son is initiated. He cannot freely visit his son at Mophatong and have time with him aside from the rest of the initiates. The owner of the initiation training only comes to check if things are going well and whether all the initiates are in good health, whether training takes place as expected and that there is enough food. During the time that the initiates are in the mountain, men who have undergone the initiation take turns to send food to the initiates.

Interviewer: Ooh they don't cook for themselves while at Mophatong?

Ntate Tumisang: The food is sent as a bag of milled mealie meal, vegetables, a sheep and any other food that is available. In the case where a family is unable to send food, a stipulated amount of money is paid.

Interviewer: So, what happens when the family cannot send food or money for their son?

Ntate Tumisang: If the family cannot contribute anything eatable for their son, he will be obligated to serve the owner of the initiation training upon graduation, until the owner of the initiation training assumes that he has fully paid him. Then on the sixth (6th) month since “ho qacha” period, they are released, often in December to January. Parents of the initiates are made aware of the day of their coming out (letsatsi la ho tsoa or ho theoha thabeng) to be incorporated back into the community as men, no longer as boys or maqai (a man who is not initiated whom the initiated men treat as inferior, whose opinion cannot be considered as important when men sit to communicate issues pertaining to their community). Due to the training that they have undergone, they are expected to carry themselves responsibly and they are treated as mature men, ready to start a family, they are also taught to take care of animals for the wellbeing of the family and to be responsible member of their communities. There is a lot of work that takes place at Mophatong.

Interviewer: From this background that you have elaborated, now I can see a bigger picture as far as dress and grooming of Balisana is concerned. Please detail their dress, namely: hats, clothes (tops and pants), ts’ee, blankets, gumboots, socks, balaclava and molamu and any item which I have left out.

Ntate Tumisang: We have spoken about Mokhahla and its purpose. Now comes the day of their coming out. From the mountain, they are still wearing their grey blanket only that they wore from the beginning of ‘ho qacha’. When they get back, they stay outside the village, at times it could be at a ridge. When they get to the village their families would have already brought a new Seanamarena blanket (a common colour of choice is red and black). Each blanket will be tacked the name of each initiate to identify it and it should have a safety pin for wearability. They will wear the blanket and fasten with a safety pin.

Interviewer: By now initiated men are allowed to be in their company?

Ntate Tumisang: Yes. They are said to be safe back home. No one can impose any danger for them. A day following their arrival, they will be stationed out in the open space, around the village, where their families, especially a sister would come and adorn his brother.

Interviewer: This must be an exciting moment for them.

Ntate Tumisang: It is and more especially for the owner of the initiation training when all the boys are all back, safe and none of them is dead. Parents wait in anticipation to meet their sons and every parent prays that he/she sees his son during the graduation preparations. At times it can happen that one of the boys does not make it alive.

Interviewer: Hmm! I can imagine. I remember hearing such stories. It has happened in our family when my cousin didn't make it back from Mophatong. It was so sad. Anyway, the initiates are well adorned and ready for the big day.

Ntate Tumisang: Sorry to hear that. We really try hard to keep them all safe. It is an exciting time for the boys, now they are men. You can't even refer to them as boys anymore! They are now strong and grown men. Villagers come over to owner of the initiation's house for a celebration. It's a big feast, families are looking forward to hearing their son sing mangae and reciting lithoko (initiates songs and poems). Nowadays, some initiation training run for three months only.

Interviewer: How long do they stay dressed in a celebratory gear? I heard they take some time before 'ba hlatsoa' (to wash away Letsoku and the blanket that he has been wearing when he gets back from the mountain).

Ntate Tumisang: 'Ho hlatsoa' does happen but I'll get to it. So, the celebration will continue until the night. The following day the owner of the initiation will release them to the families which have requested that the initiates come to their houses to continue with the same celebration, where that family's son is part of the initiates. The initiates together with their instructors will go from house to house as per families which have requested their presence. Each family will host a celebration where several sheep or a cow would be slaughtered. When the celebrations have been

completed, each initiate is released to his respective home. When he has washed away Letsoku and the blanket, the family gifts him again with gumboots, knee high socks, safety pins and balaclava, he already has a blanket and Molamu. Molisana can't herd without the use of Molamu (a thick wooden stick). He is gifted with Molamu upon graduation with the intention to protect himself and to use it to guide the animals while herding. In this way Molisana's attire will be complete. Is there anything that you would me to add?

Interviewer: But gumboots, balaclava and socks are not part of our cultural dress, even though Basisana have been wearing them for ages. What did Basotho initiates wear back in Moshoeshe's time or after? Am not sure how far back we can trace the dress but perhaps as far as you may recollect.

