THE EXPLANATIONS AND TREATMENT OF MENTAL ILLNESS BY TRADITIONAL HEALERS IN THULAMELA MUNICIPALITY, LIMPOPO PROVINCE IN SOUTH AFRICA

By

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Dissertation submitted in fulfilment of the requirements for the degree of Masters of Arts in the Department of Psychology at the University of Venda.

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2013

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DECLARATION

I, Mpho Madzhie hereby declare that the dissertation for the Master of Arts degree in Psychology at the University of Venda, hereby submitted by me, has not been previously submitted for a degree at this or any other university, that it is my own work in design and in execution, and that all reference material contained therein has been duly acknowledged.

M. Madzhie
Signature

06/05/14
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ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

I wish to thank God the Almighty for giving me His love, strength and good health while doing this dissertation.

I would like to acknowledge and extend my heartfelt gratitude to the following people who have made the completion of this dissertation possible:

My supervisor, Dr Mashamba, for her vital encouragement, guidance and support throughout my study;

My co-supervisor, Mr Takalani, for his support and guidance;

The Department of Psychology at the University of Venda, for the constant reminders and much needed motivation;

Mrs Dube for editing my work

My husband, Amos Sigebe, for his understanding, support and patience; and

My family for their love and support;

I wish to express my special thanks and appreciation to my participants, for their valuable contribution and cooperation; and

I also wish to acknowledge the financial support that I received from National Research Foundation (NRF) and University of Venda's Research and Innovation Directorate.

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DEDICATION

This dissertation is dedicated to my mother Maria Madzhie and my children Gundo and Mukundi Sigebe who have been my source of inspiration. They have given me the drive and discipline to tackle any task with enthusiasm and determination. Without their love and support, this dissertation would not have been possible.

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ABSTRACT

Mental illness is a serious illness that can affect everyone. Mental illnesses are defined as behaviours or thoughts that are unusual in a given society and these behaviours are maladaptive. Other researchers define mental illness as psychological dysfunction associated with distress or impairment in functioning that is not culturally expected. In traditional healing, the treatment of mental illness is done by traditional healers. Studies show that a number of people in South Africa consult traditional healers before they go for western treatment.

The aim of this study was to explore and describe the traditional healers' perceptions of mental illness in Thulamela Municipality. The objectives of this study were to explore the traditional healers' view of mental illnesses; identify the symptoms of mental illness which are traditionally treated; describe traditional healers' explanations of the causes of mental illness; describe the diagnostic and treatment methods used by traditional healers when dealing with mental illness; and identify and describe the prevention methods of mental illness used by traditional healers.

A qualitative approach was used to conduct the study. One of the reasons for conducting a qualitative study is because the study was exploratory, meaning that not much has been written about the topic or population being studied. I, therefore, sought information and built a picture based on participants' ideas. The study was conducted at three villages, namely, Tshisaulu village, Ngovhela village and Sokotenda village. These three villages are within the Thulamela Municipality which is under the Vhembe District in Limpopo Province. The population in this research comprise of traditional healers who are located in Thulamela Municipality.

The study was explorative and descriptive in nature. The explorative design allowed an in-depth study of the phenomena and helped me to determine priorities for future research. I explored traditional healers' perceptions of

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mental illness, without wanting to know what caused those traditional healers' perceptions. The descriptive design helped me to get in-depth information about the topic being studied. It gave me an opportunity to conduct in-depth interviews with the participants.

Purposive sampling was used to select six traditional healers, made up of three female and three male traditional healers. The researcher used an interview guide, which indicated the kinds of topics to be covered in the interview. I had a list or a series of questions that she asked during the interview. Although I was using an interview guide, additional questions were used to explore the research question and objectives. This list of questions helped me to remember the important questions that I wanted to cover. The interview guide consisted of two sections. The first section included the participants' demographic information, such as gender, age, educational level and number of years in practice. The second section contained questions that sought to find out traditional healers' views of mental illness, the causes of mental illness, diagnosis of mental illness, treatment and prevention of mental illness.

I used semi-structured interviews. I posed major questions in the same way to all participants, but also probed for more information being guided by the participants' responses. The questions were open-ended; this allowed the participants to discuss the issues more freely than in closed-ended questions.

All interviews were audio taped. The interviews were conducted in Tshivenda, transcribed and translated into English. Face to face interviews were used to collect data. Face to face interviews also enabled me to observe the behaviour of the participants. In-depth interviews allow me to gain insight into people's experiences and it also enables the participants to speak freely.

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To analyse collected data, I used thematic content analysis. The following ethical considerations were followed: informed consent, privacy of individual/anonymity, confidentiality, voluntary participation, and no harm to the participants

The findings of this study showed that mental illnesses are behaviors that are unusual to a given society. Traditional healers showed that people who are mentally ill usually suffer for the rest of their lives. The study revealed the following symptoms of mental illness: running away from home without a reason, complete non-communication, taking off clothes without a reason, seeing things that other people are not seeing, talking alone and hearing voices, and chasing and beating up people.

Dream analysis and bone throwing was revealed as the diagnosis methods used by traditional healers. The findings also showed that the causes of mental illness includes: disturbances in the person's blood flow and blockage of oxygen, conflict and disturbed social relationships, witchcraft as a cause of mental illness, ancestors as the cause of mental illness, Pollution and Auto mobiles.

Traditional healers indicated that there are different types of treatment which are used to treat mental illness. This depends on the cause of that mental illness. Some of the treatment used includes: herbal remedies, steaming, and vaccinations. The prevention of mental illness is done by preforming various rituals.

Based on the findings of the study, the following recommendations were made: Since traditional healing is an alternative health care provider, traditional healers must register with Traditional Healers' Associations. This will help them because they will be recognised as health providers. The Department of Health and Social Development must support mental illness awareness campaign programmes and research on the treatment of mental illness.

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To conclude, mental illness is a serious problem in South Africa. Although Western trained doctors are minimising the symptoms of mental illness on people who are mentally ill, the number of people who are mentally ill is increasing. This is why it became important to know about other alternatives that can be used to treat mental illness. It was found that 45% of black patients that attended a community mental health clinic had consulted a traditional healer for their problems. This shows that traditional healing is important in South Africa.

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Table of contents Page no

Declaration i
Acknowledgement ii
Dedication iii
Abstract vi
Table of contents viii
List of Acronyms xiii

CHAPTER 1

1.1 Statement of the problem 2
1.2 Aim and objectives of the study 5
1.3 Research questions 6
1.4 Significance of the study 6
1.5 Delimitations of the study 8
1.6 Definition of concepts 8
1.7 Conclusion 9
1.8 Organisation of the dissertation 9

CHAPTER 2: LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1 Background to traditional healing 11
2.2 Mental illness in Western perspective 12
2.2.1 Definition of mental illness 12
2.2.2 The types of mental illness 13
2.2.2.1 Attention deficit-hyperactivity disorder 13
2.2.2.2 Mental retardation 13
2.2.2.3 Conduct disorder 14
2.2.2.4 Mood disorder 15
2.2.2.5 Anxiety disorder 15
2.2.2.6 Eating disorders 16
2.2.2.7 Impulse control and addiction disorders 17

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2.2.2.8 Adjustment disorder 17
2.2.2.9 Dissociative disorders 18
2.2.2.10 Factitious disorders 18
2.2.2.11 Sexual and gender disorders 18
2.2.2.12 Somatoform disorders 19
2.2.2.13 Personality disorder 20
2.2.2.14 Psychotic disorder 22
2.2.2.15 Organic mental illness 24
2.2.3 Symptoms of mental illness 25
2.2.4 Diagnostic of mental illness 27
2.2.5 Causes of mental illness 28
2.2.5.1 Biological causes of mental illness 28
2.2.5.2 Prenatal, peri-natal and post-natal 29
2.2.5.3 Disease, injury and infection 29
2.2.5.4 Life event, emotional stress and relationship 30
2.2.6. Treatment of mental illness 30
2.2.6.1 Medication 30
2.2.6.2 Psychotherapy 32
2.2.7 Prevention of mental illness 32
2.3. Traditional healing of mental illness 32
2.3.1 Definition of mental illness 33
2.3.2 African perspective 34
2.3.3 Mental illness in African perspective 35
2.3.4 Types of mental illness in African view/Culture-bound syndrome 35
2.3.5 Symptoms of mental illness 37
2.3.6 Traditional healers' diagnostic methods of mental illness 38
2.3.6.1 Bone throwing 39
2.3.6.2 Dream analysis 40
2.3.6.3 Physical examination 41
2.3.7 Traditional African perspective on the causes of mental illness 41
2.3.7.1 The Ancestors 42
2.3.7.2 Witches and Sorcerers 43

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2.3.7.3 Psychological conflict or disturbed social relationships 44
2.3.8 Treatment of mental illness 45
2.3.9. Prevention against mental illness 49
2.3.10 Protection of mental illness 49
2.4 Conclusion 51

CHAPTER 3: RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

3.1 Research approach 52
3.2 Research design 52
3.3 Location of the study 53
3.4 Population 53
3.5 Sampling 53
3.6 Participants 55
3.7 Research Instrument 55
3.8 Pre-test 56
3.9 Entry negotiation 56
3.10 Data collection 57
3.11 Data analysis 58
3.12 Ethical considerations 59
3.12.1 Informed consent 60
3.12.2 Privacy of individual/ Anonymity 60
3.12.3 Confidentiality 61
3.12.4 Voluntary participation 61
3.12.5 No harm to the participants 61
3.13 Dissemination of results 61
3.14 Limitations of the study 62
3.15 Conclusion 62

CHARPTER 4: PRESENTATION OF FINDINGS

4.1 Demographic information 63
4.2 The definition of mental illness 64

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4.3 Symptoms of mental illness 65
4.4 The diagnosis of mental illness 70
4.5 The causes of mental illness 72
4.6 The treatment and medication of mental illness 76
4.7 The prevention of mental illness 79
4.8 Conclusion 80

CHARPTER 5: DISCUSSION

5.1 Demographic information 81
5.2 The definition of mental illness 81
5.3 Symptoms of mental illness 82
5.4 The diagnosis of mental illness 85
5.5 The causes of mental illness 89
5.6 The treatment and medication of mental illness 93
5.7 The prevention of mental illness 97
5.8 Conclusion 98

CHARPTER 6: CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATION

6.1 Summary of key findings 100
6.2 Limitations 101
6.3 Conclusion 101
6.4 Recommendations 104
References 103
Appendices 113
APPENDIX 1: Participants profile 113
APPENDIX 2: Request for permission (English version) 115
APPENDIX 3: Request for permission (Tshivenda version) 116
APPENDIX 4: Consent form (English version) 117
APPENDIX 5: Consent form (Tshivenda version) 118
APPENDIX 6: Interview guide (English version) 119
APPENDIX 7: Interview guide (Tshivenda version) 120

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LIST OF ACRONYMS

ADHD	Attention Deficit- Hyperactivity Disorder
AIDS	Acquired Immune Deficiency Syndrome
DID	Dissociative Identity Disorder
DSM- IV-TR	Diagnostic and Statistic Manual of Mental Disorders
GABA	Gammaaminobuturic
GAD	General Anxiety disorder
HIV	Human Immunodeficiency Virus
ICD	Culture Bound Syndrome
IKS	Indigenous Knowledge Systems
MR	Mental Retardation
OCD	Obsessive-Compulsive Disorder
PTSD	Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder
SAD	Seasonal Affective Disorder
TBAs	Traditional Birth Attendants
TBI	Traumatic Brain Injury

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CHAPTER 1: INTRODUCTION

Mental illness is defined by Butcher, Mineka and Hooley (2010) as an entire range of abnormal behaviour patterns. Mental illness is a serious problem which can affect anyone. It is said that approximately 1% of humans develop mental illness in their lifetime. Mental illness causes distress or discomfort and, often interferes with people's ability to live a useful and productive life. It often makes it impossible for people to hold jobs or raise a family or relate to others socially. It also brings pain and discomfort to the patient, his/her friends and family (Carison & Carison, 1993). Mental illness is a disease that can damage relationships in families. It is hard for mentally-ill people to maintain relationships. Most people who are mentally-ill suffer throughout their lives, losing opportunities for careers and relationships (Pastorino & Doyle- Portillo, 2006).

Mental illness costs the health services much money. Each year, doctors prescribe drugs costing millions of rands to treat mental illness. This disorder is disabling and frequently requires hospitalization. The financial costs of hospitalisation and the psychological costs to patients, families, and friends can be enormous. Many hospital beds are occupied by people suffering from mental illness (Sue, Sue & Sue, 1994). According to the Journal of the American Medical Association (2004), the prevalence of having any mental disorder varied from 4.3% in Shanghai to 26.4% in the United States and between 33.1% in Colombia and 80.9% in Nigeria.

U.S Census 2004 estimated that 57.7% of Americans suffer from mental disorders, but 6% suffer from serious mental illness such as schizophrenia. Research shows that 20.9 million suffer from mood disorder, 2.4 million suffer from schizophrenia, 40 million suffer from

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anxiety disorder, 6 million suffer from panic disorder, 2.2 million suffer from obsessive compulsive disorder, and 7.7 million suffer from post-traumatic stress disorder (National Institute of Mental Health, 2012).

Millions of South Africans live with mental illness. According to the Department of Health, one out of four South Africans has or is affected by mental illness. Between 1% and 3% of the South African population is likely to suffer from a mental health problem, severe enough to require hospitalisation. Research shows that only 45% of South African patients with mental health problems seek help timeously. It is estimated that up to six million of South Africans suffer from post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD). Millions of South Africans live with mental illness and, yet, the majority of them go undiagnosed (National Institute of Mental Health24, 2012).

1.1 Statement of the problem

Mental illness is a serious illness around the world, although Western-trained doctors are minimising the symptoms of mental illness on people who are mentally ill. The number of people who are mentally ill is increasing (American Medical Association, 2004). Looking at the increasing number of people who are affected by mental illness, it becomes important to find other alternative methods that can be used to reduce the increasing number of people who are mentally ill.

This study therefore explores and describes traditional healers' perceptions on mental illness. In Thulamela Municipality, there are a number of people who are suffering from mental illness. Although many are hospitalised at Hayani hospital, Malamulele hospital, Tshilidzini hospital and Donald Frazer hospital, there are still a number of them not hospitalised because they are receiving medical treatment at home or

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using traditional medications. Thus, since traditional healing is also seen as another alternative health care provider in villages around Thulamela Municipality, it becomes important to know how traditional healers perceive mental illness (Mzimkulu & Simbayi, 2006).

Gerald (1991) feels that mental illness in the work place is also a serious problem. Mental illness can affect everyone at all levels in, industry. When workers suffer from mental illness, their productivity may be reduced; they may be less efficient, or produce fewer goods, and some end up being forced to quit the jobs. They may take time off because of illness and this may result in complete loss of job.

Sometimes, mental illness can damage relationships in the family, that is, between partners, parents and children. It can also make people irritable and short-tempered, and this can cause frequent rows, disagreements and violence. Schizophrenia can sometimes lead to violence in the family directed against children and partners in the family. In extreme cases, it can cause the family to split up (Okasha, 2002; Gerald, 1991).

Hirschowitz and Orkin (1997) ague, that mental illness costs the health services and the tax payer a great deal of money. There are a number of people who receive mental illness treatment in South Africa. Each year, doctors prescribe drugs costing millions of rands to treat symptoms of mental illness. Many hospital beds are occupied by people suffering from mental illness.

Many factors in South Africa, such as disease, poverty, apartheid, substance abuse, political violence, as well as the decay of the traditional value system, are contributing to mental health issues in South Africa. Among people in South Africa, many people still hold on to the

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traditional belief that mental illness results from demonic possession by witches and ancestors. As a result, many individuals fear being rejected by others. They keep their mental illness confidential instead of seeking the much needed medical attention (Okasha, 2002). This indicates that there are still a number of people in South Africa suffering from mental illness, who are currently unrepresented in mental health statistics (National Institute of Mental Health, 2012).

Research shows that 23% of the people in South Africa were exposed to a traumatic event of political violence in the past, during apartheid. These traumatic events include acts such as fighting, being tortured, or participating in violence. All these are contributing to the increased number of people who suffer from different types of mental illness (Hirschowitz & Orkin, 1997).

Another factor contributing to mental illness in South Africa is substance abuse. Provinces such as Limpopo and Western Cape are known to be drug trafficking routes, and, as the South African government lacks the necessary resources to control this problem, many of these people who are selling drugs find their way into local communities. Many people, in particular children, are buying those drugs in the streets and these drugs are causing mental illness to their users (Freeman, Nkomo, Kafaar, & Kelly, 2008).

Diseases such as HIV provide a significant contribution to the prevalence of mental illness. Research shows that the prevalence of mental illness among those suffering from HIV is 43.7% compared to the 16.5% observed among the general population. This data indicates that the disease delivers equal emotional damage as it does physiological harm to people in South Africa. It causes disorders such as stress, depression and anxiety among people (Freeman, et al., 2008).

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According to Kale (1995), African traditional medicine plays an important role in the African society. It was found that 45% of the black patients that attended a community mental health clinic had initially consulted a healer for their problem. In addition, 26% were simultaneously seeking treatment from both traditional healers and psychiatrists (Kale, 1995).

Traditional healers are often instrumental in treating mental illness. Psychological healing relies more on a cultural and emotional understanding than it does on possessing medical knowledge. Beliefs are fundamental to behaviour and, therefore, a deeper understanding of traditional medicine will help to improve the effectiveness of psychological care.

The Traditional Health Practitioners Bill in South Africa, No. 25 of 2007 made attempts at the "formalization, regulation and professionalization" of traditional medicine doctors, but this bill has never been put into effect. As indicated there are many factors in South Africa which contribute to the increase in the number of people who are suffering from mental illness. These people are also consulting traditional healers for the treatment of their mental illnesses. It is, Thus, very important to learn about traditional healing.

1.2 Aim and objectives of the study

The aim of this study is to understand and describe the traditional healers' perceptions of mental illness.

The specific objectives of the study are:

- To explore the traditional healers' views of mental illness;

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- To describe the types of mental illness which are traditionally treated;
- To identify the symptoms of mental illness from an African perspective;
- To describe the diagnostic methods used by traditional healers to treat mental illness; and
- To describe traditional healers' explanations of the causes of mental illness;
- To describe the treatment methods used by traditional healers to treat mental illness;
- To describe the prevention strategies of mental illness used by traditional healers.

1.3 Research questions

The following research questions were included in the interview guide.

- In your view, what is mental illness?
- What are the symptoms of mental illness?
- How do you diagnose mental illness?
- What do you think are the causes of mental illness?
- How do you treat mental illness?
- How do you prevent mental illness in your patients?

1.4 Significance of the study

In 2007, the South African parliament passed the Traditional Health Practitioners Act (Act 22 of 2007). Among other things, the Act seeks to:

- Establish the traditional Health Practitioners Council of South Africa; and

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- Provide for a regulatory framework to ensure the efficacy, safety and quality of traditional health care services.

Looking at the above Act, it is clear that traditional healing in South Africa has now become officially recognised as a health care delivery system. Because of this Act, it becomes important that research should be undertaken to explore traditional healing as a part of the national health care system in South Africa. Developments such as the Traditional Health Practitioners Act, have also motivated me to embark on the present study.

In view of the latest developments, which include legislation to officially recognise the role of traditional healers, it becomes imperative to understand the role that this alternative health care system can play in the promotion of health in South Africa. Furthermore, this study will assist in supporting efforts that encourage collaboration between traditional healers and Western-trained health care practitioners. A study of this nature will also assist various South African government departments such as the Department of Health; the Department of Science and Technology; Department of Education and Department of Arts and Culture, in their efforts to support and promote Indigenous Knowledge Systems (IKS).

