NEGOTIATING BOUNDARY CROSSING FROM TRADITIONAL OR INDIGENOUS KNOWLEDGE TO MODERN WESTERN SCIENCE: A SOUTH AFRICAN XHOSA PERSPECTIVE

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Abstract
The main aim of this study was to investigate a sample of university students’, teachers’ and community members’ perceptions, experiences and beliefs on the cultural practice of passage to manhood (ukwaluka). All these participants’ mother tongue is isiXhosa and are all from the Eastern Cape South Africa, and Grahamstown in particular. The study was triggered by my interest to learn and explore ways on how to tap into traditional knowledge or indigenous knowledge possessed by community members. The participants voluntarily completed open-ended questionnaires and thereafter one-on-one semi-structured interviews were conducted with a selected few. The data generated suggest that there is a wealth of knowledge embedded in the traditional or indigenous practice of passage to manhood (ukwaluka) which could be used to bridge the gap between everyday knowledge from the community, home and school science. Thus, the study recommends that traditional or indigenous knowledge and western science should be seen as complementing one another rather than being seen as mutually exclusive. Similarly, traditional or indigenous knowledge from community members should be valued and tapped into where possible. That is, there is a need to recognize the African worldviews and ways of knowing. However, any misconceptions and risks embedded in indigenous practices need to be identified and corrected.

Keywords: Socio-cultural theory; Xhosa indigenous practice; cultural heritage; cultural identity; everyday knowledge; scientific knowledge.

1 INTRODUCTION
As part of the transformation agenda, the democratically elected government in South Africa which came into power in 1994 introduced a new education curriculum. The new curriculum was intended to, so to say, redress the imbalances of the past which were brought about by the apartheid’s Bantu Education. In his own words, [1] reiterated that Bantu Education was a poison one could not drink in his or her point of death from thirst. According to [2], one of the inequities of apartheid was that African worldviews were ignored in the schooling system. Hence, the ongoing metamorphosis and changes in the curriculum by the post-apartheid democratic government were from the old one, namely, the Curriculum 2005 (C2005), the National Curriculum Statement (NCS), the Revised National Curriculum Statement (RNCS) and now the Curriculum Assessment Policy Statement (CAPS).

Notwithstanding, the curriculum transformation in South Africa has been met with mixed feelings. For example, what has been found to be lacking and a challenge to most science teachers is the clarity on the implementation process [3] given the diverse contexts in South African schools. It could be argued that there are tensions between curriculum formulation and implementation. Despite these challenges, as an endeavor to address issues of equity, access and relevance, the inclusion of traditional knowledge or indigenous knowledge during teaching and learning is encouraged in the curriculum [4], [5], [2]. This is reflected in the outcome which states that learners need to demonstrate understanding of the relationship between science and technology, society and environment. It is against this backdrop that in this study I sought to investigate an isiXhosa indigenous practice [6] in relation to a passage to manhood (ukwaluka), in particular, with a view illuminate how border crossing from traditional knowledge (TK) or indigenous knowledge (IK) to modern western science (MWS) and vice versa, could be facilitated to enable meaningful learning in science classrooms. Thus, the study sought to answer the following research questions: What are university students’, teachers’ and community members’ perceptions, experiences and beliefs of the cultural practice of passage to manhood (ukwaluka)? What science knowledge is embedded in this cultural practice? How can this knowledge be tapped into to facilitate border crossing from traditional knowledge or indigenous knowledge to science and vice versa?
2 BACKGROUND AND AIM OF THE STUDY

Worldwide and in South Africa in particular, there are calls for cultural revitalization of the school science curriculum [7], [8]. For instance, based on a research done by an Agricultural Science teacher in the Eastern Cape, South Africa on changing wild vegetables (*imifino*) to cultivated vegetable (*umfuno*), it was found that through mobilising indigenous knowledge in school-community contexts, scientific learning in learners was enhanced [7]. A similar research conducted by a Life Sciences teacher in Grahamstown, South Africa, it was found that using an example of a homemade alcoholic drink (*umqombothi*) to explain concepts associated with alcoholic fermentation enhanced sense making in learners (ibid). In yet another research done in Eastern Cape, South Africa based on a programme called *Inkubeko Nendalo* which involved learners going out on weekly excursions in the forest to experience nature in a recreational context, it emerged that both teachers and learners enjoyed being exposed to nature, and that stimulated valuing both their cultural heritage and environment [8]. These aforementioned examples suggest that there is place for the inclusion of traditional knowledge (TK) or indigenous knowledge (IK) in the school curriculum.