Ntate Tumisang: Basotho used to wear animal skins and hides. Young men wore Tse'ea which was made of sheep skin. It had to cover the front part. It was cut in a triangle shape which covered the lower part of the torso and had a thick strap to cover at the back. Following colonialism and the introduction of cotton fabrics, Ts'ee has been made of loin cotton cloth worn around the lower part of the body as pants and fastened and decorated with safety pins on one side. Often Basotho men would not cover the upper body, especially in summer months, otherwise they would wear a blanket made of animal skins. They wore leather shoes which were called Lifatla (leather shoes made from softened cow hide). They also wore katiba ea kuoane (hat made of fur from a wild animal). It's true that these items (gumboots, socks and balaclava hat) are not part of the Basotho culture, however, they have been used as initiates' attire following the graduation from initiation training since colonisation period. They were introduced into the Basotho culture by Basotho men who worked in the mines in South Africa. For many years, Basotho men have been working in the mines to sustain their families. Men would leave their livestock with their sons or any man who is a family member. When the miners come home, they would be seen wearing gumboots with more than one pair of knee-high socks. The miners would also buy gumboots, balaclava and

socks for their sons, who would be shepherding family animals or the miners shepherd when they come home. Apparently, this has been a uniform miners' and it has been Balisana's attire to this day.

Interviewer: I wish we would've stick to animal skins, at least for some years following colonisation.

Ntate Tumisang: Aooo!! It wasn't going to be that easy since the missionaries first changed King Moshoeshoe 1's attire. As such it became easy for the rest of Basotho to buy machine produced products than to turn the skins. Working at the mines made it even easier to buy products from the mines or sold at Frasers supermarkets locally. Balisana wore a blanket from the time when they graduate from initiation school until their shepherding days. Molisana wears a blanket until it is Letairi (a thin old blanket). Am sure you have seen that around. Instead of putting the blanket away when it is old, they pile two (2) or more blankets on it. This is also due to cold weather in Lesotho. So being out in the open most of the time, it is imperative for Balisana to ensure their warmth. They wear the blanket in different styles, some of which they learn or copy from others during the initiation training.

Interviewer: I see. But I believe that Basotho were skilled in various crafts before colonialism and the introduction of mine work.

Ntate Tumisang: Of course. Basotho were very skilled as craftsmen and women, in working with leather and metal. They made their own weapons, agricultural and domestic tools, way before the arrival of white settlers. Basotho were also skilled in woodwork, in making various ceramic products, especially for domestic use.

Interviewer: I have seen that they embellish their gumboots with mural artworks. Some tattoo their arms and wear the rubber band around their arm muscles as well.

Ntate Tumisang: Yes. lately there are many styles that they adopt.

Interviewer: Thank you so much Ntate Tumisang. I deeply appreciate the time you offered to share such an important information with me.

Ntate Tumisang: You are welcome.

Interview with a former initiate- Ntate Molapo* (Molapo is a younger Mosotho man who is initiated. Due to nature of confidentiality of initiation training, Ntate Molapo did not agree to voice recording of the interview due to confidentiality and secrecy of initiation training).

Time allocated for the interview: 50 minutes

Interviewer/Researcher: Nteboheleng Lepheana

Notetaker: Nteboheleng Lepheana

Greetings Ntate Molapo. As you know me, my name is Nteboheleng Lepheana, a registered student at Durban University of Technology. I am pursuing Master of Applied Art in Fashion. I am conducting a study that looks at the role that creative problem solving can play in designing innovative fashion which draws on the indigenous knowledge of the Basotho nation, especially the dress and grooming of Litsoejane. I would like to interview you about dress and grooming of Balisana. However, I am aware that such training originates from dress and grooming of male initiates. The information gathered from you will be used by myself and a group of fashion students. Together we will use a creative problem-solving method to design innovative fashion which reflects Basotho culture. We will then display this fashion collection to members of Limkokwing University community, and you will of course be invited. The responses of the people viewing the collection will give us some idea of how successful the design process was in achieving its purpose. Please note that I am not looking into critical details of the initiation process, rather, my focus is dress and grooming, including the inspiration behind that. If you allow me, may I please record this information?

Molapo: I don't have a problem answering the questions, but please don't record me.

Interviewer: I fully understand the confidentiality of initiation training.

Interviewer: Please detail the dress of Balisana, namely: hats, clothes (tops and pants), ts'eea, blankets, gumboots, socks, balaclava and molamu and any item which I have left out.

Molapo: When the initiates have come back from Mophatong, they are kept outside of the village for most of the day. While they are there, they are gifted with molamu (decorated stick), new decorated koto (a stick with a head) and they apply letsoku on their bodies, from head to toe. Later in the afternoon, when the animals reach home, they also approach the village accompanied by initiated men and their instructors, straight to khoaling/khotla. It is important that they are well adorned, it shows their families' support and appreciation. Their hair is cut is called motloenya, a cut around the head, leaving the hair around the centre of the head or just a line in the middle of the head towards the back. (Motloenya looks closer to mohawk haircut). On the day of the celebration, they will be adorned with any ornaments that the family can afford, namely: beaded necklace, beaded veils, earrings, mirrors, safety pins handkerchiefs, beaded and rubber bracelets and necklaces and anklets. In the absence of female family member, the instructors are the ones who can assist in dressing the initiate or the initiates can assist each other to adorn.