This study will help people in general to understand mental illness in African healing, and, in turn, will make it easy for them to understand mental illness from an African perspective. Those who have friends, relatives and children who are suffering from mental illness will seek help for their people using both traditional treatment and western medicine, depending on what will work better for their people. Knowing that there is an alternative way of fighting mental illness in our country

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will reduce the increasing number of people who are suffering from mental illness.

As indicated earlier, traditional healers are located within the community, they understand the life and beliefs of the people they live with better. The information that they have about their community and the experience that they have can be combined to help those who are suffering from mental illness. This study will also help traditional healers to share their knowledge with other people. This, in turn, will increase the people's trust on their treatment methods.

1.5 Delimitations of the study

The present study seeks to explore the traditional healers' perceptions of the nature of mental illness, symptoms, causes, diagnosis, treatment, and prevention of mental illness. Traditional healers from Thulamela Municipality of Limpopo Province were selected for the study. The study was limited to participants whose mother tongue is Tshivenda.

1.6 Definition of concepts

Ancestors

Ancestors refer to any people from whom a person is descended, especially those more remote than grandparents.

Mental illness

Mental illnesses are behaviours or thoughts that are unusual in a given society and these behaviours are maladaptive.

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Perception

Perception refers to the way that an individual sees and understands things.

Traditional healer

A traditional healer is someone who is recognised by the community in which he or she lives as a person who provides health care by using plants, animals and mineral substances.

Witchcraft

Witchcraft is the use of magic power, especially evil ones, to harm or cause misfortune to others.

1.7 Conclusion

Mental illness is a serious problem in South Africa. Although western-trained doctors are minimising the symptoms of mental illness on people who are mentally ill, the number of people who are mentally ill is increasing. This is why it has become important to know about other alternatives that can be used to treat mental illness. It was found that 45% of the black patients that attended a community mental health clinic had consulted a healer for their problem. This shows that traditional healing is of importance in South Africa.

1.8 Organisation of the dissertation

Chapter one presents the introduction to the study. It provides the problem statement. Aims and objectives and significance of the study are discussed. Also discussed are the research questions and the delimitation of the study. Finally, a clarification of concepts is provided.

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Chapter two provides the reader with relevant literature related to the research topic.

Chapter three discusses the methods used to conduct the present study.

Chapter four presents the results of the study. The analysis and interpretation of the data is provided.

Chapters five discusses the key study findings, and links them with literature.

Chapter six highlights the study limitations and make recommendations for further research.

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Mental illnesses are behaviours or thoughts that are unusual in a given society and these behaviours are maladaptive. Butcher et al. (2010) define mental illness as an entire range of abnormal behaviour patterns.

This literature review is divided into the western and African view of mental illness. The following subtopics are discussed: Background to traditional healing, definition of mental illness, the causes of mental illness, and Diagnostic methods for mental illness, treatment of mental illness, and prevention and protection of mental illness.

2.1. Background to traditional healing

Traditional healing is seen to be the oldest form of healing throughout the world. The origins of traditional healing date back to before the end of the last ice-age. In the last 50 years or so, humans have relied on traditional healing to treat all types of illnesses. Traditional healing is gaining popularity worldwide as an alternative and complementary healing process (Peltzer, 1993; Osowole et al., 2005).

It has been estimated that 80% of the world's population relies on traditional healing for its health care needs (Peltzer, 1993; Osowole et al., 2005; Mzimkulu & Simbayi, 2006; National Reference Center for African Traditional Medicines, 2009). Meissner (2004) states that traditional healers play a significant role in the everyday lives of the majority of black people. Traditional healing is more readily accessible and available to most people in rural areas. Traditional healers are usually found in the same villages with their patient, and they usually share the same culture and beliefs with their patients (Kubukeli, 1999). This makes

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traditional healers to be the more commonly consulted healers, especially during emergencies (Rinne, 2001; Asaah, Manu & Ombaku, 2003).

In many developing countries, a large proportion of the population relies heavily on traditional healing to meet their primary health care needs. Although modern healing may be available in those countries, traditional healing has often maintained popularity for historical and cultural reasons. Traditional healing is a health system based on the social, cultural and religious background of people (Asaah, Manu & Ombaku, 2003).

2.2. Mental illness in Western perspective

The idea of this research is not to compare Western perspective and traditional perspective of mental illness, but I find it important to give readers an overview of the Western perspective of mental illness in so that it becomes easy for them to understand the traditional perspective.

2.2.1 Definition of mental illness

Louw and Edwards (1997) defined mental illness as illness that is characterised by hallucinations, delusions and speech disorganisation. Mental illnesses are behaviours or thoughts that are unusual in a given society and these behaviours are maladaptive (Butcher, et al.,2010). Swart, De la Rey, Duncan and Townsend (2011) defined mental illness as an illness that is characterised by disorganised emotions, behaviours and cognitions.

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2.2.2. Types of mental illness

Mental illness is seen when someone experiences significant changes in his/her thinking, feelings or behaviour. These changes affect how the person functions or cause distress. In the Western perspective, there is a wide range of mental illness. Some of them are: Attention deficit-hyperactivity disorder (ADHD), Eating disorders, and addiction disorders, schizophrenia, personality disorder etc. (Jayashree, 2011). These mental illness are discussed next,

2.2.2.1 Attention deficit-hyperactivity disorder (ADHD)

Attention deficit hyperactivity disorder (ADHD) is one of the most common childhood disorders, which can continue through adolescence and adulthood. ADHD is a neurobehavioural disorder characterised by either significant difficulties of inattention or hyperactivity and impulsiveness or a combination of the two. Its symptoms emerge before the age of seven. ADHD impacts school-aged children and results in restlessness, acting impulsively, and lack of focus which impairs their ability to learn properly. Symptoms include difficulty staying focused and paying attention, difficulty controlling behaviour, and hyperactivity (over-activity) (Oltmanns & Emery, 2012).

2.2.2.2 Mental retardation (MR)

Mental retardation (MR) is a generalised disorder appearing before adulthood. It is characterised by significantly impaired cognitive functioning and deficits in two or more adaptive behaviours. Mental retardation is a condition which is diagnosed before the age of 18, usually in infancy or prior to birth. It includes below-average general intellectual function, and a lack of skills necessary for daily living. The

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intelligence level as determined by individual standard assessment for people with MR is below 70, and the ability to adapt to the demands of normal life is impaired.

Behavioural traits associated with MR include aggression, dependency, impulsivity, passivity, self-injury, stubbornness, low self-esteem, and low frustration tolerance. Some may also exhibit mood disorders such as psychotic disorders and attention difficulties. Sometimes physical traits, like shortness in stature and malformation of facial elements, can set individuals with MR apart, while others may have a normal appearance (Sarason & Sarason, 2005).

2.2.2.3 Conduct disorder

Conduct disorder is a psychological disorder diagnosed in childhood. It is characterised by a repetitive and persistent pattern of behaviour in which the basic rights of others or major age-appropriate norms are violated. These behaviours are often referred to as antisocial behaviours. Conduct disorder is a disorder of childhood and adolescence that involves long-term behaviour problems, such as: defiant or impulsive behaviour; drug use; and criminal activities. Children with conduct disorder tend to be impulsive, hard to control, and not concerned about the feelings of other people.

Symptoms of conduct disorder include the following: breaking rules without obvious reasons; cruel or aggressive behaviour toward people or animals (bullying, fighting, using dangerous weapons, forcing sexual activity, and stealing); failure to attend school (beginning before age 13); heavy drinking or heavy use of drugs; intentionally setting fires, lying to get a favour or avoiding things they have to do; running away from home;

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and vandalising or destroying property. They may have a hard time making real friends (Sarason & Sarason, 2005).

2.2.2.4 Mood disorders

Jayashree (2011), indicates that mood disorders include conditions that are caused by persistent and extreme mood swings, like excessive happiness or sadness. This is an intense mood of depression or elation, which lasts for a long time and interferes with effective everyday functioning Mood (Butcher, et al.; 2010). Types of mood disorders include:

- Depression, which is the emotional state characterised by extraordinary sadness and dejection (Carson, 1992);
- Bipolar Disorder, which is a mood disorder in which a person sometimes is too happy, sometimes is too depressed (Oltmanns & Emery, 2012);
- Seasonal Affective Disorder (SAD), which is a mood disorder that involves two episodes of depression in the past two years occurring at the same time of the year e.g. during winter (Butcher, et al.; 2010); and
- Dysthymia, which is a severe mood disorder characterised by a depressed mood for two years (Dubovsky & Butler, 1995).

2.2.2.5 Anxiety disorders

Anxiety disorders are conditions characterised by excessive and irrational fear. People with anxiety disorders respond to certain objects or situations with fear and dread, as well as with physical signs of anxiety or nervousness, such as a rapid heartbeat and sweating (Barlow & Durand, 2009). In some cases, the symptoms can affect the day-to-day activities, leading to a total disability. While some people develop such

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disorders after going through traumatic events, some acquire them due to genetic make-up (Jayashree, 2011).

Anxiety disorders are diagnosed if the person's response is not appropriate to the situation, or if the person cannot control the response, or if the anxiety interferes with normal functioning. Different types of anxiety disorders include:

- Generalized Anxiety Disorder (GAD), which is a chronic excessive worry about a number of things but with no specific threat (Sarason & Sarason, 2005);
- Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD), which is a disorder that occurs following an extreme traumatic event (Jayashree, 2011);
- Obsessive-Compulsive Disorder (OCD), which is an anxiety disorder characterised by the persistent intrusion of unwanted thoughts which are accompanied by compulsive behaviours that are used to neutralise the unwanted thoughts (Carson, 1992).
- Panic Disorder, which is an occurrence of repeated unexpected panic attacks (Butcher, et al., 2010); and
- Social Anxiety Disorder, which is a fear of being the center of attention and, finally, there are Specific Phobias which are an excessive fear of certain things which are not dangerous e.g. blood (Louw & Edwards, 1997).

2.2.2.6 Eating disorders

Eating disorders involve extreme emotions, attitudes, and behaviours involving weight and food. There are two types of eating disorders, namely:

- Anorexia nervosa, which is the intensive fear of gaining weight, and this is accompanied by a refusal to maintain enough nutrients and a refusal to eat food (Jayashree, 2011); and

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- Bulimia nervosa which is the frequent occurrence of over eating episodes and it is accompanied by a sense of losing control over eating and a recurrence of inappropriate ways of eliminating food from the body such as vomiting or use of laxatives (Carson, 1992).

2.2.2.7 Impulse control and addiction disorders

People with impulse control disorders are unable to resist urges, or impulses. They perform acts that could be harmful to themselves or others. Examples of Impulse control disorders includes: Pyromania (starting fires), kleptomania (stealing), and compulsive gambling. Alcohol and drug abuse are common objects of addictions. Often, people with these disorders become so involved with the objects of their addiction that they begin to ignore responsibilities and relationships (Barlow & Durand, 2009).

2.2.2.8 Adjustment disorder

Butcher, et al. (2010) indicate that the adjustment disorder occurs when a person develops emotional or behavioural symptoms in response to a stressful event or situation. The stressors may include natural disasters such as an earthquake or tornado; events or crises such as a car accident or the diagnosis of a major illness; interpersonal problems such as divorce, death of a loved one, loss of a job; or a problem with substance abuse. Adjustment disorder usually begins within three months of the event or situation and ends within six months after the stressor has stopped or is eliminated

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2.2.2.9 Dissociative disorders

People with these disorders suffer severe disturbances or changes in memory, consciousness, identity, and general awareness of themselves and their surroundings (Oltmanns & Emery, 2012). According to Barlow & Durand (2009), these disorders are usually associated with overwhelming stress, which may be the result of traumatic events, accidents, or disasters that may be experienced or witnessed by the individual. Dissociative Identity Disorder (DID), formerly called multiple personality disorder, or "split personality", and depersonalisation disorder are some examples of dissociative disorders.

2.2.2.10 Factitious disorders

Factitious disorders are conditions in which physical and/or emotional symptoms are created, in order to place the individual in the role of a patient or a person in need of help (WebMD, 2012). Butcher, et al.(2010) state that factitious disorders involve faking of symptoms to maintain the personal benefits that a sick role may provide. These include the attention and concern of medical personnel and family members.

2.2.2.11 Sexual disorders

These include disorders that affect sexual desire, performance, and behaviour. Sexual disorders include the following disorders:

- Paraphilia, which is a sexual disorder in which a person has recurrent sexual arousal, fantasies, or sexual urges and behaviours with non-human objects (Davison & Neale, 1990);
- Fetishism- this occurs when a person has recurrent sexual arousal, fantasies or urges and behaviours involving the use of

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inanimate objects (the objects can be hair, underclothes, shoes e.t.c) to obtain sexual gratification (Price & Lynn, 1986);

- Transvestic fetishism, which is a disorder in which people experience recurrent sexual arousal, fantasies, urges or behaviours that involve cross dressing as a person of the opposite sex (Carson, 1992);
- Voyeurism this is the recurrent sexual arousal, fantasies, urges and behaviour involving the observation of an unsuspecting person who is undressing or of couples engaging in sexual activities (Alloy, Acocella & Bootzin, 1995);
- exhibitionism is the recurrent sexual arousal, fantasies, urges or behaviours that involve exposing the genitals to other people, especially strangers in inappropriate places and without their consent (Davison & Neale, 1990);
- Sadism is the recurrence of sexual arousal, fantasies, urges or behaviours that involve inflicting psychological or physical pain (such as biting, cutting or whipping) on other individuals, Sadists usually control and humiliate others, and inflict pain on others to enhance their sexual excitement (Dubovsky & Butler, 1995); and
- Masochism is the recurrence of sexual arousal, fantasies, urges or behaviours that involve the act of being humiliated, beaten or bound. These people experience sexual stimulation from the experience of pain and degradation in relating to a lover (Butcher, et al., 2010).

2.2.2.12 Somatoform disorders

A person with a somatoform disorder, formerly known as psychosomatic disorder, experiences physical symptoms of an illness such as pain, dizziness and a high rate of heart beat even though a doctor can not find

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the medical cause for the symptoms (Price & Lynn, 1986). Somatoform disorders include five types of disorders, namely:

- Hypochondriasis, which it is characterised by a fear of contracting a serious disease or the idea that a person actually has such a disease even though they do not have it (Dubovsky & Butler, 1995);
- Somatization disorder is characterised by different physical complaints such as pain, sexual, gastrointestinal and psedoneurological symptoms for several years before the age of 30 (Oltmanns & Emery, 2012);
- Pain it is characterised by the experience of persistent and severe pain in one or more areas of the body (Price & Lynn, 1986);
- Conversion disorder, which involves symptoms of sensory or voluntary functions that lead one to think that he/she needs medical attention (Carson, 1992); and
- Body Dysmorphic Disorder involves being over obsessed with a specific part of the body in such a way that a person will no longer engage in social activities (Dubovsky & Butler, 1995).

2.2.2.13 Personality disorders

Personality disorders are characterised by abnormal personality and behavioural patterns that clash with the social norms and expectations of the society. People suffering from personality disorders find it difficult to form healthy relationships with other people (Louw & Edwards, 1997; Comer, 1995). Such people are rigid in their thinking pattern and behaviour, thereby leading to problems whenever they interact with other people (Davison & Neale, 1990). People with personality disorders have extreme and inflexible personality traits that are distressing to the person and/or cause problems in the work place, school, or social relationships (Barlow & Durand, 2009). In addition, the person's patterns

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of thinking and behaviour significantly differ from the expectations of society and are so rigid that they interfere with the person's normal functioning.

There are 3 categories of personality disorders: the first category includes: Odd and unusual behaviour. Disorders found in this category include the following:

- Paranoid Personality Disorder - people who suffer from this disorder lack trust and are suspicious of other people. They feel that everyone and everything is against them when in reality this is not true (Louw & Edwards, 1997);
- Schizoid Personality Disorder - people who suffer from this disorder are apathetic to others and have no desire to socialise with other people (Oltmanns & Emery, 2012),
- Schizotypal Personality disorder people who suffer from this disorder feel extremely anxious in social situations. They may find it difficult to form relationships with other people in the community (Barlow & Durand, 2009; Comer, 2012).

The second category is dramatic behaviours, which include the following disorders:

- Antisocial personality, which is a disorder that causes people to show emotional or erratic behaviour. People suffering from this disorder have no respect for rules and regulations, often violate them, and they cause harm to others (Carson, 1992);
- Borderline personality, which is a pattern of instability in interpersonal relationship which is characterised by self-image and mood swings (Comer, 2012);
- Histrionic personality, which includes people who are attention seekers and manipulators and have pervasive patterns of excessive emotionality (Alloy, Acocella & Bootzin, 1995); and

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- Narcissistic personalities include pervasive patterns of grandiosity, a need for attention, and a lack of empathy for other people. These people are self-centered to the core (Barlow & Durand, 2009).

The third categories of personality disorders include people who are naturally anxious and fearful. This group includes:

- Avoidant personality disorder which is a disorder characterised by fear of taking risks, hypersensitive, avoidance of all things that include social interaction (Alloy, Acocella & Bootzin, 1995);
- Dependent personality disorder, which is characterised by a dependent and submissive nature, allowing others people to take ones decisions, uncomfortable while lonely, and the need for constant assurance (Barlow & Durand, 2009); and
- Obsessive-compulsive personality disorder, which is repetitive, compelling thoughts and obsessions concerning things that are not real - for instance, cleaning things that are already clean (Sarason & Sarason, 2005).

2.2.2.14 Psychotic disorders

Psychotic disorders involve distorted awareness and thinking. Psychotic disorder includes the types of mental illnesses that affect the brain and thinking processes. People suffering from psychotic disorders have difficulty thinking rationally and impaired judgments (Alloy, Acocella & Bootzin, 1995). Living their daily life becomes very, very difficult. The commonest symptoms of these mental disorders are delusions and hallucinations.

People suffering from these disorders develop false beliefs (delusions) and perceptions (hallucinations - false sensations, like seeing, hearing or smelling something that is not there). Some other symptoms are strange

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behaviour (may be dangerous to themselves or others), lack of personal hygiene, decreased interest in doing things, strange speech patterns that are not understandable, mood swings, relationship difficulties and slow or strange movements (Barlow & Durand, 2009).

The major psychotic disorders are described by Barlow and Durand (2009) as follows:

- Schizophrenia - the affected people have symptoms that last longer than six months. Delusions and hallucinations are common in this disorder. Schizophrenia is a mental disorder characterised by a breakdown of thought processes, and by poor emotional responsiveness. Symptoms include auditory hallucinations, paranoid or bizarre delusions, or disorganised speech and thinking, and it is accompanied by significant social or occupational dysfunction (Sarason & Sarason, 2005).

  There are five subtypes of schizophrenia, namely: paranoid, disorganized, catatonic, residual and differential schizophrenia. In paranoid schizophrenia, the person is preoccupied with delusion and auditory hallucinations (Friedman & Revera, 2009). Disorganised schizophrenia is characterised by disorganised speech, disorganised behaviour and flat afferent. Catatonic schizophrenia is characterised by a immobile body or stupor, excessive motor activities, which are purposeless, extreme negativism and bizarre postures. According to Sarason & Sarason (2005), Residual schizophrenia is characterised by continued evidence of negative symptoms or mind psychotic symptoms such as odd beliefs and unusual perceptual experiences. Undifferentiated is characterised by mixed symptoms of catatonic, disorganised and paranoid schizophrenia (Comer, 2012).

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- Schizophreniform - people suffering from this disorder also have symptoms of schizophrenia, but the condition does not last longer than six months and is milder. Schizophreniform disorder is a mental disorder diagnosed when symptoms of schizophrenia are present for a significant portion of the time within a one-month period. However, signs of disruption are not present for the full six months required for the diagnosis of schizophrenia (Palladino, 1996)

- Schizoaffective disorder - those affected have both schizophrenia and other mood or affective disorders such as bipolar disorder. Schizoaffective disorder is a mental disorder characterised by recurring abnormal mood and psychotic components. The mood component may be elevated or depressed or simultaneously elevated and depressed, and these abnormal mood components alternate with, or occur together with, distortions in perception (Alloy, Acocella & Bootzin, 1995).