[9] point out that indigenous knowledge (IK) is a legacy of knowledge and skills unique to a particular indigenous culture and community. Additionally, IK is characterised by having wisdom that has been developed and passed on over generations. Lending support, [10] explain that IK implies that the knowledge has not been borrowed from another locality or culture. It is about knowledge of the indigenous people of a particular geographical area that they have survived on for a long period of time [11]. Such wisdom is derived from interactions between people and their environment as proposed by [6]. Furthermore, each community member is responsible for sharing knowledge and new discoveries with other community members [12]. Scholars such as [13] comment that the increasing recognition of the importance of using IK for contextualizing school science creates opportunities and spaces for learners’ prior experiences to be taken seriously during teaching and learning.

It is precisely for these reasons that a large body of literature calls for the inclusion of IK in science curricula [14], [15], [12], [9] point out that science teaching is enriched when IK is used as indigenous prior knowledge in the classroom and can thus be used as a starting point [16] to explore concepts associated with western science. [17], [14] and [18] postulate corresponding views emphasising that IK and Modern Western Science (MWS) should complement one another rather than being seen as competing or mutually exclusive. To this end, [18] and [19] are in favour of a culturally-centred curriculum which they believe can unlock and expand the potential for development. [12], for instance, in their call for the Africanisation of the curriculum state that,

IK promotes teaching and learning scenarios in which both teachers and learners engage in knowledge construction in the full diversity of cultural, racial, ethnic and religious practices of all people so as to bring about common understanding (p. 72).

This suggests that central to the inclusion of IK in science classrooms is the co-construction of knowledge, showing the connections and with a focus on meaning making rather than rote learning. I thus sought to make a contribution in this regard in this study.

Despite the perceived advantages associated with the inclusion of IK in science classrooms, it should be acknowledged that there are however some challenges. [20] and [21], for instance, caution that not all IK is relevant to science. Similarly, [12] propose that IK needs to be properly scrutinised before it is used so that there is a possibility of exposing any contradictions that might come with it or embedded in it. They further warn that IK is deeply rooted in people’s beliefs, and highly localised of which some are entrenched in ‘myths’ that are hard to explain in scientific sense. They thus advise that teachers need to have a deep understanding of science in order to be able to incorporate IK effectively with MWS.

[22] believes that in South Africa the topic on the inclusion of IK has not been given the attention it deserves. For instance, among other things, one of the challenges hindering the incorporation of IK in science curricula in sub-Saharan Africa is politics [20]. [11] affirms that the colonialists have denigrated indigenous science, regarding it as superstitious and that the indigenes are in the dark and backward [23]. Furthermore, IK has been regarded as inefficient, old-fashioned, non-scientific, mythic and superstitious [11], [23], [3]. In his study conducted in Zimbabwe, [14] found that some teachers had negative attitudes towards the inclusion of IK during teaching and learning and only confined themselves to teaching school science exclusively. Yet, according to [22] and other scholars, there is a need for teachers to embrace positive attitude towards integration of IK in science classrooms. To this end, [19] suggests that this could be achieved through engaging community members to share their cultural knowledge and expertise as evidenced by her study she conducted in Namibia. It
emerged from Klein’s study there is a need to conserve and preserve the Nama culture a view shared
and reiterated by [8] in their study conducted in the South African context.

The danger regarding neglecting IK, is that learners may experience conflicting worldviews between
their school science experiences and their everyday life experiences [25], [22], [26]. (25) refers to such
conflict as ‘cognitive dissonance’ resulting in learners experiencing difficulties in crossing borders
between these worldviews. Some learners might avoid choosing science-related subjects and may
even drop out of school [9], [17], [19]. [9], however, make a compelling argument that it is not always
necessary to ‘cross over’ in order to learn science but instead IK itself can reinforce learning of
science concepts.

Many research studies in Africa find that, indigenous knowledge is very important and should be
incorporated in our education system [11], [9], [12]. Hence, these scholars and many others are
increasingly calling for locally-developed programmes to address the development needs of the region
as [19] demonstrated with her study which she conducted in Namibia with the Nama people.