Interviewer: That sound interesting. So, the initiates are well adorned and ready for the big day?

Molapo: During the celebration Makoloane are still wearing just a blanket, besides other things which they are adorned with, even though they have changed a blanket to a new one. They also have letsoku applied all over their bodies.

Interviewer: I heard they take some time before 'ba hlatsoa' (to wash away Letsoku and the blanket that he has been wearing when he gets back from the mountain).

Molapo: True. Once the initiates are released, they are given a short period of between a day to about few days before 'ba hlatsoa'. When the initiate gets to his home, there are rules that he must live by for a stipulated period. For instance, he is not allowed to be in the company of women, and he must sleep in a secluded house and in the case where there is no extra

room or a house to sleep in it alone, he can join his nearby colleague who has a room or a house to himself.

Interviewer: I wish we would've stick to animal skins, at least for some years following colonisation

Balisana fasten the blankets with a safety pin, or one can make lefito (a big knot) from the side of the shoulder or with just a sharp metal pin that they often make. Balisana spend a lot of time doing almost nothing, so they get to be creative with available and accessible resources. Then they wear a balaclava to protect themselves against harsh weather conditions while herding. Molisana can't herd without the use of Molamu (a thick wooden stick). He is gifted with Molamu upon graduation with the intention to protect himself and to use it to guide the animals while herding. Then they wear a balaclava to protect themselves against harsh weather conditions while herding.

Appendix F: Transcriptions of students' responses

Interview transcription for participants

This is a semi-structured focus group Interview with participants. Names of the participants are replaced with alphabetical letters. The interviews were held in a group and it were organized into Phases1-3 of Participatory Action Research based on 5D Cycle of Appreciative Inquiry. Phase 1 is based on the research through semi-structured interviews with participants, whereas planning is the communicated plan of the entire research project to participants. Semi-structured interviews are held with the participants to probe their knowledge and understanding of the three design probes. Phase 2 is action based. Semi-structured interviews inquiries about the activities of the project as participants have designed moodboards and illustrated ideas of the garments to be produced. Phase 3 is centred around reflection and evaluation of the project. Participants are asked to reflect on lessons learned from the project and discuss the new discoveries by participants as a result of three design probes. In each Phase participants were asked a series of questions. The questions were in English but some of the answers from the participants were in Sesotho. So, the answers were translated to English.

Time allocated for the interview: 1:30 hour

Interviewer/Researcher: Nteboheleng Lepheana

Notetaker: Nteboheleng Lepheana

Translators: Nteboheleng Lepheana

Transcriber: Nteboheleng Lepheana

As you all know my name is Mme Nteboheleng Lepheana, your lecturer. I currently work as a lecturer at Limkokwing University of Creative Technology in the Faculty of Design Innovation. I studied Fashion and Education and I have spent seventeen years working as a lecturer in the field of fashion. I am conducting a study that looks at the role that creative problem solving can play in stretching, re-imagining and re-creating a fashion identity. The study is participatory in nature, and I, as the researcher and your lecturer, will serve as a

co-designer and participant in this research project. In my capacity as your lecturer, I will share my expertise, as well as guide and advise you as the project proceeds. Together we will design and produce a range of twelve fashion outfits that stretch and re-imagine the fashion identity in the context of Lesotho. The collection will be inspired by selected design probes drawn from Basotho culture. The cultural aspects selected for the design probes are: Litsoejane (women initiates), Litema (motifs/geometric patterns) and Balisana (Shepherds). The fashion designs produced for this study, although not part of the curricular timetable

I have registered for Master of Applied Art in Fashion at the Durban University of Technology because I believe that my experience, expertise and background will enable me to work in participatory ways with a group of students to explore the potential of the Basotho cultural forms as design probes that may help to renew and re-imagine some aspects of fashion in Lesotho to transcend the bounds of Seshoeshoe and Seanamarena as the predominant cultural idioms to express Lesotho's fashion identity. I would like to invite you to participate in the research as a student participant in a group of students who will participate in the research project to investigate whether applying a creative problem-solving method (e.g., appreciative inquiry) to aspects of Basotho culture might result in innovative fashion designs inspired by indigenous knowledge.

Phase 1- Research and planning

Facilitator: I am going to ask you several questions to discover you carry out your day-to-day assignments and projects and find out your background knowledge about Litsoajane, Litema and Balisana.

For a start, besides attending classes, how do you continually improve your knowledge and skills as a fashion student?

Participant A: We conduct research. We look up to celebrities and follow them.

Participant B: And we follow how they (celebrities) dress and their lifestyles.

Participant C: We are also active on social media to see what is happening about fashion. We also use internet to access eBooks from the eLibrary.

Facilitator: What is your take on group projects?

Participant D: I just don't like groups.

Facilitator: Why?

Participant E: We often end up doing work because other members do not pitch for appointments.