2.2.2.15 Organic brain disorders

- Organic Brain Disorders are conditions that are due to damage or deterioration of brain tissue. Organic brain disorders include the following disorders (Palladino, 1996).

- Huntington disease - Huntington disease is an inherited disease that affects the brain. It causes the progressive breakdown of the nerve cells in the brain, leading to functional, cognitive and psychiatric problems (Bootzin & Acocella, 1988).

- Multiple sclerosis - Multiple sclerosis is another degenerative disease which affects the myelin sheath covering of the nerve cells,

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thereby slowing down or stopping the nerve impulses. This disorder affects the central nervous system (brain & spinal cord), causing a wide range of physical, as well as mental symptoms (Alloy, Acocella & Bootzin, 1995).

- Alzheimer's disease - Alzheimer's disease is a common disease that causes dementia (loss of brain function caused by certain diseases). Alzheimer's disease is characterised by degeneration and the death of brain cells, thereby affecting the mental function. Palladino (1996) states that alzheimer's disease is caused by a decrease in the amount of oxygen or increase in the amount of carbon dioxide in the blood. Brain cells can also result from head injury and this injury can decrease or block the blood flow to the brain. It is characterised by impairment of memory, orientation and judgment, reasoning, and inability to integrate new information, which results in failure to learn new associations (Friedman & Revera, 2009).

- Parkinson's disease – is a degenerative disorder of the Central Nervous System. This condition affects the nerve cells' ability to send messages and causes tremors that may even lead to paralysis. It is characterised by a stooped posture, slow body movements, tremors, jerking when walking. People suffering from this disorder speak in a soft monotone (Halgin & Whitbourne, 1994).

2.2.3 Symptoms of mental illness

Symptoms of mental disorders vary depending on the type and severity of the condition. Symptoms of mental disorders in children, that is people between birth and the age of 18 years, are as follows:

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- Changes in school performance;
- Poor grades despite strong efforts;
- Excessive worry or anxiety;
- Hyperactivity;
- Persistent nightmares;
- Persistent disobedience and/or aggressive behaviour; and
- Frequent temper tantrums.

(MedicineNet, 2012, Halgin & Whitbourne, 1994)

The following are symptoms of mental disorders in youth, which are people who are between childhood and puberty

- Abuse of drugs and/or alcohol;
- Changes in school performance, falling grades;
- Inability to cope with daily problems and activities;
- Changes in sleeping and/or eating habits;
- Excessive complaints of physical problems;
- Defying authority, skipping school, stealing, or damaging property;
- Intense fear of gaining weight;
- Long-lasting negative mood, often along with poor appetite and thoughts of death; and
- Frequent outbursts of anger.

(Alloy, Acocella & Bootzin, 1995; Palladino, 1996)

Symptoms of mental disorders in adults, adult as people who are grown to full size or mature, are as follows:

- Confused thinking;
- Long-lasting sadness or irritability;
- Extremely high and low moods;
- Excessive fear, worry, or anxiety;

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- Social withdrawal;
- Dramatic changes in eating or sleeping habits;
- Strong feelings of anger;
- Delusions or hallucinations (seeing or hearing things that are not really there);
- Increasing inability to cope with daily problems and activities;
- Thoughts of suicide;
- Denial of obvious problems;
- Many unexplained physical problems; and
- Abuse of drugs and/or alcohol.

(Diagnostic and Statistical Manual of Mental of Disorders, 2000)

2.2.4 Diagnosis of mental illness

Diagnosis is done using the Diagnostic and Statistical Manual of Mental of Disorders (-DSM-IV-TR). During diagnosis, the psychologist will observe the symptoms of the person and he/she will check on a Diagnostic and Statistical Manual of Mental of Disorders to see the disorder in which the symptoms fit best. After this initial interview, the individual will be monitored by the psychologist over a period of time (Friedman & Revera, 2009).

The psychologist will ask about a full medical history and information about recent changes in the person's life from family and/or friends. Usually, one family member will be involved in providing care for the person with mental illness, and, as a result, will have an understanding of how the person's condition has developed and the extent of the symptoms, and the impact it is having on the quality of life. It is important to check that the symptoms are not part of some other medication or substance abuse. This is because some symptoms found in mental illnesses, such as hallucinations, can also appear in other

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medical conditions (Diagnostic and Statistical Manual of Mental of Disorders, 2000).

Reaching a diagnosis can be difficult, and it takes time to be sure that the individual's symptoms truly indicate a particular mental illness. Family and friends should be involved, as they will be aware of details of patients, cultural differences and religious beliefs (Oltmanns & Emery, 2012).

2.2.5 Causes of mental illness

There are different causes of mental illness. Some of the causes include biological, prenatal, peri-natal and post-natal, disease, injury and infection, life events, emotional stress, and relationships.

2.3.5.1 Biological causes of mental illness

Genes play an important role in the development of mental disorders. Some mental disorders are inherited through genes. Genes carry information about heredity; they are found on the chromosomes, which are found on the nucleus cell (Halgin & Whitbourne, 1994). Abnormal levels of dopamine activity have been linked to a number of disorders (ADHD, schizophrenia). Dysfunction in serotonin and other monoamine neurotransmitters such as norepinephrine and dopamine have also been linked to mental disorders such as major depression, obsessive compulsive disorder, phobias, posttraumatic stress disorder, and generalised anxiety disorder. Dysfunction of the central gamma-aminobutyric (GABA) system is associated with stress, anxiety disorders and mood disorders (Oltmanns & Emery, 2012).

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Some abnormalities in the average size or shape of some regions of the brain have been found in some disorders. Studies indicate that people with schizophrenia have enlarged ventricles and sometimes reduced volume of the cerebrum and hippocampus, and those with bipolar disorder have increased amygdala volume (Butcher, et al., 2010).

2.2.5.2 Prenatal, peri-natal and post-natal

Research by Halgin & Whitbourne (1994) shows that events surrounding pregnancy and birth have been linked to an increased development of mental illness in the offspring. This includes maternal exposure to serious psychological stress or trauma, birth complications, infections, diseases, and exposure to alcohol or cocaine. Such factors have been found to affect specific areas of neurodevelopment within the general development of the child. A mother's exposure to viruses or toxic chemicals while pregnant may also contribute to a child's mental health (Baron, 1995).

2.2.5.3 Diseases, injury and infection

Other disorders are caused by traumatic brain injury (TBI). There is a positive relationship between TBI and psychiatric disorders. Usually brain injury affects the neurons, which end up on to the drake down of communication between neurons. A number of disorders have often been linked with microbial pathogens, particularly viruses and infections. A number of diseases of the white matter can cause symptoms of mental disorder (Sarason & Sarason, 2005). Poor general health has been found among individuals with severe mental illnesses. This is because of factors such as the diet, bacterial infections, substance use, exercise levels, effects of medications, socioeconomic disadvantages, lowered help-seeking or treatment adherence, or poorer healthcare provision. Some

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chronic general medical conditions have been linked to some aspects of mental disorders, such as AIDS-related psychosis (Davison & Neale, 1990).

2.2.5.4 Life events, emotional stress and relationships

Maltreatment in childhood and in adulthood, including sexual abuse, physical abuse, emotional abuse, domestic violence and bullying, has been linked to the development of mental disorders. Stressful life events are also associated with the development of some disorders, such as mood and anxiety disorders (Davison & Neale, 1990). People cope with those life events in different ways depending on factors such as genetic vulnerability, coping patterns, and other experiences. Relationship has been linked to the development of mental disorders. Issues of parenting skills or parental depression or other problems may be a risk factor. Parental divorce appears to increase the risk of mental disorders (Bootzin & Acocella, 1988).

2.2.6 Treatment of mental illness

The treatment of mental illness varies, and it includes the use of different medications and psychotherapy. The treatment depends on the type of mental illness a person is suffering from (Costello & Costello, 1992). The following treatments are used:

2.2.6.1 Medications

Medications are used to reduce the symptoms of metal illness. Medications help make other treatments, such as psychotherapy, more effective. The medications depend on the type of disorder and how the

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patients' body responds to that medication (Carson, 1992). Some of the medications that are prescribed for mental illness are as follows:

Antidepressant medications

Antidepressants are used to treat types of depression. Antidepressants can help reduce symptoms such as sadness, hopelessness, lack of energy, difficulty concentrating and lack of interest in activities. Different types of antidepressants are grouped by how they affect brain chemistry (Alloy, Acocella & Bootzin, 1995).

Mood-stabilising medications

Mood stabilisers are most commonly used to treat bipolar disorder, which is characterised by alternating episodes of mania and depression. Sometimes mood-stabilising medications are added to antidepressants to treat depression (Lazarus & Andrew, 1995).

Anti-anxiety medications

Anti-anxiety medications are used to treat anxiety disorders, such as generalised anxiety disorder and panic disorder. They may also help reduce agitation and insomnia (Costello & Costello, 1992).

Antipsychotic medication

Antipsychotic medications, also called neuroleptics, are typically used to treat psychotic disorders such as schizophrenia. Antipsychotic medications may also be used to treat bipolar disorders or added to antidepressants to treat depression (Davison & Neale, 1990).

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2.2.6.2 Psychotherapy

Psychotherapy is a process of treating mental illness by talking about one's condition and related issues with a mental health provider or a psychologist. During psychotherapy, patients learn about there condition and their moods, feelings, thoughts and behaviour. This helps the patient to learn coping and stress management skills. Psychotherapy often can be successfully completed in a few months, but in some cases, long-term treatment may be helpful. It can take place one-on-one, in a group or along with family members (Dubocsky & Butler, 1995).

2.2.7 Prevention of mental illness

Prevention of mental illness includes deducing the risk factors that contribute to mental illness. Risk factors for mental illness include genetic inheritance, life experiences and substance intake. Risk factors involving parenting include parental rejection, lack of parental warmth, high hostility, harsh discipline, high maternal negative affect, parental favouritism, anxious childrearing, modelling of dysfunctional and drug-abusing behaviour, and child abuse (Dubocsky & Butler, 1995). Other risk factors may include family history (e.g. of anxiety). In schizophrenia and psychosis, risk factors include migration and discrimination, childhood trauma, bereavement or separation in families, and abuse of drugs (Alloy, Acocella & Bootzin, 1995).

2.3. Traditional healing of mental illness

Traditional healing plays an important role in primary health care in many developing counties. Traditional healing treatment is holistic, which means that it heals both psychological and the physical well-being of an individual. The drug Utilisation Research Unit (2007) estimated

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that 60% to 80% of South Africans consult traditional healers before going to primary health care practitioners.

2.3.1 Definition of traditional healer

Kale (1995) defines a traditional healer as someone who is recognised by the community in which he or she lives as a person who provides health care by using plants, animals and mineral substances. There are different types of traditional healers, and these are as follows:

Divines

Diviners are the most important intermediaries between humans and the ancestors. They are chosen by the ancestors to become healers and are regarded as servants of the ancestors (Edwards, 2010). Diviners concentrate on diagnosing the unexplainable. They analyse the causes of illness and interpret the messages from the ancestors. They use divination bones and also provide medication for the specific case they have diagnosed (Pretorius, 1998).

Herbalists

Herbalists are ordinary people who have acquired an extensive knowledge of magical technique but who do not possess occult powers. They diagnose and prescribe medicines for everyday illnesses, to prevent and to alleviate misfortune or evil, to provide protection against witchcraft and misfortune, and to bring prosperity and happiness (Pretorius, 1998). They possess an extensive knowledge of curative herbs and medication (Drug Utilization Research Unit, 2007).

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Prophets/faith healers

In their diagnosis and treatment of a patient, prophets/faith healers use prayer, candlelight or water. They heal through prayer, lay hands on people, provide holy water, baths, steaming and ash (Edwards, 2010, Drug Utilization Research Unit, 2007). Sometimes, upon cure, a patient automatically becomes a member of the church to which the faith healer who cured him/her belongs (Pretorius, 1998).

Traditional Birth Attendants

According to Pretorius (1998), traditional birth attendants (TBAs) often serve the communities located in isolated and remote areas where they are consulted as a matter of necessity due to the unavailability of Western health care services. However, they also render their services in urban/semi-urban communities, to some patients who despite their exposure to Western health care services may still prefer TBAs.

2.3.2 African perspective theory

This research was guided by Henning Viljoen's theory of African perspective. According to this theory, mental illness is associated with the role that the ancestors, malignant spirits and sorcerers play in determining human behaviour. The theory indicates that, in the African view, mental illness is a state whereby a person is incomplete and is unable to socialise with other people.

The African perspective theory indicates that traditional healers are important in African culture; they are the ones who communicate with ancestors. Mutwa as cited in Meyer, Moore and Viljoen (2002), states that when a person has mental illness, traditional healers are the ones

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who know that some powers of the universe are disrupted and must be balanced or restored to harmony again.

From an African perspective, mental illness is not devoid of physical symptoms, and all mental disorders are seen as psychosomatic disorders. According to the African perspective theory, the person's view and world view are founded on a holistic and anthropocentric ontology. This means that humans form an indivisible whole with the cosmos (this is the unity between God, human and nature). Sow in Meyer, Moore and Viljoen (2002) distinguishes three cosmic orders. These are the macro, – which is a domain in which ancestors, are encountered; the meso, - which includes malignant spirits and sorcerers; and, finally, the micro-cosmos, - which includes people and their community (Meyer, Moore & Viljoen, 2002).

2.3.3 Mental illness in the African perspective

Mental illness in the African perspective is seen as an illness caused by different things, including ancestors, witches and disturbances in social relationships. It is characterised by symptoms such as running away from home without cause, talking alone, beating people for no reason and taking off clothes.

2.3.4 The African perspective Types of mental illness / Culture bound syndrome

Culture bound syndromes are conditions which do not correspond to DSM-IV-TR disorders. These are disturbances of thoughts, emotions and behaviour that only occur in a specific cultural group. Ola, Morakinyo & Adewuya (2009) define the culture bound syndrome as culturally-based signs and symptoms of mental distress or maladaptive behaviour that is

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prominent in folk belief and practice. The following are different culture bound syndromes:

Amok

Amok is a cultural-bound syndrome characterised by a severe loss or shame or public insult. People suffering from this disorder become quiet and depressed for a while and then from there, they will take a dangerous weapon such as a gun or axe and run into a public place and kill people (Louw & Edwards, 1997).

Brain fag

This is when the brain is tired through reading, in such a way that it is no longer absorbing anything (Louw & Edwards, 1997). This type of stress may cause different symptoms such as inability to concentrate and to remember, watering or painful eyes, blurring of vision, pain or feelings of pressure in the head and neck and dizziness and weakness, headaches, difficulty in falling asleep, shaking hands, rapid beating heart and vomiting and also symptoms of depression. Usually, people suffering from brain fag believe that they have been bewitched (Ola, Morakinyo & Adewuya, 2009).

Amafufunyana

Witches who possess this disorder take ants that have been fed by a dead body in the grave, and give the affected person secretly. These ants are believed to be made of a poison (idlis/thilso). People who suffer from this disorder hear voices coming from the stomach, and those voices speak a language which is different from that of the affected person. The symptoms include feelings of tiredness, loss of appetite, uncontrolled

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anger and outbursts, sleeping difficulties, disturbing dreams, and hearing voices. The voices usually threaten the person, promising to kill the patient.

These people may go into state of extreme agitation and run about and break things (Aina and Marakinyo, 2011). They become physically powerful and have suicidal thoughts. They have commanding hallucinations for example the voices might command them to kill themselves. People suffering from amafufunyana sometimes fall down and speak with the voice of a person who is believed to have bewitched the patient. Amafufunyana may affect a group of people at the same time (Louw & Edwards, 1997).

Intwaso: shamanic initiatory illness

People are selected to be traditional healers by their ancestors. Usually, they are called through serious illnesses. The symptoms include a serious illness, unusual dreams or waking visions. If a person accepts the call of the ancestors they do training and become a traditional healer. The training helps a person to diagnose and treat illnesses (Louw & Edwards, 1997).

2.3.5 Symptoms of mental illness

The African view associates the following symptoms with mental illness:

- Running into a public place and killing people; Losing control of aggressive impulses, unpredictable and uncontrolled anger outburst (Sorsdahl, Flisher, Wilson & Stein, 2010);
- Hearing people's voices calling and ordering a patient to be violent (Sorsdahl, et al., 2010);

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- Difficulty in falling asleep, head and neck pains (Ola, Morakinyo & Adewuya, 2009);
- Disturbing/unusual dreams (Ogana, 2009);
- Waking vision that indicates that person is being called to undergo initiation as a traditional healer (Mufamadi & Sodi, 2010);
- Hearing voices coming from ones stomach, voices speaking in a different language (Aina & Marakinyo, 2011);
- Command hallucination that leads to suicidal attempts (Masotho, Louw & Calitz, 2011); and
- Speaking in a strange voice and vomiting (Ogana, 2009).

2.3.6 Traditional healer's diagnostic methods of mental illness

Diagnosis is a system of seeking to discover the origin of the disease. The diagnostic process does not only seek answers to the question of how the disease originated but who or what caused the disease, and why it has affected this particular person at this point in time (Pretorius, 1993). In African healing, an illness always has a cause and a reason why it affects a particular individual and why it happened at that time (Kubukeli, 1999).

Asaah, Manu & Ombaku, (2003); Sandlana & Mtetwa, (2008) state that diagnosis in African healing is often carried out using the senses, such as taste, touch, smell and sight, as well as by consulting spirits and oracles. As part of the diagnostic process, traditional healers determine the nature of the problem by examining the symptoms directly and by using questions to reveal the illness in the context of the patient's life, social relationships and physical environment. Because people are products of the community, they ask every aspect of a patient's present

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and past activity, focusing on the behaviours that can cause conflict with others (Mariana & Hewson, 1998).

In traditional healing, the ability to diagnose an illness is seen as a gift from the ancestors. Traditional healers consult the spiritual realm by invoking and conferring with the ancestors (Mariana & Hewson, 1998). Ancestors are very important and they play a major role in the lives of traditional healers and African people. Traditional healers are selected by ancestors before they can go for training. Bodibe and Sodi cited in Mashamba (2007) state that since ancestors cannot talk to their people directly, they choose a person (Traditional Medicine Network, 2003) to be the mediator between them and the living.

Those who are chosen to be traditional healers, are given special powers by the ancestors, which include the ability to heal (Philip, 2007). The major focus of the diagnoses of illness is placed on determining the cause of that illness. According to Swartz (1998), diagnosis in African healing is better understood as related to the causes of illness rather than the classification of the symptoms. Diagnosis is done through different strategies such as bone throwing, dream analysis, and physical examination. These strategies are discussed below:

2.3.6.1 Bone throwing

Diagnoses are done through divination in conjunction with the interview questions (Osowole, et al., 1998). Throwing of bones is one of the oldest forms of divination used by traditional healers to communicate with ancestors. Bones give the traditional healers direction to the right treatment (A World in Balance, 2006). The throwing of bones also helps traditional healers to obtain the history of the patient, as well as confirm

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what the patient has said about his or her problem (Mufamadi & Sodi, 2010).

After the healer has struck rapport in a calculated and deliberate manner with the client, he would go on to ask questions which are related to the person's functioning. The traditional healer will explore all of these areas carefully and try to make sense of the individual's world and his problems. Throughout this exploration, the client is free to agree or disagree with what the healer says (Mariana & Hewson, 1998; Ogana, 2009).