3 THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

This study was informed by [27] socio-cultural theory whose major theme is that social interactions
play a fundamental role in the development of cognition. Building on Vygotsky’s seminal work, [28]
explained that the socio-cultural theory underscores that all human activity functions mostly on
upbringing, the community they live in, religion, culture and so on. That is, practicing or doing science
is a human activity that is carried out within a cultural context. Essentially, this suggests that learners’
learning is also rooted in those contexts and science cannot be taught in isolation to learners’ culture.
[28] reiterates that it is critical for teachers to understand that science is part of the larger community
and culture. Furthermore, the socio-cultural perspective focuses on the role that participation plays in
social interactions and culturally structured activities.

That is, meaningful learning occurs best in the interactions between individuals in social contexts
engaging with cultural products which are made available to them in their context [29], [30], [31].
Additionally, cultural beliefs and cultural passage to manhood (ukwaluka) in the context of this study
and attitudes may impact on how instruction and learning takes place.

4 METHODOLOGY AND METHODS

4.1 Setting and sampling

The study was conducted in the Eastern Cape, South Africa. According to [6], the Eastern Cape
covers about 169 580km² (14% of South Africa) and has a population of about 6.5 million people.
More than 80% of the people leaving in the Eastern Cape are isiXhosa-speaking making it quite
convenient and appropriate to investigate traditional or indigenous Xhosa related issues. During the
apartheid era, the province was divided into three geographical areas, namely, homelands of Transkei
and Ciskei and the eastern portion of Cape Province. Grahamstown where this study was conducted
and which has a population of about 70 000 people, 72% of whom are isiXhosa-speaking, is in the
eastern portion of the Cape Province. Since 1994, however, the three geographical areas of the
Eastern Province were amalgamated into one big province. As a result, the challenges in this province
have increased proportionally to its size.

The study comprised of university students who had undergone the cultural practice of passage to
manhood, teachers from local school township schools as well as community members. Only young
men, male teachers and elders were purposively selected to be part of this study as this practice is
strictly restricted to males.

4.2 Orientation, approach and data collection process

An overall objective of this study was to gain more insight into urban Xhosa people’s perceptions,
experiences and how they looked at the possibility of conserving and preserving their traditional
culture of passage to manhood. Furthermore, how they viewed the challenges between modernizations in relation to their cultural practice. The study was thus informed by an interpretive paradigm [32], [33] to understand the people’s worldviews. Within the interpretive paradigm, a qualitative case study approach was employed.
Data were generated through questionnaires and follow-up semi-structured interviews to capture the participants’ narratives and experiences. Part A of the questionnaire solicited biographical details of the participants. Part B, captured the participants’ narratives on their perceptions, experiences and beliefs on the cultural practice of the passage to manhood. Lastly, in Part C participants had to make their general comments and suggestions so that their voices could be heard more.

4.3 Data analysis, validity and trustworthiness

A thematic approach was used to analyze and interpret data. Vygotsky’s socio-cultural theory was used as a theoretical lens to look at data in this study. The socio-cultural theorists point out that cultural artefacts and interactions play an important role in the learning process [29], [31]. In the context of this study, the process involved understanding the complex cultural beliefs and scientific processes associated with the cultural practice of passage to manhood (ukwaluka). Data were validated through piloting the data gathering instruments and by doing member checking [32].

4.4 Findings and discussions

The following section of this article discusses the findings from the data obtained from university students, teachers and community members. Generally, the findings seemed to be homogenous in nature with of course some few differences here and there. From the analyse data, four themes emerged, namely, perceptions, experiences and beliefs on the cultural practice of passage to manhood; timing and safety measures regarding the cultural practice of passage to manhood; health and food related issues as well as sustainability and cultural identity. I now discuss each of these below.

Perceptions, experiences and beliefs on the cultural practice of passage to manhood

All participants agreed that this cultural practice should respected and nurtured. In this regard, one teacher commented that:

“This is a sacred practice which should be handled with great care. It is the pride of the amaXhosa culture”.