Participant D: Most of my colleagues have a problem with me. If they come up with excuses I continue with work and tell them that I'll submit and not include their names.

Participant A: Some of the group members will just send screenshots through WhatsApp texts especially if it involves the visuals or a small paragraph.

Participant F: We assign each person a task to research on a certain portion. Then we come together to put the assignment together.

Facilitator: Personally, I have seen that research-based projects often lack coordination. It appears that one person does his/her own part then you will put the information together without seeing whether it coordinates or even proof-read it. In this project we are going to work in groups, I will facilitate them during each lecture time to ensure that we all pull our weight to ensure that we don't leave any person behind.

Participant H: That's true. People just don't like to honour appointments to come together to work. But if you facilitate the project, that's good to hear.

Participant B: Me and my groupmates work well together. We actually enjoy group work.

Facilitator: You have visual diaries, right? Have you ever thought of sourcing inspirations from your culture or incorporating anything relating to your culture in your design work? If yes, what was it and what was the outcome?

Participant D: I have done so. I redesigned a blanket into a medium length poncho with hood.

Facilitator: Did you make the garment?

Participant D: No. I just designed it.

Facilitator: That's a good start. We have to think about incorporating The Basotho culture in our design projects, without thinking much about Seshoeshoe, Mokorotlo or Seanamarena.

Participant H: That is always the centre of our cultural projects. Have we done anything cultural that doesn't involve Seshoeshoe or Mokorotlo or Seanamarena?

Participant I: I don't think so. Whenever we think Basotho cultural fashion, we think along those three cultural aspects.

Facilitator: Have you work on any cultural project even if they are not based on Basotho's culture, from around Africa, maybe?

Participant C: One time we designed garments from inspired by different cultures round the world. The outcome was very interesting.

Participant E: I have done a personal project on Basotho's cultural attire. Let me show you what have I done. I have pics on my phone.

Facilitator: Okay. Let me see.

Participant E: This is Thethana, mose-oa-khomo (dress made of softened cow hide) and brassiere. Well, it's a not a real leather.

Facilitator: I see. And you can actually make a good business if you make more of this cultural dress and sell or rent them out during Moshoeshoe's month season (March).

Participant E: I do and I make some money.

Facilitator: I would like you to share your knowledge of Litsoejane especially their dress and grooming, Litema and Balisana's dress and grooming. But first let's talk about Litsoejane. What do you know? (There is silence until I volunteer them to speak).

Participant J: I know that they wear a dress made of grass.

Participant I: They apply white clay.

Participant F: They decorate themselves around the arms and legs.

Participant G: They start initiation from the ages of 12.

Facilitator: Age 12? Someone who is aged 12 is very small. Do you know the name of the white clay that litsoejane use on their bodies?

Participants: Phepha (answering in a chorus).

Participant G: They also start the initiation ('ba kena) when there's a full moon.

Facilitator: Which month (s)?

Participant G: October to December.

Facilitator: Are they the months when Litsoejane start or come out?

Participant G: When they start.

Participant J: They wear animal skins.

Participant A: Ba tebuka (to walk slowly in a rhythm and in sequence.) Litsoejane walk very slowly holding their long sticks (demonstrating the movement holding a pencil). At that time, they come out of Seotlona (straw fence of mophato which is build closer to the owner of the initiation school), Litsoejane are nicely adorned and they look beautiful. So, Tsoejane will give a stick to a man that she likes. If the young man accepts it, that one becomes her future husband. (Participants laugh).

Participant K: At night, initiated men make a bonfire and Litsojane sing and go round the fire. If a man holds Tsoejane from the circle, that one becomes his wife.

Facilitator: What happens if Tsoejane is not chosen?

Participant K: If no man removes Tsoejane from the fire, that means she is not chosen and she will have to dance around the fire the whole night.

Participant L: I heard that during their release, unmarried men attend the ceremony to choose women that they like. When they attend, men buy gifts for Litsoejane and when they choose their prospective wives, they will tie a neckpiece or bracelet on chosen Tsoejane. If a brother(s) of a chosen Tsoejane do not like a gentleman who chose his/their sister, they will take off the gift off their sister's body and give it back to its owner (a group laughs). But if the brother(s) like the gentleman, they will leave the gift with their sister. Also, on the night of their graduation, some cultures or clans are said that 'ba leta thojane' (they stay alert the whole night). On the night of 'ho leta thojane', Litsoejane apply a lot of letsoku around the inner elbow and they are expected to stretch their arms for hours during the night. If they bend their elbows and letsoku shows that there was a movement of arms, they are expected to repeat that movement until they have passed that part. This is the practice by other clans. This is meant to teach them to be resilient, strong and faithful. Again Litsoejane 'lia tebuka'. They must listen to a drum beat which beats once. With every beat of a drum, they move forward a step forward, taking one step at a time, sticking to a drum rhythm. They can walk in that rhythm for a long time.