2.3.6.2 Dream analysis

Traditional healers also use their dreams, through which the ancestors give them diagnostic insights (Sandlana & Mtetwa, 2008; Mariana & Hewson, 1998). Sometimes the ancestors will show the healer, through dreams, the problems of the patient before the patient arrives for consultation (Peltzer, 1993; Mashamba, 2009). In some cases the ancestors might even show the traditional healer the kind of treatment that he or she has to use for the patient (Rinne, 2001). According to Fourie (1992) the traditional healer would then prepare the treatment so that when the patient arrives for consultation, he or she would find the medication ready. Traditional healers also use the spiritual power of ancestral spirits or gods to diagnose a patient's problem (Peltzer, 1993).

Uys (1992) believes that effective treatment is achieved when it is based on correct diagnosis methods, while misdiagnoses lead to ineffective treatment (Traditional Medicine Network, 2001). Traditional healers always seem to strive for the correct chord as far as diagnosis of the problem is concerned. To enhance the diagnostic process, traditional healers dance or follow specific rituals such as washing with herbs

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(Sandlana & Mtetwa, 2008; Marian [boilerplate] on, 1998). Since illness is seen as being attributable to a disturbance or imbalance of the psychical, psychical materials, interpersonal or spiritual levels, all of these are taken into account when a diagnosis is made and treatment is prescribed.

2.3.6.3 Physical examination

- Pulse diagnosis, - here traditional healers look at the interaction between the heart pulse and breath. They check to see if the heart is beating normally, and the colour of the blood in the blood vessels and if the amount of blood in the vessels is normal.
- Tongue diagnosis, - they look at the colour of the tongue. The colour of the tongue tells the traditional healer if the person is fine or sick.
- Urine analysis, - this analysis focuses on colour, smell and also consistency of the urine. Traditional healers are able to tell the colour and smell of the urine of a person who is ill.
- Nail, hand, - which also is based on their colour, where-in they study the colour to see if it is normal (Traditional Medicine Network, 2001)

2.3.7 Traditional African perspective on the causes of mental illness

Africans believe that psychological disorders are caused by things like the anger of the gods or ancestors, possession by spirits or a deliberate manipulation of supernatural forces through witchcraft (Lonner & Malpass, 1994). For African traditional healers, the cause of mental illness is an important aspect of the diagnosis. Mental illness is seen as being caused by ancestors, witchcraft, and disturbances in social relationships. However, they also recognise that mental illness can also

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be caused by physical injuries that can result in the blockage of oxygen and blood flow in the head and brain, stress, marital distress, problems at work and substance abuse (Lonner & Malpass, 1994) as well as heredity (January & Sodi, 2006; Louw & Edwards, 1997). In the African view, nobody becomes sick without a reason.

2.3.7.1 Ancestors

Ancestors are sometimes seen as the cause of mental illness (Parle, 2003). Ancestors have powers and authority, and they play an important role in the world of the living. Ancestors are capable of blessing, cursing and punishing those who are still living (Bogopa, 2010). Traditional healers believe that ancestors sometimes use mental illness as a punishment to their people.

Fourie (1992), reports that ancestors are seen as spirits who preserve the honour and traditions of a tribe. They are seen as protectors of their people against evil and destructive forces. He further states that, when ancestors are angry, they can punish their people by sending illness and misfortune, to those people who do not listen to their (ancestors) wise counsel. For example, if certain social norms and taboos are not obeyed, and if culturally prescribed practices and rites are not performed or incorrectly performed (Onwuanibe, 2012), ancestors can punish the people. Mental illness is, thus, explained as the anger of the ancestors or punishment (Mufamadi & Sodi, 2010).

Other than just punishing their people, ancestors also use illness just to communicate with their people. They send and illness knowing that the patient will consult a traditional healer, then the traditional haler will tell the patient what the ancestors want from him/her (Fourie, 1992).

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Sometimes mental illness could be a sign of a calling by ancestors (Sorsdahl, Flisher, Wilson & Stein, 2010). According to Ngubane in Sodi, Mudhovozi, Mashamba, Radzilani-Makatu, Takalani and Mabunda (2011), a person does not choose to be a traditional healer, but he/she is selected by the ancestors. The call is usually in the form of unusual dreams and waking vision. Those who are selected are given power to divine and diagnose illness (Louw & Edwards, 1997).

Pollution is also a cause of mental illness. Traditional healers also believe that people sometimes get sick because they do not purify themselves from pollution (Sorsdahl, et al., 2010). Failing to carry out the age-old prescribed rituals for everyday life, or not being purified after doing something bad (e.g. after killing someone) or funeral (e.g. after death of a spouse) can lead to the development of mental illness (Parle, 2003).

2.3.7.2 Witches and Sorcerers

Traditional healers also believe that sometimes ancestors do not punish their people, but they allow it to happen by withdrawing their protection from witches and sorcerers (Van Dyk, 2005). When ancestors show their anger to their people, by withdrawing their protection, people are left with no protection, and this makes it easy for these people to be attacked by witches and sorcerers. Fourie (1992) concurs when he states that witches or sorcerers are often blamed for illnesses and misfortunes in traditional societies. Lonner and Malpass (1994); Parle (2003); and Van Dyk (2005) also agree that witchcraft is believed to be a causal agent in mental illness.

Witchcraft affects individuals, families, communities and nations. Witchcraft has a negative impact, and it is seen as a threat to the life and well-being of the people of Africa. Witches are believed to be dedicated to

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carry out evil things, make people ill and cause death (Manala, 2004). According to Kgatla cited in Manala (2004) witches are blamed for causing diseases, such as tuberculosis, paralytic stroke, and are able to cause death, pain and misery. They are also associated with causing infertility and turning people into zombies. It is believed that they cause those things by inter alia pointing a finger at their victims, through food poisoning, by mixing some magical potions with the soil on which their victims' footprints are made in order to inflict pain on them and by lightning (Asaah, et al., 1994).

Usually, witches are driven by envy, malice or jealousy of people rather than to gain materials. Witches are believed to reverse all acceptable standards of living, for example by eating their own children, going naked at night, and enjoying practising their craft. They make life unbearably difficult for individuals, families, communities and societies. In the African mind, sickness and misfortune are associated with witchcraft. Sorceress is the use of evil spirits to cause ailments or misfortunes in those targeted for attack. A sorcerer brings misfortune and illness to others by purposefully using of magic rites (Manala, 2004).

2.3.7.3 Psychological conflict or disturbed social relationships

Many traditional cultures believe that when a person has psychological conflicts or bad social relationships with other people, this creates a disequilibrium for that person, which is later expressed in the form of physical or mental illness. In African traditional healing, people and family relationships are important, disturbances in a relationship may create mental illness (Sandlana & Mtetwa, 2008).

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2.3.8 Treatment of mental illness

Traditional healers treat all age groups and all genders and different illnesses. Their treatment is curative, protective and preventive, and it can be natural, spiritual or both, depending on the cause of the mental illness (Peltzer, 1993). Their treatment includes ritual sacrifice to ancestors, steaming, purification (ritual washing) and magical strengthening of people and possessions (Pretorius, 1993; Sodi, 2009). In addition, there is no treatment that can be successful without the guidance of the ancestors (Bogopa, 2010). When treating illness in African healing, it is important to identify, uproot and punish the cause of the illness (Fourie, 1992; Van Dyk, 2005). Healing of mental illness caused by this disequilibrium, therefore, consists of restoring this disequilibrium (Broome & Broome, 2007; Mariana & Hewson, 1998).

Healing involves health and growth at physical, psychological, social and spiritual levels (Edwards, et al., 2006). Treatment is based on the past experiences and skills of the practitioner, which are usually handed over from other family members (Asaah, et al., 2003). This shows that traditional healers are trained by other traditional healers who are more experienced and this training takes plus or minus seven years (Traditional Medicine Network, 2003).

The goal in healing is to establish a balance and harmonious relationship with one's ancestors. The treatment used by traditional healers varies greatly and depends on the healer's knowledge and skills, as well as the nature of the problem (Pretorius, 1993; Mufamadi & Sodi, 2010). Since illness is said to originate from a lack of balance between the patient and his or her social environment, it is this imbalance that determines the choice of the healing herbs.

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Traditional healers understand the relationship between the mind and the body; this makes their healing system to be holistic (Traditional Medicine Network, 2003). Traditional treatment does not only aim at curing the disease, but also at healing the patient. When traditional healers treat people, they treat them, their families, their houses and everything that they have in their environment (Peltzer, 1993). Human ill-health is explained as a state of not feeling well, being unable to mix freely with other people in society, and disobeying the ancestors. When traditional healers treat the person, they do not only heal the person's body, for example, the pains, but they also re-establish a person's harmony with his or her ancestors, environment, and also the person's relationship with other people in the community. Traditional healing is based on correcting of both internal imbalances and external inharmonious (Traditional Medicine Network, 2001).

Traditional healers treat the patient's mind and body and the patient's family. They usually treat the whole family because sometimes treating the individual might be ineffective (Edwards, et al., 2006). Konado cited in Mashamba (2007) and Makgopa & Koma, (2009) states that indigenous medicine represents a holistic approach as it takes into account the patient's family, community and environment. Africans do not only believe in the treatment of the patient, but also that of the whole family. When treating the patient, there are certain ceremonies that must be performed by other members of the family (Bogopa, 2010).

Different categories of traditional healers use different types of treatments. Some of them include the following therapies: herbal remedies, vaccination, therapeutic dance, bathing and steaming and rituals (Louw & Edwards, 1997; Sodi, 2009; and Sorsdahl, Flisher, Wilson & Stein, 2010). These treatments are discussed next:

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Herbal remedies

Herbal remedy is used when more powerful treatment is needed and this is the one which is mostly used (Kubukeli,1999), Although traditional healers use a variety of strategies and medications when treating patients (Traditional Medicine Network, 2001), Van Ransburg (2004:543) shows that "herbal remedies may constitute of one or several plants". Herbal medicine is also mostly used when treating illness such as mental illness, emotional distress and to correct balance between physical and natural cycles (Wootton, 1999; (Sorsdahl, et al., 2010). Traditional remedies may be used orally, on the skin, in the nose or ear, and vaginally. The advantage of herbal prescriptions is that they are individually prepared for a particular patient who is given such medication for either treatment and/or prevention.

Vaccination

Vaccination involves the use of a razor blade to make small cut on the body surface of a person. Usually those cut are deep enough to cause bleeding. After cutting, a powdered medicine is rubbed on to the incised area (Sodi, 2009). Fourie (1992) argues that traditional healers also use vaccination to remove poison in the body; open blood vessels if they are blocked and improve the circulation of blood throughout the body. The vaccination is also performed after illness, in order to remove any remnants of the disease in the body. Medicine is directly introduced into the bloodstream through incisions.

Therapeutic dance

Therapeutic dance is called Malombo in Tshivenda. It is a very important dance which is used for healing. During the malombo dance, patients are

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able to communicate with their ancestors (Sodi, 2009). Traditional healers sometimes use dancing as a way of relieving stress. Dancing is not only used to relieve stress, but it also serves as a communication tool with the ancestors. It provides strength and is also used in cultural rites. When dancing is used as part of healing, the traditional healer also slaughters an animal and drink sorghum.

Rituals

Traditional healers also use ritual, the performance and practices in which an altered state of consciousness is induced (Sandlana & Mtetwa, 2008; Pretorius, 1993). According to Van Rensburg (2004), prayers to ancestors function at the psycho-social level. Traditional healers also use it to ask for help in dealing with ancestor-related diseases or illnesses, and even asking for protection and luck. Smoke inhalation is also used as another way of treating illness. It is mostly used to introduce medicine into the bloodstream and the brain. Just like prayer, it is used at the psychological level for protection, to drive away evil spirits, communicate with ancestors, and for headache treatment and the strengthening of the body.

Bathing and steaming

Bathing (herbal mixtures are added to bath water to purify the patient) and steaming (medicinal herbs are inhaled by steaming the patient; the herbs are put in a bucket of boiling water) serve as a topical application of medicine through the skin pores. They are meant to penetrate, stimulate, invigorate or relax and heat the body (Traditional Medicine Network, 2001; Sandlana & Mtetwa, 2008). Traditional healers also use steaming for protection purposes, to wash off bad luck and evil spirits.

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Steaming is considered more effective than bathing because of the hot temperature.

2.3.9 Prevention of mental illness

Traditional healers also protect their clients from possible affliction. This is because most of these illnesses are believed to come from destabilised forces. Protection, therefore, then involves warding off the negative forces of witchcraft and maintaining an equilibrium with other people, the spirits, and the ancestors (Sandlana & Mtetwa, 2008; Mariana & Hewson, 1998). Thus, protection includes propitiation for real or possible offenses that are wittingly or unwittingly incurred against others. Traditional healers believe that illness can be prevented by obeying the basic law of nature and ancestors. When preventing illness, they look at the individual as a whole (health and social relationship) and give guidance to maintain optimum health (Sodi, 2009).

2.3.10 Protection against mental illness

Protection may be accomplished by performing ceremonial acts and rituals using medicines against disequilibrium, or wearing totemic objects, such as wrist bands (Mariana & Hewson, 1998; Peltzer, 1993; Sandlana & Mtetwa, 2008). Prevention can also be done by obeying basic laws and listening to ancestors such as performing old age rituals or worshiping the ancestors (Traditional Medicine Network, 2001).

Rituals are also used as a way of protecting people from illness. Bogopa (2010) indicates that rituals are performed throughout a person's life span, but at different stages such as birth, maturity, and after a person's death. Rites of birth are also seen a way of protecting the child from illness and bad things and also a way of asking for the child's protection

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from the ancestors (Ampim, 2003; & Bogopa, 2010). Rites of birth involve initiating the infant into the world through a ritual and naming ceremony. It is believed that infants are coming from the spirit world with important information from that world, and that they are bringing unique talents and gifts to offer to the community.

Therefore, it is the responsibility of the family and community to discover the infant's unique mission through consultations with a diviner and to have rituals. This is done to clearly determine the new community member's mission, in order to guide him/her through his/her life path. When the baby is born, welcoming rituals connect the child to his or her ancestors and seal his or her membership in a covenant (Ampim, 2003). If birth rituals are not performed, it is believed that a child will not be protected by the ancestors, and he or she will be disobedient, even against the ancestors (Bogopa, 2010).

After the birth ritual, there are maturity rituals which are performed, in order to thank the ancestors for protecting the child. These rituals are followed by marriage rituals. These rituals introduce the couple to the ancestors and ask for their protection for the new family. Failure to perform marriage rituals and pay lobola (mamalo) might result in the couple giving birth to abnormal or mentally ill children.

The last ritual is done in the family after the death of a person Failure to perform all these rituals would lead to a negative impact on the health of the family members. In other words, performing all these rituals also serve as a preventative measure of illness in the family (Bogopa, 2010).

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2.4 Conclusion

The literature review indicated that there are different symptoms of mental illness. The diagnosis of mental illness is done through dream analysis and bone throwing. Traditional healers use a variety of treatments (such as vaccination, herbal remedies, rituals and therapeutic dances) to treat these mental illnesses. Traditional healers believe that illness can be prevented by obeying the basic law of nature and ancestors. Protection may be accomplished by performing ceremonial acts and rituals using medicines against disequilibrium, or wearing totemic objects, such as wrist bands.

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CHAPTER 3: RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

In this chapter, I am going to presents the research methodology that I followed when conducting this study. This chapter discusses the following sub-topics: research design; location of the study; population of the study, sampling method used in the study; participants; research instrument used; pre-testing; data collection; data analysis; ethical considerations; dissemination of results, and limitations of the study.

3.1 Research approach

This study was qualitative in nature. Qualitative methodology refers to research that produces participants' own written or spoken words pertaining to their experiences or perceptions (Brynard & Hanekom, 2006). The main reason for conducting a qualitative study is to explore the phenomena. This means that not much has been written about the topic on population being studied. I, therefore, sought information from participants and built a picture based on participants' ideas.

3.2 Research design

Babbie and Mouton (2005) defines research design as a plan or blueprint of how one intends to conduct the research. It focuses on the end-product, formulates a research problem as a point of departure and focuses on the logic of research.

This study is explorative and descriptive in nature. The explorative design allows an in-depth study of the phenomena and helps to determine priorities for future research (Babbie & Mouton, 1998). Descriptive design helps the researcher to develop ideas on the phenomena without making any attempt to determine what causes it

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(Wysocki, 2008). The other reason is to find in-depth information about the topic being studied (Creswell, 1994). This design also gives the researcher an opportunity to conduct in-depth interviews with the participants.

3.3 Location of the study

Hawkins (1998) describes a location as a place where something is situated. This study was conducted at the following three villages: Tshisaulu village, Ngovhela village, and Sokotenda village. These three villages are situated within the Thulamela Municipality which is under the Vhembe District of Limpopo Province. Thulamela Municipality is a municipality which consists of both rural and urban communities, and a population estimated of 602 819. The total number of household is approximately 125 900, with a total number of 81 927 employed people and 62 813 unemployed people (Thulamela Municipality IDP review, 2012/2013).

3.4 Population of the study

Population is consists of individuals, groups, organisations, human products and events or the conditions to which they are exposed (Welman, Kruger & Mitchell, 2005). The population in this research was made up of traditional healers who reside and practice in the Thulamela Municipality.

3.5 Sampling

According to Bailey (1978), sampling is the process of selecting things or objects when it is difficult or impossible to have knowledge of a larger collection of those objects. There are two major types of sampling,

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namely probability and non-probability sampling. I used the non-probability sampling procedure. This is a sampling strategy in which there is a way of specifying the probability of each unit's inclusion in the sample, and there is no assurance that every unit has the same chance of being included in the study (Nachmias & Nachmias, 1992).

Non-probability sampling has different sub-sampling types. I used snowball sampling and purposive sampling. Snowball sampling is a non-probability sampling technique where existing study participants recruit future participants from among their acquaintances. Thus, the sample group appears to grow like a rolling snowball. I identify one or two participants and those participants will refer him/her to other people who are of interest to the study (Robson, 2011).

I handpicked the potential individuals to be included in the sample on the basis of my judgment. The selected individuals were judged to have certain special characteristics or those who provide the most useful information for the purpose for which the study is being done. In this study the major characteristic I was looking for was that of being a traditional healer (Shaughnessy & Zechmeister, 1994).

The sample comprised of six participants, made up of three males and three females. At first I went to Tshisaulu village and asked people for a known traditional healer who treats mental illness. After interviewing him, I asked him to give me names of other traditional healer who treat mental illness in Tshisaulu village. The second traditional healers gave me two names of traditional healers who treat mental illness at Ngovhela, and those from Ngovhela gave me the names of traditional healers who treat mental illnesses at Sokotenda village. The traditional healers who were identified helped me to identify other traditional healers who participated in the study.

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3.6 Participants

Six participants from the Thulamela Municipality were selected to participate in the study. Three males and three females were selected for the study. Their ages ranged from 30 and to 70 years. Three were illiterate, one had primary school education, and two had secondary school education. The participants of this study were Tshivenda speakers only.

3.7 Research Instrument

The interview guide that was used consisted of two sections. The first section included participants' demographic information, such as gender, age, educational level and number of years in practice. The second section contained questions that sought traditional healers' view of mental illness, the causes of mental illness, diagnosis of mental illness, treatment and prevention of mental illness, (see appendix 3). All questions in the section were open-ended. The instrument comprised of nine questions which were as follows:

- In your view, what is mental illness?
- Do you treat patients with mental illness?
- Can you explain the symptoms of mental illness?
- How do you know (diagnose) if a patient is mentally ill?
- How long does it take you to diagnose an illness?
- What do you think are the causes of mental illness?
- How do you treat mental illness?
- What medication do you give to your patients?
- How do you prevent mental illness in your patients?

