



Oral Traditions as Historical Sources in Southern African Communities: A Mixed-Methods Inquiry

Nandi Nxau¹

¹ Department of Interdisciplinary Studies, University of the Witwatersrand

Published: 06 August 2008 | **Received:** 12 March 2008 | **Accepted:** 16 June 2008

Correspondence: nnxau@outlook.com

DOI: [10.5281/zenodo.18873348](https://doi.org/10.5281/zenodo.18873348)

Author notes

Nandi Nxau is affiliated with Department of Interdisciplinary Studies, University of the Witwatersrand and focuses on Arts & Humanities research in Africa.

Abstract

Oral traditions play a significant role in documenting historical narratives within Southern African communities, particularly in South Africa, where they are often passed down through generations via storytelling and song. The methodology combines ethnographic fieldwork with structured interviews, focus groups, and archival research to gather data on oral traditions. Quantitative analysis will use thematic coding and statistical methods to measure consistency and variation in the content across communities. Findings indicate a strong correlation between the age of participants and the depth of their knowledge about historical events as recounted through oral traditions, suggesting that older generations are more knowledgeable sources for historical accuracy. This mixed-methods study highlights the importance of integrating qualitative and quantitative approaches to understand the reliability of oral traditions as historical records. The findings underscore the need for further research to validate these sources in academic contexts. Recommendations include developing standardised protocols for collecting and analysing oral tradition data, promoting interdisciplinary collaboration between historians, anthropologists, and linguists, and fostering community engagement in documentation efforts.

Keywords: *African, Oral Tradition, Ethnography, Quantitative Research, Qualitative Inquiry, Historical Interpretation, Community Studies*

ABSTRACT-ONLY PUBLICATION

This is an abstract-only publication. The complete research paper with full methodology, results, discussion, and references is available upon request.

✉ **REQUEST FULL PAPER**

Email: info@parj.africa

Request your copy of the full paper today!

SUBMIT YOUR RESEARCH

Are you a researcher in Africa? We welcome your submissions!

Join our community of African scholars and share your groundbreaking work.

Submit at: app.parj.africa



Scan to visit app.parj.africa

Open Access Scholarship from PARJ

Empowering African Research | Advancing Global Knowledge