This resonates with [6]’s findings in his study he conducted in the Eastern Cape, South Africa that amaXhosa still value some of their cultural practices, in particular, the passage to manhood (ukwaluka). Concurring, one university student contributed that:

“Ideally, the cultural practice of passage to manhood is for the transition of Xhosa boys to becoming men. It is a cultural practice I respect and commend because it is much more than the physical change but rather a psychological change. That is, how one’s behavior changes such as how to carry yourself as a man and how you address people. Not only your elders, but those that are younger than you. It’s an important practice because it is a way of grooming men”.

One community member added that the cultural practice plays a very important role in our communities (both urban and rural) since children’s up-bringing of is different from one family to another. Hence, initiates have an opportunity to be exposed to discipline (ukuqeqeshwa) during the passage to manhood. Embedded in this cultural practice is the spirit of Ubuntu whereby families and community members support one another [14], [15], [12] during this cultural practice. Certainly, these narratives resonate with what [6] highlight that there is need to revitalise and restore cultural heritages in South African communities so that learners can value their cultural and indigenous knowledge. This could contribute to identity formation of learners [19], [23].

However, one teacher expressed his concern that today this practice is done in a careless manner by greedy people who are after money. Another parent added that, as a result, this cultural practice has lost its dignity because there are people who are taking chances and who are not qualified to do it. That could be why some initiates end up losing their manhood or even die during this period. Thus, these community members suggested that lessons should be taught from grade 10-12 on how boys should conduct themselves. That is, they should not engage in unprotected sex and not abuse alcohol. Another parent added that, the initiation school has a code of conduct and initiates should be taught to be responsible. One teacher commented that:

“The lessons teach them how to be men. How to face difficult times in life. How to treat women and children with love and respect. How to control and handle family issues. They help in making them to respect elderly people”.

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Timing and safety measures regarding the cultural practice of passage to manhood

Regarding the fact that in the past the cultural practice of passage to manhood ({	extit{ukwaluka}}) was mostly done in June and hence the number of years for manhood were counted using this month’s {	extit{isiXhosa}} name, {	extit{iSilimela}}; all the participants commented that this was the best time of the year for this cultural practice. One university student commented that:

“This month is during winter, so diseases do not spread easily and most organisms are in hibernation especially snakes”.

One parent commented that:

“Initiates don’t wash and fire has to be made most of the time in their huts. Also, bacteria can’t withstand the cold weather in winter. There are limitations in drinking the water but initiates don’t get thirsty that much in winter. Furthermore, since June is after autumn ({	extit{ukwindla}}), there is plenty of fresh food from the fields, sour milk (amasi) made from fresh milk from cows, and so on, and so initiates couldn’t get hungry”.

The above except suggests that there is a great potential to bridge the gap between indigenous knowledge and school science to make science relevant and accessible to learners [11], [9], [12]. One teacher commented though that the timing of the practice was intended to also test the initiates’ endurance to winter or cold conditions in order prepare them to face or withstand difficult times in life. So, it could be argued that this practice is perceived as lifelong learning.

The participants in this study acknowledge though that this practice is now mostly done in December. This shows that cultural practices are not static but are rather dynamic as proposed by [15]. They cited various reasons for this and these ranged from financial to convenient issues. For example, one teacher commented that:

“Initiation is an expensive practice. By this time most people have money because they received bonuses therefore they can financially prepare for the passage to manhood (\textit{ulwaluko}). Everyone is on holiday so most members of the family can participate and assist in the preparations of \textit{ulwaluko}. Boys are also having a long vacation. Initiates can nicely expose their bodies to the sun”.

Concurring, some parents added that:

“Most parents get bonuses at the end of the year; they are on long holidays to make imigidi; togetherness of families; young initiates are on school holidays; no need for making fire in the bhoma”.

“Has to do with long school holidays and the initiates do not have any stress about studying”.

From these participants’ narratives, it seems that the change of this practice from June to December is a reflection of the influences of the more modern social economic systems on traditional social practices. Seemingly small but with some unintended knock-on effects. For instance, some these participants acknowledged that doing this cultural practice in December has its disadvantages. To this end, one parent commented that since it is hot in December, the initiates can suffer from dehydration. So, there is a need for precautionary measures to be taken. One teacher added that:

“This is a very hot period. Initiates might dehydrate easily if they don’t take too much liquid. Wounds get septic easily and might take too long to heal if not treated carefully”.