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3.8 Pre-testing

Babbie (1990) defines a pre-test as a miniaturised run-through of a study for the purpose of testing all aspects of the study design. It is a scale rehearsal of the actual study to test procedures and practice interaction with the subjects (Vandam & Rankins, 1998). I conducted pre-testing with two traditional healers. These two traditional healers were selected from Tshivhulani village. The pre-test was conducted at the traditional healers' houses.

Before the pre-test interview I made appointments with traditional healers to carry out the pre-test interview. The reason for doing a pre-test was to determine whether the instrument was adequate and appropriate. The out come of the pre-testing helped me to change the interview guide. The question on the types of mental illness was removed since it was found that there are no types of mental illness in Tshivenda traditional healing (Welman *et al.,* 2005; Pelham & Blanton, 2007). The two traditional healers who were used in pre-testing were not part of the final study.

3.9 Entry negotiation

Before the interviews, I went to the villages selected for the study and asked for permission from traditional healers to conduct my research. After that, I went to traditional healers to request for their permission. After they had agreed to participate in the study, I made arrangements regarding the schedule and venue for interviews. I requested them to give me their contact numbers, in order to remind them of the interview dates.

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3.10 Data collection

Neuman (1995) defines data collection as a procedure specifying techniques to be used to collect information from the participants. Face to face interviews were used to collect data which was used in this study. Kvale in Greeff (2005) defined an interview as an attempt to understand the world from the participant's point of view, to unfold the meaning of people's experiences, and to uncover their lived world prior to scientific explanation.

The interview allowed me to explain my questions to the participants. It also helped me to probe deeper (De Wet, Monteith, Venter & Steyn) as cited in Brynard & Hanekom (2006). According to Edwards and Louw in Mashamba (2009) an in-depth interview allows me to gain insight into people's experience and also allows respondents to speak freely. The interviews were done face-to-face. I used face-to-face interviews for the following reasons as outlined by Grinnel (1993):

- In-depth information can be found through probing;
- Participants are allowed to ask for clarification if there is something that they don't understand;
- Face-to-face interviews usually have high respondent rates;
- Interviewers are in complete control of the interview situation;
- Participants tend to provide more thoughtful answers;
- It allows for longer, more open-ended responses;
- It allows recording of non-verbal information; and
- It can reach disabled or illiterate participants.

I used an interview guide, which indicated the kinds of questions to be covered in the interview (Breakwell, Hammond, Fife-Schaw & Smith, 2006). Although I used an interview guide, additional questions were

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used to explore the research questions and objectives. Research questions were asked in Tshivenda. A tape recorder was used during data collection. After data collection, the information gathered was transcribed and translated into English.

3.11 Data analysis

Monnette, Sullivan and De Jong (1990) define data analysis as that which unlocks the information hidden in raw data and transforms it into something useful and meaningful. Rubin and Babbie (1993) define data analysis as a process of manipulating the processed data for the purpose of answering the research questions. According to Kerlinger in Reid and Smith (1981), data analysis is the categorising, ordering, manipulating and summarising of data to obtain answers to research questions.

To analyse data, I used thematic content analysis. Thematic content analysis is defined by Hoisti in Shaughessy and Zechmeister (1994) as a technique for making inference by objectivity, identifying specific characteristics of messages. It may be used with any form of message, including speeches and interviews. The method is used to categorise a wide range of open-ended responses (Mitchel & Jolley, 1992). One of the advantages of content analysis is that it allows the researcher to redo a part of the research if there has been a mistake, rather than other analyses that require the researcher to redo the entire research (Babbie & Mouton, 1998).

I analysed data following Van Mannen's stages of thematic content analysis (Kruger, 1998). The stages are as follows:

Step one involves reading the text several times to acquire the overall understanding of it;

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Step two involves one going through the text again, underlying or highlighting words, phrases or sentences which are relevant to the research question;

Step three involves the researcher grouping different units of the same meaning into themes of meaning;

Step four involves giving appropriate titles to the themes according to the contents of each theme; and

Step five involves the researcher discussing the relationship of themes, thereby presenting what the whole text portrays.

The recorded data were classified into units that had the same meaning, in order to formulate themes (Bailey, 1978). The aim was to be able to find quotations to illustrate particular themes or strands of meaning within the transcript (Breakwell, Hammond, Fife-Schaw & Smith, 2006).

3.12 Ethical considerations

Goodwin (2005: 522) defines "*ethics as a set of principles prescribing behaviour that is morally correct*". The permission to conduct research was obtained from the University of Venda. Firstly the proposal was presented before the Department of Psychology, then to the School of Health Sciences Higher Degrees Committee. Thirdly, it was submitted to Senex for approval and finally, to the University of Venda's Ethics Committee for ethical clearance. The request was also made with traditional leaders and potential participants to participate in the study. The following ethical issues were taken into consideration when conducting this study:

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3.12.1 Informed consent

The participants were informed about the reason and purpose of the research, what was involved in the research, and what would happen to the data they had generated (Dyer, 1995). The participants were informed of all the features of the research, their rights, and what the research was about. They were also informed about the aim and objectives of the research. Participants were told of their right to withdraw from the research at any time, taking with them any information that they have contributed to the investigation up to that point without giving a reason, (Dyer, 1995). Participants were told about this right before the research started and reminded of it. If during the research session the researcher believed that he/she was experiencing any physical or psychological stress, he/she was allowed to withdraw from the study. However, in this study, all participants were free to participate.

Participants were informed that they could choose not to participate in the study as a whole or to omit certain questions. Informed consent letter were translated in to Tshivenda (see appendix 1). Before gathering the data, participants were given a consent form to sign as proof of their approval to participate in the study. In the case of those who were able to read the consent form was given to them to read. Those who could not read had it read to them by the researcher (see appendix 2). Consent forms were translated into Tshivenda.

3.12.2 Privacy of individual/ Anonymity

For purpose of anonymity, I did not use participants' real names. Participants' real names were only known by the researcher. I locked the real names of the participants in a safe place, and not in the same place with the data. Therefore, no one could link the participants' names with

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the data. Participants were also told their real names would not be used. This ensured the anonymity of information (Shaughnessy & Zechmeister, 1994).

3.12.3 Confidentiality

I kept the information confidentially and did not share the information generated by the participants with anyone else without the consent of the participants. Data collected was only used for research purposes only. In this way, the information was kept confidentially (Shaughnessy & Zechmeister, 1994).

3.12.4 Voluntary participation

Participants have the right of voluntary participation. I informed the participants about this right. The participants were not forced to participate or to give information (Babbie, 1998). I accepted and respected the participants' decisions. The participants were told that their participation should be voluntary.

3.12.5 No harm to the participants

I guarded participants against danger. Questions that could affect participants psychologically or emotionally were not included in the interview (Babbie, 1998).

3.13 Dissemination of results

The copy of this study will be submitted to the University of Venda Library Special Collections. Students, lecturers and the general community will have access to the results of this research study. At the

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end of the study, I will give feedback to the research participants. I will also present the findings in conferences, and also publish articles.

3.14 Limitation of the study

Since the participants of this study are traditional healers, it was not that easy to get all the information, because traditional healers do not want to divulge some information as one of their principles.

3.15 Conclusion

The study was a qualitative design and was conducted at Tshisaulu village, Ngovhela village and Sokotenda village. Purposive and snowball sampling were used to sample six participants, three males and three females, aged between 30 and 70 years. The interview guide was used during interviews and was done at participants' house. Research questions were asked in Tshivenda. After data collection, the information gathered was transcribed and translated into English. To analyse data, I used thematic content analysis. The following ethical issues were taken into consideration: informed consent, confidentiality, privacy of individual/ anonymity, voluntary participation and no harm to the participants.

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The findings of the study are divided into six different themes: the traditional healers' definition of mental illness; the symptoms of mental illness; traditional African perspective on the causes of mental illness; diagnostic methods for mental illness; treatment of mental illness, and prevention of mental illness.

4.1 Demographic information

Table 4.1 Demographic information

	Age	Gender	Level of education	No. of years in practice
Participant 1	70	Female	Illiterate	50 years
Participant 2	48	Female	Primary	20 years
Participant 3	34	Male	Secondary	8 years
Participant 4	68	Female	Illiterate	35 years
Participant 5	69	Male	Illiterate	32 years
Participant 6	65	Male	Secondary	31 years

Six traditional healers were sampled to participate in the study. These comprised three males and three females, whose age group is, between 30 and 70. Their education levels ranged from illiteracy, primary and secondary education. Only Tshivenda-speaking traditional healers were interviewed in the study. All traditional healers who were interviewed for the study were able to treat mental illness. Their years of practice ranged from 8 to 50 years.

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4.2 Definition of mental illness

Traditional healers defined mental illness as madness and disturbance in the person's brain, memory and personality. This includes people who see things that other people do not see. Traditional healers stated that mental illness is an illness that affects the persons mind and its functioning. Mental illness results in behaviors which are culturally not accepted.

"When a person is mentally ill in Tshivenda we call it madness (u penga), this is when a person has mind problems, and his / her mental is not well or complete like other people. People who are mentally ill talk and do things that normal people do not do. Mental illness is a result of abnormal body cells, especially cells which are found in the brain. So it means that people who are mentally ill have abnormal brain cells (Participant 2).

"In our tradition mental illness is madness (u penga).This person's mind is disorganised and not functioning properly like of that of people who are not mentally ill. They do things that normal people do not do. Their reasoning is disturbed. This may be caused by different things such as brain damage resulting from accidents, witchcraft and evil spirits, and also as punishment from the ancestors" (Participant 6).

"Mental illness is an illness that affects the person's mind. This is when the mind of a person is not functioning properly. This malfunctioning of the mind makes a person see and do the things that other normal people do not do" (Participant 4).

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4.3 Symptoms of mental illness

Symptoms are signs of the existence of an illness, especially a perceptible change from what is normal in the person's functioning. There are several symptoms of mental illness in African traditional healing. People may show either one or a combination of different symptoms. The study was able to come up with the following themes:

Seeing things that others are not seeing

The findings of the study show that people who are suffering from mental illness see things that other people cannot see. Usually, they see threatening things like being chased by people who are known by the community to be dead. They can even see things such as snakes chasing them.

"People who suffer from mental illness see things that other people do not see and they hear voices that others do not hear" (Participant 3).

"This malfunctioning of the mind makes a person to see and do things that other normal people do not do" (Participant 4).

"In this type of mental illness,the person suffering from mental illness will be seeing things that other people are not seeing. The mentally ill person can report that there are people who are chasing him/her whereas other normal people are not seeing those people. The person can even report seeing snakes which want to bite them" (Participant 4).

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Traditional healers indicated that people who suffer from mental illness hear voices that other people do not hear. As a result, they end up responding to those voices. Thus, appear as if they are talking to themselves because people do not see and hear people that he/she is communicating with. There are times when they see people who are known to be dead, and there are times when they talk using different languages.

"Mental illness of talking alone is seen when people spend most of their time alone, but they will be talking with someone whom other people cannot see or hear. Only the person who is mentally ill will be able to see or communicate with that person. Mentally ill people even see people who are known to be dead. There are times when they use the languages of other people" (Participant 6).

"Mental illness of talking alone is when a person talks alone as if there is someone who is talking to her or him. But other people will not see the other person. Only the person suffering from the illness will see the person he is talking to" (Participant 4).

"There are times when mentally ill people talk using other languages which they have never heard before. Sometimes they mix different languages, depending on the language which is used by the person they are talking to, who can only be seen by them" (Participant 1).

Calling names of dead people

Findings of this study indicate that people who suffer from mental illness call names of people who are known by the community to be dead. Since

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they see dead people, they end up calling them by their names. They even report that they do communicate with dead people.

"They even call people's names, mostly, those who are dead claiming that they can see those people, whom other people cannot see. They even go to the extent of crying out saying that there are people who want to kill them" (Participant 3).

"A person who is mad will be able to see that person or communicate with that person. They even see people who are known to be dead" (Participant 6).

Running away from home

People who suffer from mental illness sometimes run away from home, and they usually run to the bushes. As indicated above, that they see dead people and hear people calling them and sometimes they see people chasing them or they see things that are scary and they end up running away from those thing. There are times when they run away and fail to find their way back home.

"There is mental illness of running away from home, where a person just runs; his/her madness makes him/her to run away from home. The mentally ill do not even know why they are running or where they are going. Some just take off their clothe and run naked" (Participant 6).

"This is when a person just runs away from home. Mostly they run from home to the bush. Some of them even forget their way back home, but that does not happen to all mentally ill people, some are able to trace their way back home. Some of them run naked, whereas some run with their clothes on (Participant 1).

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"This is when a person who is mentally ill just runs away from home without knowing where he/she is going. Some run away and never come back, some run away for a couple of days and some only run away for a few hours. For those who run away and never come back the reason could be that they have forgotten their way back home, or they saw something at home that they no longer want to see. Mostly, the things that they say they have seen are things that other people cannot see them" (Participant 2).

Taking off clothes in public

Traditional healers indicated that people who suffer from mental illness some times take off their clothes as if they do not want to wear anything or as if the clothes are heavy on them.

"These people don't want to wear clothes; they take off their clothes for no reason as if the clothes are heavy on them" (Participant 4).

"Some of them run away naked, while some run with their clothes on. (Participant 1).

Chasing and beating up people

People suffering from mental illness can be dangerous to other people. Traditional healers indicated that people who suffer from mental illness can chase and beat up people. There are times when they might just chase a person and laugh at that person without beating him/her.

"Some chase people and when they catch them they can either beat, bite or smile at them. They might even just laugh at the people they are chasing" (Participant 4).

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"They usually beat people" (Participant 3)

"Sometimes they don't just run away from home to the bush, but they even chase people. They may beat or just touch them when they reach them" (Participant 1).

"People suffering from mental illness chase people and even beat them" (Participant 6).

Complete non-communication

Sometimes, people who suffer from mental illness do not communicate with people. They do not respond to other people. They may just look at the person who is talking to them to show that they are listening, but will not respond. They usually sit alone and may stand in one position or repeat non-purposeful actions for a long period of time.

"People who suffer from this mental illness are able to communicate but they might feel that they don't want to talk to anyone. Their mental illness stops them from communicating with people. Even if you talk to them, they will not answer you. Some will look at you, but not respond, whereas others will not even look at you" (Participant 2).

"They usually stay alone and they might sit or stand in one position, without moving or talking to any one for a long period of time" (Participant 1).

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Ancestors play an important role in traditional healing. Traditional healers stated that ancestors are the ones who help them when they are diagnosing mental illness. They further stated that ancestors might tell them the problem of the patient through the divination bones. Diagnosis is done in the following ways:

Bone throwing

In African healing, bone throwing is an important part of diagnosis. Traditional healers state that they use bone throwing, in order to tell what the person is suffering from.

"I use traditional healer's bones (thangu) to diagnose the problem/illness. The patient must blow his/her air inside a small bag with the bones. From there, I tthrow them down, and after throwing them I explain their meaning to the patient. The traditional healer's bones are the ones that tell me what the patient is suffering from and the treatment required for the problem" (Participant 1).

"In Tshivenda traditional healing we use different methods. Ancestors are the ones who tell us everything that we need to know as traditional healers. They communicate to us in different ways. They can communicate with me through traditional bones. When I will throw the bones ancestors help me to read the explanation of the bones, and the bones will tell me the problem, the cause and the treatment of the illness" (Participant 6).

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Participants mentioned that dreams in traditional healing are also important because ancestors communicate with traditional healers through them.

"There are times when I don't use bones, but ancestors will tell me in my dreams, that tomorrow or day after I will see a person who is mentally ill and that these are the traditional herbs that you should give him/her. Ancestors even tell traditional healers the problems of the patient and the treatment to give that patient. Dreams are very important in traditional healing because ancestors sometimes communicate with the traditional healers through dreams" (Participant 1).

"Ancestors sometimes use dreams to communicate with me. They tell me the herbs for different illnesses. In this situation, they show me the patient, his/her illness, its cause and its treatment a day or a week before the patient comes" (Participant 6).

This study showed that the diagnosis of mental illness in Tshivenda does not take time.

"It does not take time at all; I tell my patients the explanation of the bones just after throwing the bones. But if I had already been told by my ancestors, it won't even take a minute because I already know what the person is suffering from" (Participant 1).

"It does not take time at all just after throwing my bones I am able to see everything that the ancestors want me to know about the patient and his/her illness. But If I were shown the problem via dreams, when the

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patient comes I will just explain the problem to him according to what I saw in my dreams" (Participant 6).

4.5 The causes of mental illness

In African healing, mental illness can be caused by different things. The causes of mental illness can be the ancestors, witchcraft, and disturbances in social relationships. The findings of this study identified the following causes of mental illness:

The disturbance in the person's blood flow and blockage of oxygen

Traditional healers reported that the disturbance in the person's blood flow and oxygen blockage can result in insufficient oxygen in the brain. It can also result in malfunctioning of the mind, which, in turn can result into mental illness.

"Mental illness is caused by disturbances in the person's blood flow. When blood is not moving the way is it expected to move, it means the blood is failing to move to all parts of the body. Sometimes it is a result of the shifting of the worms inside the person's head. This is when the worm moves away from its position. Sometimes accidents can disturb a person's brain and force this worm to move from its position" (Participant 1).

Conflict and disturbed social relationship

Social relationships are important among Africans. Any disturbance or conflicts in social relationships can lead to the development of mental illness. In Africa a person, his family, relatives and the community at large are very important in the well-being of people and their health.

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Good relationships among people and their community reduce the chances of mental illness developing.

"The other thing which is of importance in our tradition is that you cannot separate a person and his family and community at large so the relationship that people have with their families and the community are also very important. People must have good relationships with their community because bad relationships lead to mental illness"(Participant 6).

Witches and sorcerers

Traditional healers indicated that witchcraft causes mental illness. Witches have the power to send bad things, which include mental illness, to other people.

"Witches use bad spirits to send bad things including illness, to people because of jealousy. Witches have the power to manipulate bad sprits and use them to do bad things to other people (Participant 4).

"Mental illness caused by witchcraft is when a person has been witched. Witches have the power to manipulate evil spirits to cause bad things to happen to other people" (Participant 3).

Traditional healers indicated that witches send mental illness to people because of jealousy.

"Mental illness is a type of illness which people get from witchcraft. Witches are able to use their powers to possess other people with different illnesses including mental illness. More especially, if you are progressing well in life or prospering, witches might use mental illness as a way of

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stopping you. Every time when people are mentally ill, there is always witchcraft behind" (Participant 2).

Ancestors

Ancestors are also seen as the cause of mental illness. Ancestors are very important in Africa. They are the ones who protect their people from witchcraft and bad things. But they must be obeyed and respected by their people. Ancestors communicate with people in different ways. Traditional healers reported that sometimes ancestors communicate through mental illness. People are called to be traditional healers by their ancestors through illness.

"They send illness to their people as a way of communicating with them. When people suffering from this type of mental illness consult traditional healers, the traditional healer will tell patients what the ancestors want to communicate with them. They usually send illness when they want to a person to be a traditional healer. This is called a calling from the ancestors" (Participant 3).

"Ancestors use different illnesses to call people they want. They can even use mental illness, and, sometimes, ancestors use illness to communicate with the people they want" (Participant 5).

There are times when ancestors use illness as a punishment to their people. Traditional healers indicated that when people are not obeying their ancestors, the ancestors use illness as punishment.

"Ancestors sometimes punish their people by sending illness to them, but sometimeS they also use illness, in order to call the people they want to use (Participant 4).

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"Mental illness can also be caused by the ancestors either as a form of punishment or a way of calling the patient to be a traditional healer" (Participant 6).

Pollution

Pollution refers to bad acts that people do. For example, a person needs to be purified if he/she kills a person. Purification includes things like rituals that need to be done at different stages of life such as at birth and after the death of a spouse. Traditional healers indicated that if people are not purified, this may cause mental illness.