Facilitator: That is interesting. I have heard of Maleta Thojane (people who stay the whole night watching over something. The term can also be used by people who work night shifts). What role do you think Litsoejane play in our culture?

Participant I: I don't know if they play any role. Am not used to Litsoejane because I've been scared of them since childhood.

Participant B: Me too. I've never made any attempt to get close to them or find out about their initiation and benefits thereof, if any.

Participant D: Bale have always been a no-go area. I've seen them chasing people. I don't usually come any closer to where they are. So, I lost interest in them.

Participant L: Maybe their importance is keeping the culture of women initiation going.

Facilitator: Do you think there is anything we can learn from Litsoejane's lifestyle and the way of dressing that you can incorporate in your designs in the future?

Participant D: I can use Lesira, innovate it and use it as sunglasses.

Facilitator: How about Likhologoane, Setea, mose-oa -khomo etc? Maybe you do not get the bigger picture at the moment. I follow a lot of designers from overseas and from around Mid-January up to early March, they have fashion weeks. It's amazing to see how designers incorporate cultural elements from Africa, among other nations. So, for the next class I will show you visuals that caught my attention and I easily related to. With Likhologoana for instance, there is so much that you can tap on creatively. You don't even have to use them as they are normally done using a grass. I have also seen how one local designer remodelled Lesira. We have to break the stereotype around our culture. There is a lot that you can uncover beside what we are discussing regarding the Basotho culture. If there is no other comment. Let's talk about Litema. Please share your knowledge of Litema?

Participant E: Back in the days, Basotho's houses were decorated with Litema. Inside the house they build meholoana (clay display units) and they will make Litema on meholoana.

Participant C: They drew heart shapes, for instance, four heart shapes all touching at the pointed parts. So, they formed a cross-like shape. Then they will use a fork to decorate the inside of the hearts, maybe in different colours.

Facilitator: From my research, I learned that a fork is used by Basotho in South Africa whereas Basotho in Lesotho use fingers or a stick. Basotho in Lesotho have adopted they use of a fork from South Africans. To fully visualise Litema, you can make a mud paste and make Litema so that you see how the outcome

of the pattern. How has Litema inspired different design products in Lesotho, have you seen any product that you can clearly identify the design as Litema?

Participant M: Seshoeshoe and Seanamarena mostly.

Facilitator: What else? Do you know so little about Litema?

Participant I: Nkho ea Sesotho (a clay vase that holds the liquids like sour porridge, sour milk etc.) is decorated with Litema around its mouth. And other household utensils.

Facilitator: Litema is a dying Basotho's valuable art. How can you revive them as design students? How can you bring them back, even if we cannot beautify our houses with Litema? Can you engage deeper research about Litema? How can you incorporate them in your design projects, now and in the future?

Participant L: We can use them as sources of inspiration, as part of fabric designs. Instead of having flowers and other designs on fabrics. Am thinking more of fabrics which are used for upholstery.

Facilitator: Do you think Litema have any relevance in contemporary Lesotho?

Participant C: Yah!

Participant A: We can also use them to come up with jewellery, apply them on t-shirt graphics or prints.

Facilitator: Okay. That sounds promising. Any more opinion? Let's now talk about Balisana's dress and grooming?

Participant M: They wear socks, gumboots and wear blankets.

Participant A: They hardly bath.

Facilitator: Why would they bath when they spend their days in the open? They are exposed to all sorts of weathers. Their swimming is their bathing especially in summer days.

Participant L: Balisana stay at motebong (at the cattle post). So motebo is not a big house, it is not so well built. It's mostly a pile of stones, the height of motebo is about 1.5m at most. So, they bend when they enter the motebo. The door is made of thick sticks tied together with grass ropes. It is loosely thatch roofed. Balisana use three-legged pot for cooking and it is hanged from the roof. In winter they cook inside the motebo but in summer they cook outside. Motebo is fenced by the kraal of animals. The door of motebo faces the animals and the animals are in their view. They are expected to sleep lightly so that they guard the animals against thieves or wild animals.

Participant E: Balisana from Mants'onyane in Thaba-tseka district are very dark in complexion. However, one can see that they are well fed. They look healthy. They apply charcoal around their bodies.

Participants (talking at the same time). Those Balisana do not apply charcoal, they are not clean, they stay in the sun for long hence a dark complexion.

Participant E: In summer months, Balisana wear just a grey blanket, ts'eea and gumboots while herding animals. Their ts'eea covers the front part and it is twisted at the back to cover their butt slightly and it is tied around the waist. When they see females, they turn back and open the blanket so that they can see their buttocks. Women will run away, that serves as a form of entertainment for them. Sometimes they cover the back with wide animal tails so that when they dance the tails move. They usually do not mean any harm. When they are away from the villages, they stay completely naked.

Participant L: Where I come from, the church is far from the village. So, on our way to church they would stop us, usually surrounded by their dogs. They will draw a line and they will not allow us to cross that line. We would stand on the other side of the line and they stand on the other side. They would tell us that if we want to pass, we have to kiss them first. When we look at the distance that we would've covered from the village, we would kiss them, mostly on the cheeks, a baby kiss.