Pollution is also a cause of mental illness. This is when a person is not cleansed after the death of a spouse or his/ her child, or after committing a bad thing such as killing a person. If the spouse is dead, the remaining spouse must go to a traditional healer for cleansing rituals (Participant 4).

Auto- mobile accidents

The brain is the most important part of a human being. Any disturbance to it may result in changes in personality, and may cause mental illness. The findings of the study indicated that car accidents which may damage the person's brain may result in mental illness.

Mental illness can be caused by accidents. This is when you are involved in a car accident which might result in the brain damage (Participant 5).

"When a person is mentally ill, the worm inside his/her head has moved from the right position. This worm is found inside the head of a person. It regulates the person's behaviour. If it happens that this worm moves from its normal position, it results in mental illness. This worm can be moved

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from its position by things like accidents, witchcraft and the gods. Sometimes, accidents can disturb a person's brain and force this worm to move from its position" (Participant 1).

4.6 Treatment of mental illness

In African healing, the cause of illness is important for treatment. There are different types of treatment which are used to treat mental illness. The chance of treatment depends on the cause of that mental illness. Traditional healers reported that when they prescribe treatment, it is determined by the cause of that mental illness.

When giving treatment, the traditional healer must first find the cause of the illness and the type of mental illness because different types of mental illness are treated differently" (Participant 1).

There are different treatments that are used depending on the cause of that mental illness. Traditional healers know different types of treatment for mental illness. They know which treatment to use depending on the cause of that mental illness (Participant 2).

"I use different medicine, traditional herbs which are a mixture of different leaves and animals depending on the cause of the illness. Sometime, the person can be given traditional herbs that will make him/her to vomit, or the herbal are given for washing the body, or for steaming. Sometimes you can be given herbs which you just drinking" (Participant 4).

"I sometimes give my patients traditional herbs that they should boil and drink. Sometimes, I give them herbs for steaming. They might use one or all of them at the same time, depending on the cause of the illness" (Participant 1).

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Traditional healers are important in African healing. They are the ones who know how to treat mental illness, and they have the power to communicate with the ancestors. This study revealed that traditional healers are the ones who know how to treat mental illness.

Mental illness is treated in different ways. If it is caused by the shifting of the worm from its position, it is only traditional healers who know how to put it back to its normal position by using different traditional herbs (Participant 1).

Mental illness is treated, but it depends on its cause. If a person who is suffering from mental illness went to a traditional healer, the traditional healer will give him medication that will treat mental illness completely" (Participant 3).

The findings of the study show that when a person is suffering from mental illness as a result of a call from the ancestors, the person must go through training to be a traditional healer (u twasa); that is the only treatment.

"*If the causes are ancestors you just do what they want. They will tell you through traditional healers what they want and if the cause is a call from the ancestors, the traditional healer will help you with the training to become a traditional healer*" (Participant 5).

"*If ancestors want you to be a traditional healer, you just do the traditional dances and training to be a traditional healer, and the experienced traditional healer will help you throughout the training*" (Participant 6).

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Traditional healers indicated that they use traditional bones to prescribe treatment for mental illness.

Traditional healers' bones are also the ones that are used to prescribe the treatment. Traditional healers' bones are able to tell the type of treatment that must be used" (Participant 1).

"I prepare a remedy for each and every person that I treat depending on their problem and their cause or depending on what my ancestors told me to do through my dreams or bones" (Participant 6).

Traditional dances are used to enhance communication with the ancestors. They are also used to release the body and they are part of healing. Traditional healers indicated that traditional dances are also important in the treatment of mental illness.

"Sometimes the patient must first do the traditional dances, praise his/her ancestors and also ask the ancestors to accept or give him/her their own treatment. You may find that the patient's ancestors were traditional healers, so by dancing traditional dances, the patient might be able to talk to his/her ancestors. During the dance ancestors can tell the patient the kind of treatment that he/she should use for his/her illness" (Participant 1).

"If ancestors want you to be a traditional healer, you just do the traditional dances and training to be a traditional healer. Experienced traditional healers will help you throughout the training. If the person is ill because the ancestors are angry, the traditional healer must try to reconnect the patient's spirit with his or her ancestors. This can be done through malombo (dancing and praying to the ancestors" (Participant 6).

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Traditional healers mentioned that when people are suffering from mental illness, they should consult traditional healers as soon as possible because if they do not consult on time, the illness can become incurable.

"But for it to be treated easily the person who is suffering from mental illness must be taken to the traditional healer as soon as possible. If mental illness is not treated early, it might not be treated at all. So the patient must be taken to the traditional healer as soon as possible before it is too late for the treatment (Participant 1).

"But mental illness is only treated if the person who is affected goes to a traditional healer on time. If not treated in time it might not be cured at all" (Participant 5).

4.7 Prevention of mental illness

When a child is born, there are certain rituals that need to be performed. These include rituals to introduce the child to the ancestors and some to ask for protection of the child from the ancestors. The rituals are also used as a way of preventing different illnesses for the child. The study showed that the prevention of mental illness is done after the birth of a child.

"Mental illness can be treated while the person is still young. There are traditional herbs that are given to newborns to prevent different types of illnesses. These herbal medicines (pila) can be used to prevent mental illness" (Participant 1).

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Traditional healers indicated that after treating a person's mental illness, they also give the patient medicine to prevent the illness from re-occurring

After treatment, the person will be given some medicine to prevent the illness from recurring (Participant 4).

"But it can also be done after treating mental illness. The patient is given medicine that will prevent the illness from coming back" (Participant 5).

Traditional healers indicated that the person's positive relationships with other people in the community are also important in preventing mental illness.

"I don't prevent it. The person him/herself must look after him/herself. People should always maintain good relationships with their family, community and ancestors" (Participant 2).

4.8 Conclusion

Mental illness is seen as an illness caused by disturbances in the person's brain, memory and personality. The symptoms of mental illness include calling the names of dead people, seeing things that others are not seeing, talking alone and hearing voices, running away from home, taking off clothes, and chasing and beating up people. The diagnosis of mental illness is done through the divination bones and through dreams analysis. The causes of mental illness include the disturbance in the person's blood flow and blockage of oxygen, conflict and disturbed social relationships, witchcraft and ancestors. The treatment is determined by the cause of that mental illness, and prevention of mental illness can be done after birth or after the treatment of mental illness.

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This chapter discusses the findings of the study. The findings include the following subtopics: demographic information, the traditional healers' definition of mental illness. The traditional African perspective on the causes of mental illness, diagnostic methods for mental illness, treatment of mental illness, and the prevention of mental illness.

5.1 Demographic information

Six traditional healers were sampled to participate in the study, that is three males and three females, whose age group is, from the age of 30 to 70. Their education levels ranged from illiterate, to primary and secondary education. Their years of practice ranged from 8 to 50 years. It is worth nothing that although all participants have no formal schooling, they all have more than seven years experience as traditional healers.

5.2 Definition of mental illness

The findings of this study showed that mental illnesses are behaviours that are unusual in a given society. Traditional healers indicated that the view of mental illness in Tshivenda is different from the Western view. In Tshivenda, mental illness is referred to as madness or the disturbance of the person's brain, memory and personality. In western culture, mental illness is viewed as behaviours or thoughts that are unusual in a given society and these behaviours are maladaptive (Baron, 1995).

Mental illness refers to a change in a person's psychology or behavioural pattern from a normal pattern to an abnormal one. Mental illness results in behaviours which are culturally not acceptable. It affects the person's mind and its functioning. Organic mental illnesses are those mental illnesses caused by biological factors such as psychotic symptoms,

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memory or personality disturbance as well as those caused by diseases like syphilis (Edwards & Louw, 1997). People suffering from these disorders develop false beliefs (delusions) and perceptions (hallucinations - false sensations, like seeing, hearing or smelling something that is not there) (Barlow & Durand, 2009).

Traditional healers showed that people, who are mentally ill, usually suffer for the rest of their lives. These statements were also supported by Pastorino and Doyle-Portillo (2006), who agued that most people who are mentally-ill suffer throughout their adult lives, losing opportunities for careers and relationships. Most of them do not work or go to school; their illness prevents them from living a normal life.

5.3 Symptoms of mental illness

In African healing, there are different symptoms of mental illness. The following are symptoms of mental illnesses:

Seeing things which other people do not see

There are people who see things that other people do not see. They even hear things that other people do not hear. According to Louw & Edwards (1997); Barlow & Durand (2009) the major symptoms of mental disorders are delusions and hallucinations. People suffering from these disorders develop delusions and hallucinations. These people report that they are talking to someone else, but the people that they are talking to are not seen by other people. Barlow and Durand (2009) argue that people suffering from schizophrenia disorders develop false beliefs (delusions) and perceptions (hallucinations - false sensations, like seeing, hearing or smelling something that is not there). Louw and Edwards (1997) concur that people who suffer from this disorder hear voices coming from their

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stomachs, and those voices speak a language which is different from that of the affected person.

Talking to oneself

People suffering from mental illnesses such as talking alone, use different languages to communicate during their hallucinations. Louw and Edwards (1997) state that people suffering from amafufunyana hear voices coming from their stomachs and those voices speak a language which is different from that of the affected person. They sometimes fall down and speak with the voice of a person who is believed to bewitching the patient. Amafufunyana may affect a group of people at the same time.

There are times when people suffering from this mental illness where they talk alone become dangerous to themselves and other people in the community. When they are talking to this other person (the one whom they alone can see, they might want to beat this person, and if you are close to them, they might beat you or beat the tree which is closer to them, thinking that they are beating the imaginary person. This observation was made by Louw and Edwards (1997) who agued that People suffering from Amok disorder become quiet and depressed for a while and then from there, they will take a dangerous weapon such as a gun or axe and run into a public place and kill people. Sorsdahl, et al.,(2010) indicated that people with mental illnesses are very violent and they always beat other people for no reason.

Sorsdahl, et al., (2010), concurred with this observation which is in line with what one of the their participant reported,

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"There was a lady who wanted to go gallivanting because she was hearing people calling her. She said their names and told us what they were telling her to do. She was very violent and tried to fight with people all the time"

The symptom of seeing things which other people do not see is related to a subtype of schizophrenia called paranoid schizophrenia in which a person shows symptoms such as delusion and hallucination. This person hears a strange, threatening and commanding voice. This voice usually increases the risk of violence and suicide in these people (Burke, 2012).

Running away from home

Usually people suffering from mental illness run way from home. They might run to the bushes or to public places. Some mentally ill people run away and come back home, whereas others do not come back home. They might run because they are afraid of the things that they are seeing or hearing which other people do not see or hear. People suffering from this type of mental illness run away from their homes and, mostly, run to the bushes. These people usually report that there are people chasing them from home that is why they run away. They might say that they see something dangerous at home which they no longer want to see. People who suffer from mental disorder hear voices coming from their stomachs. The voices usually threaten the patient and promise to kill him/her. Louw and Edwards (1997) mentioned that these patients may go into a state of extreme agitation and run about destroying property.

The above symptom is related to the western disorder called dissociative fugue, in which a person suffering from it wanders away from home, work or the usual environment for days. During this time, the person will have complete amnesia of who they are and, their past experience. They

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might not know that they are missing. This fugue is usually short-lived; it last for hours or a few days (Burke, 2012).

Undressing in public

People suffering from mental illness sometimes undress in public. They may walk naked or prefer to stay naked. Nanayakkara (2011) also outlines the following symptoms of psychosis: shouting, and laughing inappropriately, and taking off their clothes in public. People may behave in that way because they are angry or frightened, or, perhaps, because they are responding to voices they can hear.

Complete non-communication

Sometimes people who suffer from mental illness do not talk. Although they are able to speak they do not talk or respond to other people. If someone is talking to them, they can just look at the person to show that they are listening to them, but they will not respond to that person. These people usually isolate themselves from other people such as friends and family. They spend most of their time alone, and they may stand in one position for a long time.

Non communication is related to catatonic schizophrenia. People suffering from catatonic schizophrenia have psychomotor disturbances. The disturbance can lead to complete immobility. The patient may show involuntary movements, stupor and posturing (Burke, 2012).

5.4 The diagnosis of mental illness

During diagnosis, traditional healers are also able to see the cause of the illness. This statement is in line to Swarts' (1998) observation that the

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major emphasis about the diagnosis of illness is placed on the determining the cause of that illness. Diagnosis in African healing is better understood as related to the causes of illness rather than classification of the symptoms. Traditional diagnosis is a system which seeks to discover the origin of the disease. Diagnosis, in traditional healing is done via bone throwing and dream analysis (Sodi, 2010). Different diagnosis strategies are used, and they include the following: bone throwing, dream analysis and physical examinations.

Bone throwing

Ancestors play an important role in traditional healing. They are the ones who tell the traditional healers during diagnosis, the illness that the patient is suffering from. The ancestors tell the traditional healer the problem of the patient in his/her dreams or through the divination of bones. In Tshivenda, mental illness can be diagnosed through the divination of bones and through dreams. The divination of bones is important in traditional healing, as traditional healers diagnose mental illness through bones. Mufamadi and Sodi (2010) state that traditional healers commonly use the divination of bones, observation and the patient's history when diagnosing mental illness.

The above statement was also supported by A World in Balance (2006) that, the throwing of bones is one of the oldest forms of divination used by traditional healers to communicate with ancestors. Bones give traditional healers direction to the right treatment. The throwing of bones also helps traditional healers to obtain the history of the patient, as well as confirm what the patient has said about his or her problem. Sodi (2009) reported that, apart from South Africa, the divination of bones is used in other parts of Africa.

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In the study of Sodi (2009) his participant, Taile, reported that, *"remember, we always have to establish the extent and nature of the patient's problem through divination of bones. This also applies to the nature of the treatment programme that has to be followed. The divination of bones is my extra eyes. They will indicate many things to me. From the fall of the bones, I can tell everything about the patient"*

Mariana and Hewson (1998) indicated that the throwing of bones helps traditional healers to obtain the history of the patient, as well as confirm what the patient has said about his or her problem. This statement was supported by Mufamadi and Sodi (2010), who said that traditional healers use the divination of bones to diagnose illness. After healer has struck rapport in a calculated and deliberate manner with the client, he will go on to ask questions which are related to the person's functioning. The traditional healer will explore all of these areas carefully and try to make sense of the individual's world and his problems. Throughout this exploration, the client is free to agree or disagree with what the healer says.

A study conducted by Makgopa and Koma (2009) indicated that the bones used for divination are made from the bones of elephants, baboons, kudus, hyenas, tigers, hunting dogs, rams, hoofs of cows, sea shells and skin of tortoises. In the interpretation the bone of an elephant shows intelligence and strength, elephant do not easily forget. The bone of the baboon represents the human being; the hoof of a cow shows wealth; the sea shells represent the importance of water in people's lives; the skin of a tortoise symbolises the longevity of a human being, the bone of kudu is used to diagnose the safety of the trip; the bone of ram is used to help identify important people within the community for example, chiefs; and lastly the bone of a carnivorous animal such as a lion, hyena, or a snake represent danger (Makgopa and Koma, 2009).

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Dream analysis

This study revealed that dreams in traditional healing are also important. Ancestors communicate with traditional healers through dreams. It was indicated that dreams also play an important role in the diagnostic process of mental illness. Traditional healers are shown the treatment of illnesses by their ancestors through dreams. These findings are also suppored by Sandlana and Mtetwa (2008); Mariana and Hewson (1998); Peltzer (1993), who argue that traditional healers also use their dreams, through which the ancestors give them diagnostic insights. Sometimes, the ancestors will show the healer, through dreams, the problems of the patient before the patient arrives for consultation.

Taile, in the study conducted by Sodi (2009), states that: *"My ancestors guide and indicate to me the kind of patient who will be coming to see me. My ancestors will even show me the nature of his problems. When he arrives here I will be ready".*

Participants further mentioned that if traditional healers were told by the ancestors about the patient's illness, through dreams, before the patient arrived for consultation, they would just explain the illness to the patient without throwing the bones; the treatment will be ready waiting for that patient. This statement was also raised by Peltzer (1993) who said that sometimes, ancestors will show the healer, through dreams, the problems of the patient before the patient arrives for consultation. According to Fourie (1992), the traditional healer would then prepare the treatment so that when the patient arrives for consultation, he or she would find the medication ready. In a study conducted by Tloti and Wood (2004), their participant Ma-Ngconde, claimed that she also saw illness through dreams

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"With some people who come to see me, I can see their aliments or problems like I'm watching a film I tell them what I see, and then they fill the details I may have left out"

5.5 The causes of mental illness

Participants have identified different causes of mental illness. According to the participants, mental illness is caused by witchcraft, disobeying the ancestors and the gods, and other things such as accidents that can result in brain damage. This statement was admitted by Asaah, et al., (2003); Lonner & Malpass, (1994) that witchcraft and bad spirits are the commonest causes of mental illness.

Disturbance in the person's blood flow and blockage of oxygen

Participants mentioned that the disturbance in the person's blood flow and blockage of oxygen can result in insufficient oxygen in the brain and that this can cause the malfunctioning of the mind, which in turn can result in mental illness. Researchers indicated that brain cells damage can also result from dead injury and this can decrease or block blood flow to the brain (Barlow and Durand, 2009).

Conflict and disturbed social relationship

Participants said that conflict and disturbed social relationships can also lead to mental illness. In the African view, the individual's relationships with other people in the community are very important. Rather than just having a good relationship with other people, it is also important for a person's health. According to Sandlana and Mtetwa (2008), many traditional cultures believe that when a person has psychological conflicts or bad social relationships with other people. This creates a

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disequilibrium for that person, which later manifests itself in the form of physical or mental illness.

Witchcraft

The study revealed that witchcraft is also a cause of mental illness. Witches possess bad things and cause illness in other people. Witchcraft is the use of magic of power, especially evil ones, to harm or cause misfortunes in others. According to Sorsdahl, et al.,(2010), witches are believed to have certain abilities to mobilise their evil power to harm other people. In Africa, it is believed that people are being killed and that other is ill as a result of occult power. Witches are able, through their evil spirits, to pull out a man human spirit and inject a demonic spirit in to a person's body. In this way they are also able to inject illness in people including mental illness. This statement was supported by Fourie (1992) who said that witches or sorcerers are often blamed for illnesses and misfortunes in traditional societies. Witchcraft has an influence upon people's lives.

Lonner and Malpass (1994); Parle (2003); and Van Dyk (2005) also maintained that witchcraft is believed to be a causal agent in mental illness. Usually witches send bad things or mental illness because of jealousy. Witches are usually controlled by envy, malice or jealous rather than the need to gain materials (Manala, 2004).

In a study conducted by Sorsdahl, et al., (2010), they found that:

"Mental illness has many causes of which witchcraft and possession by evils spirits were the most frequent (56%). Witches were believed to have the ability to mobilize their power and forces of nature to harm other people"

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Ancestors

Participants indicated that ancestors are also the cause of mental illness. Ancestors are believed to be the grandparents and other relatives of the family who have died. They believed to communicate from time to time with their people, and they also protect them. A person can suffer from mental illness as punishment from the ancestors. This happens when the person is disobeying the ancestors or not following their orders and norms. This could be as a call from the ancestors, indicating that they want to use that person as a traditional healer. Sometimes, however, the ancestors can just remove their protection from the person, thus, exposing the person will be exposed to witches. In this case, it will not be the ancestors that send illness, but the witches.

Mufamadi and Sodi (2010) indicated that mental illness can also be caused by ancestors. Ancestors sometimes communicate with their people in different way. They sometimes use illness including mental illness as a way of communicating with their descendants. Fourie, (1992) indicated that other than just punishing their people, ancestors also use illnesses to communicate with them. They will send an illness knowing that the patient will consult a traditional healer. Then the traditional healer will tell the patient what the ancestors want from him/her.