Participants: (Laughing and talking together at the same time). What? No ways! You should've returned back home.

Participant L: You can't win against Balisana. If you turn back, they send dogs after you. That's the scariest. For them it's another form of entertainment. And we also knew that they are just excited to see girls.

Participant N: Balisana also decorate their blankets with wool stitch. They either write their names or they make a pattern.

Participant O: They decorate their gumboots. When a boot is torn, they build another gumboot with the soles of an old boot.

Participant E: Yah. They make a platform gumboot. I think they patch them together by melting the soles of old gumboots.

Participant L: They are good at making music instruments and composing songs. They learn that from initiation training.

Participant E: The design of the doors of motebo can be a diagonal line or any pattern. Some of them take time to ensure that their motebo are habitable. Otherwise, they sleep on a pile of wood.

Participant P: While herding the animals, there is a Molisana who is called Mampoli (Boss). Other Balisana bring him food, take care of his animals, they steal a maize from the fields, braai it and give it to him. He is feared. More often Mampoli is good with stick fighting.

Facilitator: I heard of a story of one white lady who was travelling, by foot, in the mountain areas and she came across Mophato and Balisana kept her. I don't remember the details, but apparently, she stayed there for some time.

Participant E: I know the story. Molisana who kept her is from my area. He kept her and instructed other Balisana not to disclose the presence of the lady. I heard that he took good care of her, cooking for her and preparing a bed for her. The lady knew Sesotho but pretended as if she doesn't understand anything. So, the police came to their Motebo looking for the lady, but they couldn't find her. So, days later, another Molisana tipped the police about the lady's presence at Motebong. When the police got back, they found her and arrested that Molisana. He stayed in prison for a long time. Am not sure if he is still arrested or released.

Facilitator: For real!! That's sad. I heard on radio that Molisana was saying he eloped her.

Phase 2- Semi-structured interviews- - Dream and Design cycles of 5-D Cycle

Facilitator: In your opinion, is the project running in a way that you are benefiting? Is there anything you think will be helpful to facilitate this project?

Participant O: There is more to it. I think it would be helpful if it was a final project. That would be helpful to focus on the project only without worrying about the mid-term examination and final examinations later on.

Participants: That's true (answering in a chorus).

Participant N: We see the benefits, but we are unable to give it our all because we have assignments from other courses, including the upcoming mid-term examination.

Participant E: The project is good and beneficial, but we always have a lot of work as students.

Facilitator: What do you think about the timeline or schedule set to finish the project, is it okay? What do you think?

Participant A: The timeline is okay especially because we work as a group. If it was individual, it would have been hectic.

Participant F: I agree. The group has made it easy.

Facilitator: More opinions?

Participant I: We all agree. Hahaha!

Facilitator: How do you feel about the project thus far, are there any lessons learned? Is there anything you like or dislike that you would like to see improving?

Participant N: I really like the project a lot. It has been an eye opener for me. I also didn't know that my colleagues are so knowledgeable about these three aspects. We never discuss them. I'm amazed.

Participant B: I like how we go step-by-step with the project. But why is it not a final project for us?

Facilitator: Hahaha! Make it a final project when you are working as a group to produce one moodboard, one final sketch and eventually make one garment? If every person was doing all that work alone, then it would fit the final project.

Participant S: The project was really an eye opener as we have neglected our own heritage on so many levels. Being part of the project really connected me to my roots and made me take pride in these three aspects as a Mosotho. It made me realise that as a nation Basotho do not have proper documentation of our own writings and artifacts. I learned a lot about our fashion history and I had more clarity into the everyday life of a Mosotho, how and why they dressed in a particular way. What was quite interesting was the history behind the Seanamarena blanket and how it became a national treasure for us as a nation.

Participant T: This project helped me to learn the parts of Basotho culture that we do not often talk or learn about. The project gives a fresh insight into these areas and makes it clear why some of the cultural accessories were designed in a particular manner. I also learned that Basotho are more than just Seshoeshoe fabrics and Seanamarena blanket.

Participant U: This project is really important and eye opening. I didn't know a lot of Basotho's garments and the way Basotho used to live before taking part in this project. It really helped me to see and become aware of many Basotho household items and weapons. The project has made me more attentive towards the Basotho culture. I have also learned how Basotho really dressed, even though we were told different stories from childhood.

Participant V: The project is an effective way of embracing and educating us about Basotho's least recognised ethnicity, culture and traditions. The project helped me become more attentive to the smallest details centred around Basotho's culture. I also learned that Basotho are amongst the most creative people but they lacked the resources to advance their creativity based on their culture.

Participant W: As much as I love the idea of modernisation but I see the importance of not forgetting our culture and tradition. The project encouraged me to look back, study and have knowledge of how our great grandparents lived and how they dressed, as a result, I was able to understand where we come from and used that information as an inspiration for the project. I love the project.

Participant X: In my opinion this project came to be quite interesting and educational. I am a Lesotho citizen and a Mosotho but there are parts of the culture which I have not been aware of but I was introduced to those aspects through the project. I have learned that there is a lot of effort put before the final product as Litsoajane/Bale and grooming of Balisana showed that every piece of clothing or accessory is used for a certain reason or a purpose.

Phase 3- Destination cycle of 5-D Cycle

Facilitator: Do you think the project is assisting you to probe further into our culture and to discover other less explored cultural aspects of Basotho?

Participant O: It has enlightened some of us who didn't know much about our culture, especially those three aspects. I never thought much about the dress and grooming of Balisana, but now I have a different view of their dress and grooming.

Participant C: Most of us in here, if not all are Basotho and we grew up in modern times. We were taught certain things about our culture in schools, but I never gave myself a chance to really learn deeper about our culture as I am doing now. Also, I see its importance now, as you made an example with the MaXhoza brand. Had I not participated in this project, I wouldn't have learned so much about my culture. Now, I know that I have to dig deeper into the culture in order to package myself as brand.

Facilitator: Have you learnt any lessons and skills during this project, especially from working in a team with your colleagues and myself? Explain.

Participant Q: I have learned that there is more that I will design incorporating my culture. Now I can think of a design using Seshoeshoe or any cultural fabric.

Facilitator: But now we are talking outside of Seshoeshoe, remember. We are sourcing inspiration from anything Sesotho besides Seshoeshoe, Seanamarena and Mokorotlo.

Facilitator: Do you see yourself participating in a similar project in the future?

Participant A: I would love to. In the future I would love to be more hands-on, maybe come up with a collection inspired by certain cultural item. Maybe Lesaka (a kraal), Basotho's traditional wedding dress or use artefacts as sources of inspiration. I believe there is more to be discovered about us as Basotho.

Participant Q: Since participating in the project, I have appreciated Basotho's culture even more. You made an example with MaXhoza, and that made me realise the importance of making a success out of my culture.

Facilitator: Did you check him out?

Participants: Yes (answering in a chorus).

Facilitator: That is very true. Do you see yourself using other sources of Lesotho's historical resources as inspiration in your future collections? Do you see yourself creating a range inspired by Balisana's dress and grooming? Can you create a range or have a signature design, perhaps based on Litema or drawing from aspects of Litsoejane?

Participant R: I knew about the three design probes, but I never gave them much attention or see their importance in my life. Now I know that I can print Litema on a fabric and make a garment, I can take parts of Litsoejane's dress, like

Likholokoane, and design around them, I can re-design balaclava. There is more that I believe I can do going forward.

Facilitator: Which design probe interested you the most?

Participant S: Definitely and particularly Litema as I did fall in love with the art and geometric design behind them, so much that I have applied for Aranda class of 2023 blanket competition. I have been purely inspired by what I have learned about Litema and realising that there is still a long way to go in exploring such elements that exists or existed within our culture.

Participant T: Yes. I am most definitely considering using these three elements in my design journey. They portray who we are as Basotho and I hope sometime in the future I will find a chance to design a range around these elements.

Participant U: I do see myself using the three elements in my design journey because they are part of my culture. As a Mosotho designer, I have to create clothes that reflect my culture. This will help promote our country and our culture to be known to the rest of the world. It is my responsibility as a Mosotho fashion designer to make our culture to be seen and recognised in the fashion industry, to show who we are. It is important to use traditional attire in our designs as Basotho designers. It is always good to always remember where we come from.

Participant V: In my design journey, I feel that Litsoejane's grooming can be incorporated in other fashion categories, for instance, in bridal collection. I can use the cow hide for the bridal wear and likholokoane as well as supporting elements on the attire. Basotho are normally known for Seshoeshoe, however new fabric prints can be adapted from Litema to be added under the umbrella of Basotho's famous fabrics.

Participant W: I think I will come up with great designs inspired by the dressing and grooming of Litsoejane.

Participant X: Not only are these three aspects art, but they are also a great deal for Basotho's heritage. So, as a Mosotho designer, it would be a privilege to introduce them in my designs.

Participant S: Going forward, I do see a lot of cultural influence in my designs from the three elements as the world is looking for something new and rich in culture and history. As a nation we have hardly explored our own heritage as sources of fashion inspiration, particularly Litema. I just fell in love with Litema. I see a potential in digitalized Litema used anywhere else except on the houses.

Participant T: I was more drawn to Litsoejane/Bale because it is a topic less spoken of. I realised that it contains a lot of dress and grooming that I never knew the meaning of or even knew of. I see myself using Bale/Litsoejane as my sources of inspiration. We discussed a lot of things about Basotho's culture and it has made me to go back and research further with the aim of discovering more about our culture.

Facilitator: It's good to hear how inspired you are. Is there something new that you have discovered during this project regarding Basotho?