Ancestors can use illnesses to call a person to be a traditional healer. When the person consults a traditional healer, he/she will be told that the ancestors want him/her to be a traditional healer. According to Ngubane in Sodi, Mudhovozi, Mashamba, Radzilani-Makatu, Takalani and Mabunda, (2011) a person does not choose to be a traditional healer, but he/she is selected by the ancestors. The call is usually in the form of unusual dreams and waking visions. Those who are selected are given power to divine and diagnose illness (Louw and Edwards, 1997).

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Sorsdahl, et al.,(2010) also support the argument that ancestors use illness to call their people to become traditional healers.

A participant in the study by Sorsdahl, et al., (2010), confirmed that:

"The ancestors are trying to tell the person that they should follow the calling and become a traditional healer. The ancestors can cause a number of problems to a person if they do not listen to the calling, even mental illness. A calling can be viewed as a blessing and a burden"

There are times when ancestor's use illness as a form of punishment for their people, more especially when people are disobeying their rules or laws. When people are disobeying ancestors' rules, ancestors can either punish the people by sending illness or by withdrawing their protection from those people. This, in turn, would expose the people to witches. Fourie (1992) reports that ancestors are seen as spirits who preserve the honour and traditions of a tribe, and they are seen as protectors of their people against evil and destructive forces. He further states that, when ancestors are angry, they can punish their people by sending illness and misfortune to those people who do not listen to their (ancestors) wise counsel.

Pollution

Pollution was also mentioned as a cause of mental illness. After the death of a child or a spouse, people must be cleansed by going through cleansing rituals. If not cleansed bad things and illnesses of dead people will follow them where ever they go. This can result in mental illnesses and other illness. Parle (2003) agrees that traditional healers also believe that people sometimes get sick because they do not purify themselves from pollution. Failing to carry out the age-old prescribed rituals for

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everyday life, or not purifying oneself after doing something bad (for example after killing someone) or funeral (for example after the death of a spouse) can lead to the development of mental illness. Sorsdahl, et al,.(2010) also indicated that failure to do family rituals may cause mental illness.

This argument is confirmed in the study done by Sorsdahl, Flisher, Wilson & Stein (2010), in which one of the participants reported that:

"It is true that a person gets mental disturbance if they don't do family rituals, or traditions. Another person gets mad because they were abused, another because they killed someone"

Auto-mobile accidents

Lastly, participants mentioned car accidents that may damage the person's brain as a cause of mental illness. This statement was also supported by Lonner and Malpass (1994) who argued that other causes for mental illness are things like head injuries that happen as a result of car accidents.

5.6. Treatment of mental illness

The findings of this research showed that in traditional healing, the cause of mental illness is important for the treatment. Traditional healers further stated that different mental illnesses have different treatment depending on the cause of that illness. Traditional healers indicated that there are different types of treatment, which are used to treat mental illness. According to Traditional Medicine Network (2001), traditional healers use a variety of strategies and medications when treating patients.

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When traditional healers prescribe treatment, it is determined by the cause of that mental illness. Peltzer, (1993) believes that traditional healers' treatment is curative, protective and preventive and it can also be natural, spiritual or both, depending on the cause of the mental illness. Traditional healers are the ones who know when to give different treatment to the patient. They know different treatments for different mental illnesses. Pretorius (1993) argues that the treatment used by traditional healers varies greatly and depends on the healer's knowledge and skills, as well as the nature of the problem.

The study by Makgopa and Koma (2009) indicated that

"Traditional treatment uses a comprehensive approach, which is holistic in nature, curative, protective, preventive and finally it can be natural or ritual, sometimes a combination of both".

According to the participants, when a person is suffering from mental illness as a result of a call from the ancestors, the person must go through training to become a traditional healer (u twasa); that is the only treatment. According to Ngubane in Sodi, Mudhovozi, Mashamba, Radzilani-Makatu, Takalani and Mabunda, (2011), a traditional healer is chosen by the ancestors who give him/her power to divine and to heal. A participant, Ma-Ngcobe, in Tloti and Woods (2004) study agrees when she says that:

"The evening before the day of the operation, my maternal grandmother, Mampandla, whom I have never seen before, appeared to me in a dream. She told me that I should not be operated on and that when I was discharged from the hospital, I was to begin helping people with physical and psychological problems"

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Andries, in a study done by Mufamadi and Sodi (2010), reported that:

"Divination bones would tell if there is a need for any ritual to be performed or if the patient is called to become a traditional healer.

Traditional healers use traditional bones to prescribe treatment. According to A World in Balance (2006), traditional bones give traditional healers direction to the right treatment. Traditional healers indicated that they use a variety of treatments, and that those treatments depend on the illness and its causes. Mental illness is treated by different types of herbs using different methods such as bathing, boiling and drinking and steaming.

Traditional Medicine Network (2001); Sandlana and Mtetwa (2008), reported that traditional remedies may be used orally, on the skin, in the nose or ears, and vaginally. The advantage of herbal prescriptions is that they are individually prepared for specific patients who are given such medication for either treatment and/or prevention.

Bathing and steaming serve as a topical application of medicine through the skin pores, in order to penetrate, stimulate, invigorate or relax and heat the body. Traditional healers also use steaming for protection purposes, and to wash off bad luck and evil spirits. Mufamadi and Sodi (2010) state that traditional healers use steaming, vaccinations and herbs during the treatment of mental illnesses.

In the study conducted by Mufamadi and Sodi (2010), Samuel stated that he

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"Uses herbals to sedate violent patients so that they can be treated without any trouble. He also steams patients with dzitsemo (herbs used for steaming).

In the very same study Tshinakaho stated that:

"Treatments involve a mixture of herbs that are given to the patient. This mixture is perceived as being able to calm the patient. Other herbs are also given to the patients in order to cleanse the stomach. Steaming is also considered as another form of treatment".

The findings of this study showed that traditional dances are also important in the treatment of mental illnesses. Through traditional dances such as malombo (trance) traditional healers are able to communicate with their ancestors. This statement was supported by Sodi (2009) who indicated that traditional dances are used to treat illnesses. It is said that during the trance traditional healers become unconscious and in this state are able to communicate with the ancestors. The ancestors will determine the treatment and tell the traditional healer during trace.

Fourie (1992) also argued that Traditional healers sometimes use dance as a way to relieve stress. He further stated that dancing is not only used to relieve stress but it also serves as a communication tool with the ancestors. It provides strength and is also used in cultural rites. When dancing is used as part of healing traditional healers also slaughter an animal and drink sorghum.

The above statement was also reported by Tshinakoho in the study by Mufamadi and Sodi (2010), *"treatment also involves the performance of some rituals like u phasa (libations) and malombo (ritual dance).*

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Traditional healers indicated that when people are suffering from mental illness, they should consult traditional healers as soon as possible because if they do not consult on time, the illness can become incurable. Some people take time to consult traditional healers and sometimes by the time they do, they are already too late. According to Barlow and Durand, (2009) mental illness such as dementia, can be treated if it is caught early. Taile, in the study by Sodi (2009), said:

"If a patient is brought to our attention during the early stage of the illness, he will not take long with us. Such a patient's chances of recovery will also be much better. If the condition is still acute, the patient may stay with us for three days or so. On the other hand, chronic patients will stay much longer with us before they recover"

5.7 Prevention of mental illness

Rituals are important among Africans. They serve to introduce the person to ancestors, to ask for protection from the ancestors, and as a way of preventing illness for the individual. Mental illness is traditionally prevented, and the prevention is done by the traditional healer with the help of the ancestors. It can be done during and after birth. Rites of birth are also seen as a way of protecting the child from illness and bad things and also as a way of asking for the child's protection from the ancestors (Ampim, 2003; Bogopa, 2010)

The study shows that prevention can also be done when the treatment of mental illness is complete. After the treatment of mental illness, a patient is given herbals that prevent the illness from re-attacking the patient. Sandlana & Mtetwa, (2008); Mariana & Hewson, (1998) maintained that traditional healers also protect their clients from possible affliction. This

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is because most of these illnesses are believed to come from destabilised forces. Protection then involves the warding off of the negative forces of witchcraft and maintaining equilibrium with other people, the spirits, and the ancestors.

The positive relationships that a person has with other people in the community were also mentioned as very important in the prevention of mental illness. In the African context, the community and family are very important for a person and his wellbeing. Thus, maintaining a good relationship with other people is of very important. Maintaining a relationship with the community and obeying the ancestors can also be used as a way of preventing mental illness. This statement was confirmed by Traditional Medicine Network (2001) that protection includes propitiation for real or possible offenses that are wittingly or unwittingly incurred against others. Traditional healers believed that illness can be prevented by obeying the basic law of nature and ancestors.

5.8 Conclusion

This chapter revealed that there are different symptoms of mental illness, which include, running away from home, talking alone, taking off clothes and seeing things that other people cannot see. It also revealed that the diagnosis is done through bone throwing and dream analysis. In traditional healing, the cause of mental illness is attributed to the disturbance in the flow of blood, ancestors, witchcraft, pollution and auto mobile accidents. The findings also show that treatment is done through the use of herbal medicines, vaccinations, steaming and different rituals.

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CHARPTER 6: CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

This chapter attempts to summarise the findings of the study and to make recommendations based on these findings. The recommendations are aimed at providing information about traditional healing and mental illness.

6.1 Summary of Key Findings

The aim of this study is to explore and describe traditional healers' perceptions of mental illness.

The specific objectives of the study were:

- To explore the traditional healers' view of mental illness;
- To identify the symptoms of mental illness in African view;
- To describe the diagnostic methods used by traditional healers to treat mental illness;
- To describe traditional healers' explanations of the causes of mental illness;
- To describe the treatment methods used by traditional healers to treat mental illness;
- To describe the prevention strategies of mental illness used by traditional healers; and
- To describe the protection methods of mental illness used by traditional healers.

The aim and objectives of the study were achieved through the use of the following research questions:

1. In your view, what is mental illness?

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2. Do you treat patients with mental illness?
3. What are the symptoms of mental illness?
4. How do you know (diagnose) if a patient is mentally ill?
5. How long does it take you to diagnose an illness?
6. What do you think are the causes of mental illness?
7. How do you treat mental illness?
8. What medication do you give to your patients?
9. How do you prevent mental illness in your patients?

The findings show that there are different symptoms of mental illness, which include, running away from home, talking alone, taking off clothes and seeing things that other people cannot see. It also reveals that the diagnosis is done through bone throwing and dream analysis. In traditional healing, the cause of mental illness is attributed to the disturbance in the flow of blood, ancestors, witchcraft, pollution and auto mobile accidents. The findings also show that treatment is done through the use of herbal medicines, vaccinations, steaming and different rituals.

6.2 Limitations

This is a qualitative study that used snowball sampling of traditional healers from Thulamela Municipality. The results, therefore, cannot be generalized to the all South African healers. Only six participants were used in this study.

6.3 Conclusion

Mental illness is a serious problem which can affect everyone. Mental illness causes distress or discomfort and often, interferes with people's abilities to live a useful and productive life. It makes it impossible for

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people to hold jobs or raise a family or relate to others socially. It also brings pain and discomfort to the patient and to their friends and families. It damages relationships in families. Mental illness costs the health services a lot of money because each year, doctors prescribe drugs costing millions of rands to treat mental illness.

Cultures with a shamanistic system of healing have attributed many disorders to supernatural forces. People believe that psychological disorders are caused by things like the anger of the gods or ancestors, possession by spirits, or a deliberate manipulation of supernatural forces through witchcraft. Treatment includes the use of herbal medicine or the performance of rituals and practices in which an altered state of consciousness is induced. For African traditional healers, the cause of mental illness is an important aspect of diagnosis

6.4 Recommendations

- Similar studies where traditional healers from other different ethnic groups can participate must be done.

- Only six participants were used in this study. A similar study in which more traditional healers should participate in order to have a broad understanding of mental illness must be conducted.

- More research must be done on mental illness because only a few studies have been done.

- The Department of Health and Social Development must support mental illness awareness campaign programmes and research on mental illness.

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APPENDIX 1: PARTICIPANT PROFILES

Participant 1

Gender	Age	Level of education	Number of years in practice
Female	70	Illiterate	50 years

Participant 2

Gender	Age	Level of education	Number of years in practice
Female	48	Primary	20 years

Participant 3

Gender	Age	Level of education	Number of years in practice
Male	34	Secondary	8 years

Participant 4

Gender	Age	Level of education	Number of years in practice
Female	68	Illiterate	35

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Participant 5

Gender	Age	Level of education	Number of years in practice
Male	69	Illiterate	32

Participant 6

Gender	Age	Level of education	Number of years in practice
male	65	secondary	31

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APPENDIX 2: REQUEST FOR PERMISSION

To participants

I am a Masters student at University of Venda. I am conducting a study on the perceptions of traditional healers towards mental illness. You are requested to participate in the study.

Please understand that you are not being forced to take part in this study. The choice whether to participate or not is yours entirely. I would really appreciate it if you do share your thoughts with me. If you choose not to take part in the study, you will not be affected in any way, whatsoever. If you agree to participate, and then change your mind, you may discontinue at any time and tell me that you do not want to continue with the interview. I will not record your name anywhere on the interview guide, and no one will be able to link you to the answers you give. Only the researcher will have access to linked information. The information will remain confidential.

Your cooperation is highly appreciated

Yours faithfully

....

Madzhie Mpho Date

Researcher

....

Dr Mashamba Date

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APPENDIX 3: REQUEST FOR PERMISSION (TSHIVENDA VERSION)

Kha vhafhinduli

Ndi mutshudeni a khou itaho masters gudedzini la nntha la Venda. Ndi khou ita thoduluso yanga ha ndivho ine vho maine vha vha nayo malugana na vhulwadze ha muhumbulo. Ndi khou vhahumbela uri vha dzhenelele kha thoduloso iyo.

Ndi vha divhadza uri a vha khombetshedzwi u vha tshipinda tsha ino tshedzuluso, vhone vhane vha thou nanga u vha tshipida tshaino tsedzuluso. Fhedzi ndi do zwitakalela arali vha tshinga tenda u mbudza ndivho ine vha vha nayo malugana na vhulwadze u vhu. Fhedzi vha sa zwitakaleli a huna tsho khakheaho. Hone kharali vha khou zwitakalela ri tshiswika vhukathi vhapfa vha si tsha zwi takalela u isa phanda vhaya mbudza uri vha nga si tsha isa phanda na tsedzuluso iyi. Ndi nga si do nwala madzina a vho fhethu a huna muthu ane a do kona u tumana zwe vhaamba na madzina a vho. Ndi nne ndi ndothe a ne a do divha madzina avho. Madzina a vho a do dzula a a tshipiri.

U dzhenelela ha vho ndi zwa ndeme

Wavho a fulufhedzeaho

....

Madzhie Mpho Date

Mutodulusi

....

Dr Mashamba Date

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APPENDIX 4: CONSENT FORM

I.....hereby consent to participate in the research study entitled "The explanations and treatment of mental illness by traditional healers in thulamela municipality, limpopo province in south africa". I understand that I am participating freely and without being forced in any way to do so. I also understand that I can stop this interview at any point should I want to discontinue. The conditions of the study have been fully explained to me and I fully understand the circumstances of my participation.

....

Signature of the participant date

....

Signature of the researcher date

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APPENDIX 5: CONSENT FORM (TSHIVENDA VERSION)

nne.....ndi khou tenda u vha tshipida tsha tshe dzuluso yanga ha "ndivho ya vho maine ya vhulwadze ha muhumbulo, Thulamela municipality, Limpopo province". Ndi khou pfesesa uri ndi khou vha tshipida tsha ino tshedzuluso ndi songo konbetshedzwa. ndi a dovha nda pfesesa uri ndi nga kha di litsha u isa phanda na ino tshedzuluso tshifhinga tshinwe na tshinwe tshine nda funa. Ndivho yothe ya ino tshedzuluso ndo I vhudziwa hafhu ndi a divha vhuleme ha u vha tshipida tsha ino tsedzuluso.

....

Tsaino ya mufhinduli date

....

Tsa ino ya musedzulusi date

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APPENDIX 6: INTERVIEW GUIDE

Section A

1. Gender
2. Age
3. Educational level
4. Number of years in practice

Section B

1. In your view, what is mental illness?
2. Do you treat patients with mental illness?
3. What are the symptoms of mental illness?
4. How do you know (diagnose) if a patient is mentally ill?
5. How long does it take you to diagnose an illness?
6. What do you think are the causes of mental illness?
7. How do you treat mental illness?
8. What medication do you give to your patients?
9. How do you prevent mental illness in your patients?

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APPENDIX 7: INTERVIEW GUIDE (TSHIVENDA VERSION)

Section A

1. Mbeu
2. Minwaha
3. Pfunzo
4. Minwa haya u alafha

Section B

1. vhulwadze ha muhumbulo nga Tshivenda ndi mini?
2. vha ya lafha vhathu vho no lwala vhulwadze ha muhumbulo?
3. Ndi dzi fhio tsumbo dza vhulwadze ha muhumbulo?
4. vha zwi di vhi sa hani uri muthu u khou lwala vhulwadze ha muhumbulo?
5. zwi vha dzhiela tshifhinga tshi nga fhani u divha uri muthu u khou lwala vhulwadze ha muhumbulo?
6. ndi zwifhio zwithu zwine vha zwi vhona hu zwivhangi kana zwiitisi zwa vhulwadze ha muhumbulo?
7. vha alafha vhulwadze ha muhumbulo nga ndila de?
8. ndi ifhio mishonga kana dzilafho line vha lifha vhalwadze vha muhumbulo?
9. ndi dzi fhio ndila dzine vha dzi shumisa u thivhela vhulwadze ha muhumbulo kha muthu?

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Participant 1

Section A

1. Gender : Female

2. Age : 70

3. Educational level : illiterate

4. Number of years in practice : 50

Section B

1. In your view what is mental illness?

When a person is mentally ill, the worm inside his/her head has moved from the right position. This worm is found inside the head of a person. It regulates the person's behaviour. If it happens that this worm moves from its normal position, this would result in mental illness. This worm can be moved from its position by things like accidents, witchcraft and the gods. Sometimes accidents can disturb a person's brain and force this worm to move from its position.

2. Do you treat patients with mental illness?

Yes

3. What are the symptoms of mental illness?

(a) Running around

This is when a person just runs away from home. Mostly they run away from home to the bush. Some of them even forget their way back home, but that does not happen to all of them. Some are able to trace their way back home. Some of them run naked, whereas some run with their clothes on. Sometimes, they do not just run away from home to the

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bush, but they even chase people they may beat or just touch them when they reach them.

(b) Talking alone

People suffering from this mental illness talk alone. They sometimes answer themselves. If you are listening to them, you can end up concluding that they are talking to someone else. They even laugh alone. There are times when these people talk using other languages which they have never heard before. Sometimes they mix different languages depending on the language which is used by the person they are talking to, the person who can only be seen by them. These people are dangerous to other people and themselves they beat other people, beat trees, and sometimes they fight alone. However to them, they will be fighting with the person they are seeing. They talking alone and running away alone as if there is a person chasing them.

(c) Complete non-communication

People who suffer from this mental illness do not communicate with other people. They do not talk at all. Even if you try to communicate with them they just keep quite and not respond. They usually stay alone and they might sit or stand in one position for a long period of time, without moving or talking.

4. How do you know (diagnose) if a patient is mentally ill?

I use traditional healer's bones (thangu) to diagnose the problem/illness. The patient must blow his/her air inside the small bag with the bones inside. From there I throw them down, and then I explain their meanings to the patient. The traditional healer's bones are the ones that tell me what the patient is suffering from and the treatment for the problem. There are times were I do not use bones, but the ancestors will tell me in

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my dreams, to expect a mentally ill person the following day or the ay after. They will also tell me the herbs that I should give him/her. Ancestors even tell traditional healers the problems of the patient and the treatment to give that patient. Dreams are very important in traditional healing because the ancestors sometimes communicate with the traditional healers through dreams.