Participant U: I am mostly interested in the dress and grooming of Bale/Litsoejane and Litema. I have discovered how the Basotho women used to dress, especially the dress made of lekoko (cow hide) and how women used to cover their breasts with mokorotlo (a cone-shaped brassiere) as opposed to a culture where I knew that Basotho women were bare breasted most of the time. I have discovered the dressing of a Mosotho warrior in a woman.

Participant U: Thetana (fringed skirt). I saw how the modern tassels concept came from Thethana, the only difference being the type of thread used. I also see Thethana used further for more purposes such as decorative elements within garment or as an accessory. I have also learned that I can come up with Litema and print them on a fabric. I did and the fabric looks amazing.

Participant V: The dress and grooming of Litsoejane captured my interest, since it is a topic less spoken about. I discovered a lot about cultural elements, namely, kitchen utensils decorated with litema' architectural styles and decorations, Basotho norms and values including how different age groups used to dress, entertain themselves and how they lived, which influenced their dress.

Participant X: Litema. Those are like modern day tattoos on houses. The effort that Basotho took to find the right places to obtain the good quality raw materials to paint them was amazing! I've learned that I can also go the extra mile to colour fabrics in my desired colours and make surface designs for hand-made jewels and many other uses.

Participant L: I took time to learn about male initiates dress. I became interested in Leqapha, how it's made and embellished.

Facilitator: I thank you all for your input. It's time to get what we have learned to work.

Appendix G: Creative thinking notes

Creative Thinking

- Tian and Hu (2016: 15) define creativity as follows:
- “Creativity is the creative idea”.
- It “can be understood as all the designs which really break more or less something that already exists”.
- With regard to fashion, he stated that “creative fashion can be classified as revolutionary, back-to-the-future and functional”.

Mind Map

- According to Buzan and Buzan (2010: 28), “mind map is a creativity and productivity technique that can improve the learning and efficiency of an individual”.
- Mind map creates the exterior reflection of what is going on inside. Below are the samples of mindmaps.

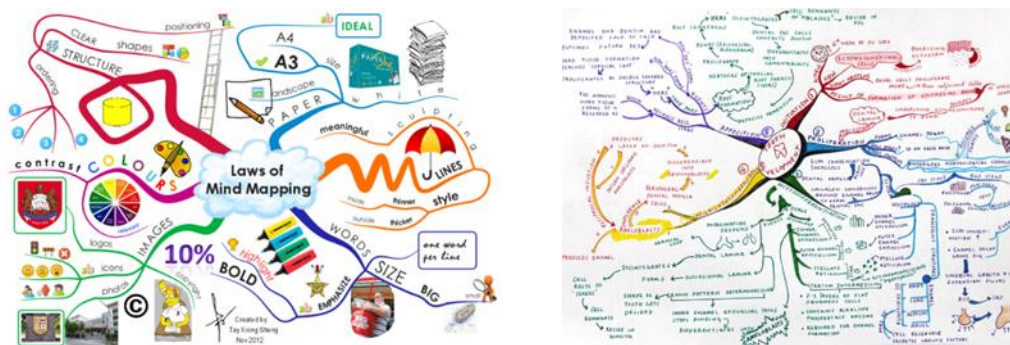


Fig. 1 and 2. Mindmaps (Buzan 2020)

Juxtaposition

- Juxtaposition is an effective visual design where two visual elements are put side-by-side for visual comparison or connect them as one new visual element or it can be an over lay of many objects in a single visualization (Lui and Shen 2015: 269). Below is a sample of juxtaposition.

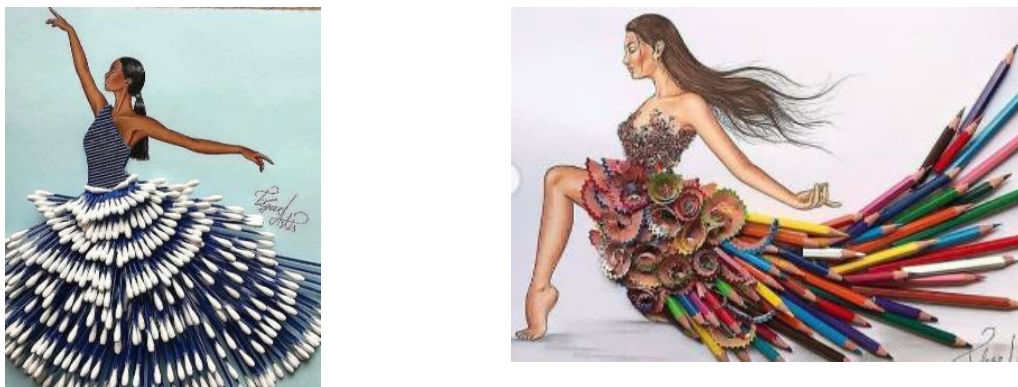


Fig. 3 and 4. Juxtaposed figures (fast_art_tips 2020)

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Appendix H: Ethics training certificate