5. How long does it take you to diagnose an illness?

It does not take time at all; I tell my patients what the bones I have just thrown tell me. But if I have already been told by my ancestors, it won't even take a minute because I already know what the person is suffering from.

6. What do you think are the causes of mental illness?

Mental illness is caused a disturbance in the person's blood flow. When the blood is not moving the way is it expected to move, the blood will not to move to all parts of the body. Sometimes, it happens as a result of the shifting of the worm inside the person's head. This is when the worm moves away from its position. When a person is mentally ill, the worm inside his/her head would have moved from the right position. This worm is found inside the head of a person. It regulates the person's behaviour. If this worm moves from its normal position, it results in mental illness. This worm can be moved from its position by things like accidents, witchcraft and the gods. Sometimes accidents can disturb a person's brain and force this worm to move from its position.

7. How do you treat mental illness?

Mental illness is treated in different ways. If it is caused by the shift of the worm from its position, it is only the traditional healer who knows how to put it back to its normal position. He can do this by using different traditional herbs. Traditional healer's bones are also used to

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prescribe treatment. Traditional healer's bones are able to tell the type of treatment that must be used. Mental illness is treated by using different traditional herbs. To make it easy for the person who is suffering from mental illness, he/she must be taken to the traditional healer as soon as possible. If the illness is not treated early, it might become incurable. So the patient must be taken to the traditional healer as soon as possible before it is too late for the treatment.

8. What medication do you give to your patients?

I sometimes give my patients traditional herbs that they should boil and drink. Sometimes I give them herbs for steaming. They might use one or all of them at the same time, depending on the cause of the illness. Sometimes the patient must first dance the traditional dances, praise his/her ancestor, and also ask the ancestors to accept or give him/her their own treatment. You may find that the patient's ancestors were traditional healers, so by doing traditional dances the patient might be able to talk to his/her ancestors. During the dance ancestors can tell the patient how to treat the illness. When giving the treatment, the traditional healer must first find the cause of the illness and the type of mental illness, because different types of mental illnesses are treated differently.

9. How do you prevent mental illness in your patients?

Mental illness can be treated while the person is still young. There are traditional herbs that are given to newborn babies to prevent different types of illnesses. These herbal medicines (pila) can be used to prevent mental illnesses.

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Participant 2

Section A

1. **Gender** : Female
2. **Age** : 48
3. **Educational level** : grade 3
4. **Number of years in practice** : 20

Section B

1. In your view, what is mental illness?

When a person is mentally ill, in Tshivenda, we call it madness (u penga). This is when a person has mental problems, and is not well or complete like other people. People who are mentally ill talk and do things that normal people do not do. Mental illness is a result of abnormal body cells, especially cells which are found in the brain. Therefore, people who are mentally ill, it means, have the brain cells which are abnormal. If not treated, people who suffer from mental illness may suffer for the rest of their lives. It is important for relatives to take the person to the traditional healer as soon as possible.

2. Do you treat patients with mental illness?

Yes I do, but they should be brought to me by their parents or adult relatives. If they come alone, I ask them to go back home and come back with a relative.

3. What are the symptoms of mental illness

(a) Talking alone while walking

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People who suffer from this kind of mental illness talk alone and even respond to themselves as if they are talking to someone else.

(b) Running for no reason

This is when a person who is mentally ill just runs away from home without knowing where he/she is going. Some run away and never come back; some run for a couple of days and some only run for hours. Those who run away and never come may have done so because they forgot their way back home, or there was something that they a saw at home, which they no longer wanted to see. Mostly, this is something that other people cannot see.

(c) Complete non-communication

People who suffer from this type of mental illness are able to communicate. However, they might just feel that they do not want to talk to anyone. Their mental illness stops them from communicating with other people. Even if you talk to them, they will not answer you. Some can look at you, but not respond; others might not even look at you.

4. How do you know (diagnose) if a patient is mentally ill?

If you ask a person who is suffering from mental illness what his/her problem is he/she might tell you things that you will never understand. They cannot tell what their illness is; they will never tell you what their problem is. It is the duty of a traditional healer to tell the parents of a person who is mentally ill what the problem is, what is causing it, and the treatment that can be given to treat it. I use traditional healer's bones (thangu) to diagnose what the problem is.

5. How long does it take you to diagnose an illness?

Immediately after throwing my bones (u tungula), I tell the parents what the problem is. I only treat people who are mentally ill if the adult

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members of the family agree, and if they are the ones who brought him to me. Just after throwing my bones, I explain their meanings. So it does not take long to diagnose mental illness. In some cases I am able to see what the problem is by just looking at the patient's face. People who are mentally ill can be easily identified, and, in those cases, I use my bones to find the solution and the cause.

6. What do you think are the causes of mental illness?

Mental illness is a type of illness which can be caused by witches. Witches are able to use their powers to possess other people with different illnesses, including mental illness. I f you are progressing in life or prospering, they might use mental illness as a way of stopping you. Every time when people are mentally ill, there is always witchcraft behind.

7. How do you treat mental illness?

There are different treatments that are used. These depend on the cause of that mental illness. Traditional healers know different treatments of mental illness. They know which treatment to use depending on the cause of that mental illness. Sometimes I give my patients medicine for steaming and drinking, depending on the cause. Mental illness is treatable in traditional healing, and, once treated, it never comes back.

8. What medication do you give to your patients?

I give them medicine for steaming and for drinking, depending on the cause of their mental illness.

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9. How do you prevent mental illness in your patients?

I do not prevent. It the person him/herself must look after him/herself. People should always maintain their relationships with their family, community and their ancestors.

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Participant 3

Section A

1. Gender : Male
2. Age : 34
3. Educational level : Grade 12
4. Number of years in practice : 8 years

Section B

1. In your view, what is mental illness?

When we say a person is mentally ill, it means that person is doing things that other people who are normal do not do. This is mostly caused by witchcraft. People who suffer from mental illness see things that other people do not see, they hear voices that others do not hear, and they usually beat people.

2. Do you treat patients with mental illness?

Yes

3. What are the symptoms of mental illness?

People who have mental illness see things that other people do not see and hear voices that others do not hear. They even call names of people who are dead and even say that they are seeing those people, whom other people cannot see. They even go to the extent of crying claiming that there are people who want to kill them.

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4. How do you know (diagnose) if a patient is mentally ill?

I use traditional healers' bones (Thangu) to see what the patient is suffering from and the things that are causing the illness. Traditional healers' bones are able to tell me the patients' illness, treatment and the cause of that illness. But there are times when the family members of the person who is mentally ill tell the traditional what the patient is suffering from.

5. How long does it take you to diagnose an illness?

It does not take time. Immediately after throwing my bones down, I read the meaning of the bones and explain to the patients' family.

6. What do you think are the causes of mental illness?

(a) Ancestors

Bad ancestors

Bad ancestors are mostly the ones who cause bad things to people for no reason. If the patients' ancestors were witches, they can send bad things to their people.

Good ancestors

Sometimes ancestors use illness to communicate with their people. They send illness to their people as a way of communicating with them. When people are suffering from this type of mental illness, the traditional healer will tell them what the ancestors want to communicate with them. They usually send illness when they want to a person to be a traditional healer. This is called a calling from the ancestors.

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(b) Witchcraft

Witches use their powers to send illness to people. They have an evil power which they manipulate to send bad things to people. Mental illness caused by witchcraft comes as a result of the person being be witched. Witches have the power to manipulate the evil spirit to cause bad things to other people.

(c) Pollution

Pollution also causes people to suffer from mental illness. This is when people are not cleansed of bad things that they have done. For example, when a person is not cleansed after a death of the spouse or miscarriage, they might suffer from mental illness.

7. How do you treat mental illness?

The treatment of mental illness depends on its cause. If a person who is suffering from mental illness goes to a traditional healer, the traditional healer will give him medication that will treat the mental illness completely. But treatment can also be done if the patient does what the ancestors want him/her to do. The cause, in this case will be the ancestors. But if the person is born with mental illness, it is difficult to treat it. This one can only be treated by traditional healers who have extensive has experience of treating mental illness.

8. What medication do you give to your patients?

Medication that they boil and drink, for steaming and for washing their bodies.

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9. How do you prevent mental illness in your patients?

Mental illness can be prevented when a child is born during *muthuso*. This is when a new born is given medicine to prevent all types of illness, including mental illness. This medication also protects people from witchcraft. The medication makes it difficult for witches to bewitch the protected person. Prevention can also be done after the treatment mental illness treatment. After treatment of mental illness, the traditional healer will give the patient medicine to prevent mental illness from recurring.

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Participant 4

Section A

1. Gender : Female
2. Age : 68
3. Educational level : illiterate
4. Number of years in practice : 35

Section B

1. In your view, what is mental illness?

Mental illness is an illness that affects the persons' mind. This is when the mind of a person is not functioning properly. This malfunctioning of the mind makes the person see and do the things that other normal people do not do. People with mental illnesses sometimes talk alone. They can even fight alone and clam that they are fighting with someone, whereas other people cannot see. Only the mentally ill person will be claiming that he/she can see the person.

2. Do you treat patients with mental illness?

Yes.

3. What are the symptoms of mental illness?

a. Talking alone

This kind of mental illness involves the person talking alone as if there is some one whom he/she is talking to. However, other people are not able to see the person being conversed with. Only the person suffering from mental illness claim to be seeing the person he is talking to.

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b. Seeing things that other are not able to see

In this type of mental illness, the person suffering from mental illness will be seeing things that other people are not seeing. The mentally ill person might report that people are chasing him/her whereas other normal people seeing those people. The mentally ill can even report seeing snakes which want to bite them.

c. Running away for no reason

In this type of illness a person suffering from this mental illness will just run without away for no reason. Some of them might even run away to the bushes and fail to find their way back home again. However, others will able to find their way back home. Some mentally ill people will chase people and when they catch them might bite them or smile to them or even just laugh at them. This type is also characterised by a stooped posture, slow body movements, tremors, and jerking when walking.

d. Taking off clothes

These people do not want to wear clothes, they take off their clothes without a reason, it is like the clothes are heavy on them.

4. How do you know (diagnose) if a patient is mentally ill?

For diagnosis I use my bones, the traditional healers' bones. Every time when I want to know what my patients are suffering from, I use my bones. These traditional bones are the ones that explain the illness of the patient and the treatment required. The person who is suffering from the illness must blow his/her air in the bag with traditional bones, and then I throw my bones and explain their meaning to his or her family. The traditional bones will tell me the illness, the cause and the treatment.

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5. How long does it take you to diagnose an illness?

It does not take time at all. As soon as I am done, with throwing the bones I explain their meaning to the patient.

6. What do you think are the cause of mental illness?

a. Witches

Witches use bad spirits to send bad things, including illness, to people because of jealousy. Witches have the power to manipulate bad sprits and use them to do bad things to other people.

b. Ancestors

Ancestors, sometimes, punish their people by sending illness to them, but sometimes they also use illness to call the people they what to use. This mean that a person can suffer from mental illness as punishment from the ancestors (this happens when the person is disobeying the ancestors or not following their orders and norms) or as a call from the ancestors. This call could mean that they want to use that person as a traditional healer. But sometimes the ancestors can just remove their protection from the person and thus, expose him/her witches. In this case it will not be the ancestors that send illness, but the witches.

3. Pollution

Pollution is also a cause of mental illness. This happens when a person is not cleansed after the death of a spouse or his/her child, or after a bad thing that the person has committed, for example killing. If the spouse is dead, the remaining spouse must go to a traditional healer for cleansing rituals.

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7. How do you treat mental illness?

Mental illness is treated in different ways, using different traditional herbs. The type of treatment and the type of herb depends on the cause of that mental illness. Sometimes the person can be given traditional herbs that will make him/her to vomit, or herbs to wash the body with, or for steaming. Sometimes he/she can be given herbs which he/she must drink.

8. What medication do you give to your patients?

I use different medicines, traditional herbs which are a mixture of different leaves and animals, depending on the cause of the illness. Sometimes the person can be given traditional herbs that will make him/her to vomit, or herbs to wash the body with, or for steaming. Sometimes the person is given herbs which he/she must drink

9. How do you prevent mental illness in your patients?

After treatment, the person will be given some other medicine to prevent the illness from recurring.

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Participant 5

Section A

1. Gender	: Male
2. Age	: 69
3. Educational level	: illiterate
4. Number of years in practice	: 32

Section B

1. What do you think mental illness is?

Mental illness is called tshipengo. Sometimes people who suffer from this illness may suffer throughout their lives.

2. Do you treat patients with mental illness?

Yes

3. What are the symptoms of mental illness?

There are no symptoms of mental illness.

4. How do you know (diagnose) if a patient is mentally ill?

I use traditional bones

5. How long does it take you to diagnose an illness?

It does not take time. Just after throwing the bones.

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6. What do you think are the causes of mental illness?

Car accidents

Mental illness can be caused by accidents. This is when one is involved in a car accident that might result in the damage of the brain.

Witchcraft

Witches also have the power to manipulate their medicines and make a person to suffer from this illness. Witches have the power to make people suffer from this illness.

Ancestors

Ancestors use different illnesses to call the people they want. They can even use mental illness. Sometimes ancestors use illness to communicate with the people they want. For example, when they want you to be a traditional healer, they can send an illness to you. When you go to a traditional healer, they will tell you the reason why you are ill and that kind of mental illness will not get cured unless you do the traditional healers' training.

7. What are the methods you use to treat mentally ill patients?

When treating mental illness, I use traditional medicine, but these methods are used differently depending on the cause of that mental illness. If the cause is ancestors you just do what they want, they will tell you through traditional healers what to do. If the cause is a call from ancestors, the traditional healer will help you with the training of being a traditional healer. Others may be treated using herbs that need to be boiled for the person to drink steam or bath with. But mental illness is only treated if the person who is affected goes to a traditional healer on time. If not treated early, the illness might become incurable.

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8. Do you have special medication to treat different types of mental illness?

Yes, those depend on the cause of that mental illness

9. How do you prevent or protect mental illness in your patients?

There are traditional healers who have the power to prevent mental illness, but not all of them. Sometime, mental illness is prevented when a child is still young, during *muthuso*. But it can also be done after treating it. Here, you give the patient the medicine that will prevent it from recurring.

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Participant 6

Section A

1. Gender : Male
2. Age : 65
3. Educational level : secondary
4. Number of years in practice : 31

Section B

1. What do you think mental illness is?

In our tradition, mental illness is madness (u penga). This person's mind is disorganised and not functioning properly like those of others who are not mentally ill. They do things that normal people do not do. Their reasoning is disturbed. This may be caused by different things such as brain damage that may be a result of an accident, witchcraft and evil spirits, and also as a punishment from the ancestors.

2. Do you treat patients with mental illness?

Yes, I have treated a number of them.

3. What are the symptoms of mental illness?

Yes there are different types of mental illnesses. There is the mental illness of running away from home. The people just runs away, his/her madness makes him/her to run away from home. They do not even know why they are running or where they are going. Some just take off their clothes and run naked. People suffering from this mental illness sometimes chase people and even beat them.

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There is the mental illness of talking alone. These people spend most of their time alone, but they will be talking with someone whom other people cannot see or hear. Only the person who is ill will be able to see that person or communicate with that person. They even see people who are known to be dead. There are times when they use languages of other people. Mostly, people who suffer from this mental illness are attacked by witches, who make them see people and things which are not there. They are usually dangerous to other people because they even beat people.

Usually, people with mental illness of not talking, are born normal, but when this mental illness starts they change and stop communicating with friends and family. The do so until they reach a point where they do not communicate with anyone at all.

4. How do you know (diagnose) if a patient is mentally ill?

In Tshivenda traditional healing, we use different methods. Ancestors are the ones who tell us everything that we need to know as traditional healers. They communicate with us in different ways. They can communicate with me through traditional bones. When I throw the bone my ancestors help me to read the explanation of the bones and the bones will tell me the problem, the cause and the treatment of the illness.

Ancestors, sometimes, use dreams to communicate with me in the dreams; they tell me the herbs for different illnesses. In the dreams situation they show me the patient, his/her illness, its cause and its treatment a day or a week before the patient comes to me. They can also communicate with me through the traditional healing dances (malombo), during the dreams I will fall in to the state of unconsciousness, it is in this state that I communicate with my ancestors directly. So ancestors use this method to tell me the illness of the patient and the treatment to use for that person.

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5. How long does it take you to diagnose an illness?

It does not take time at all. Just after throwing my bones I am able to see everything that the ancestors want me to know about the patient and his/her illness. If I were shown the problem via dreams, when the patient comes I will just explain the problem to him according to what I saw in my dreams.

6. What do you think are the cause of mental illness?

There are different causes of mental illness as I have already indicated. There is witchcraft, as I said, and witches have the power to send illness to people. Mental illness can also be caused by accidents that may damage the brain. It can also be caused by the ancestors either as punishment or as a way of calling a patient to be a traditional healer. There are things like pollution (mirunzi) that is when people are not cleansed after the death of a close relative. When this happen a person must undergo several rituals as a way of cleansing that person. The other thing which is of great importance in our tradition is not to separate a person from his family and community. The relationship that people have with their families and community are also very important. People must have good relationships with their people because bad relationships lead to mental illness.

7. What are the methods you use to treat mentally ill patients?

Since the cause differs the treatment is determined by the cause. There are different kinds of treatment. If ancestors want you to be a traditional healer, you just do the traditional dances and training to be a traditional healer. An experienced traditional healer will help you throughout the training. If the person is ill because the ancestors are angry the traditional healer must try to reconnect the patient's spirit with that of his or her ancestors. This can be done though malombo (dancing and praying to the ancestors).

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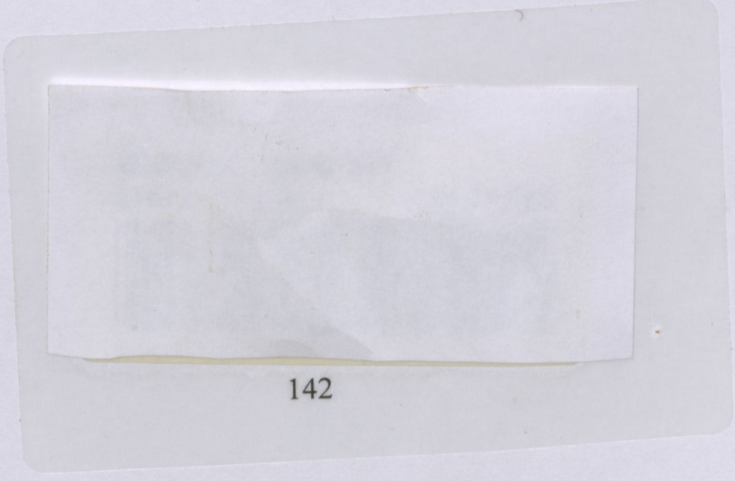
There are times when illness is caused by witchcraft. Here the treatment includes a mixture of herbs and animals. This remedy can be used in different ways. The herbs can be used for bathing, for applying on the skin, for drinking and steaming. All these medicines are used due to the cause of that mental illness.

8. Do you have special medication to treat different types of mental illness?

No, I don't have. The treatment that I give to my people depends on their illness and its causes. I prepare a remedy for each and every person that I treat, in line with their problem and the cause or it also depends on what my ancestors tell me to do through dreams or bones.

9. How do you prevent or protect mental illness in your patients?

Usually, when a person is ill, there is a problem, but after solving that problem, I tell the person what is expected of him or her by his or her ancestors, the things that he or she can do as a way of preventing the illness from recurring. However, if the person disobeys my advice, there is nothing I can do. But there is prevention that is done just after the birth of a child. Certain rituals are done as a way of introducing the child to his or her ancestors, to the world, and the ancestors. That is when the ancestors and the gods are asked to protect and look after the child.



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