Regarding certain parents or guardians taking their boys to the circumcision school in early grades such as grade 8, which is something new compared to the past, one community member commented that this could be a problem at school since when they go back and they may demand respect from other school learners. Also, they may not finish their studies thinking that they are old now. Concurring, one teacher acknowledged that although taking of boys to the circumcision during early grades is problematic, this happens when some boys have failed some grades resulting in them getting old and getting peer pressure from the other boys who have done the practice. Additionally, some parents regard it as an honour to have taken their boys to the circumcision school.

However, one university student made a compelling argument in this regard that:

“Every family has its own reasons for doing such and it could be valid for them. Some situations they allow for this because the boy is keen, and that could be due to the boy being excited to be a man. Point is, situations differ”.
Health and food related issues

All the participants in this study felt that it is very important for all boys to undergo medical examination before going through the process of passage to manhood. Some teachers commented that:

“It is a very good practice because it will indicate whether that boy is ready to do the practice in a traditional way or to go to the hospital. Today there are diseases that can make it difficult for a boy to survive there. Therefore, it will inform the parents about the precautionary measures to be taken when the boy is there”.

“It is good for health purposes. These boys might have diseases such TB, HIV/AIDS etc. These diseases can be cured when detected”.

Lending support, some community members commented that:

“Sexually transmitted infections and other chronic diseases such as diabetes, epilepsy, and hypertension could be detected– we try to control this but we need thorough examination by health professionals…”

“As a result of diseases it is useful for boys to undergo medical check-up before they go to the circumcision school as a preventive measure”.

Agreeing, one student added that medical check-up is a precautionary measure that is taken in order to avoid complications and is thus a good thing for the safety of the boys. These findings suggest that there is an intersection between modern western science and traditional knowledge or indigenous knowledge. And so these thought systems should be seen as having a potential to complement one another rather than being seen as diametrically opposed or mutually exclusive [7], [18], [12].

Notwithstanding, all these participants acknowledged, however, that in some parts of the Eastern, such as former Transkei, they have been experiencing problems as far as the cultural practice of passage to manhood. To this end, one teacher commented that:

“May be there are no medical check-ups before the boys go there. Or perhaps they are taken there at a tender age sometimes without the consent of their parents. Some traditional doctors (jingcibi) are inexperienced. Sometimes some fathers did not undergo this practice so they don’t know what’s going on”.

Two community members confirmed that:

“They are experiencing these problems because some of their traditional practitioners are unqualified and there is a tendency to commercialize the practice; in the former Transkei some amaMpondo fathers never went to the circumcision school and yet their sons have been; some of them go at the same time as their sons and this affects respect; not respected if you have done the practice in hospital”.

“In some of those areas this practice was not done and people are starting to have interest of it, but they are not qualified to do it and they are doing it the wrong way”.

One university student commented that:

The boys do not take the necessary precautions before the practice as a result there are complications. Some boys also do the practice without having obtained some permission from their parents (ukuziba)…”

Regarding the white clay that initiates have to put on their bodies, community members, teachers and university students commented that this was a useful practice for the initiates to experience change from boyhood to manhood. To this end, two teachers commented that:

“AmaXhosa believe that the white clay (ingceke) extracts boyhood from the initiates. It also protects the body as most of the time the initiates are not on their clothes”.

“It makes them dignified and respectful to women. It acts as a sunscreen and prevents sunburns. Therefore, it is a good thing to put on the clay”.

Two community members added that:

“Since the initiates do not wash, the white clay protects the skin and draws on the sweat. It also prevents the skin from cold weather as well as from the sun rays”.

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“It’s also good as the clay sucks body sweat and dirt as the initiates are not allowed to wash during that period. It can also keep them warm”.

One university student agreed that the white clay is good to protect the skin and it is also a form of clothing to cover up the body. Another teacher added that the white clay also chases away evil spirits (oohili) at night. It could be argued that this cultural belief has no scientific explanation as pointed out by [20], [21] that not all indigenous knowledge is scientific.

However, one community member cautioned that while he supports the use of the white clay by initiates, the reaction of other initiates to it should be assessed by health professionals for in case they are allergic to it. This shows that this community member embraces tapping into both these knowledges and herein lies the role of border crossing as espoused by [26].

Regarding the practice of putting on red clay (imbola) and later isibindi, all the respondents in this study felt that this was good practice. For instance, one teacher commented that:

“Red clay represents first stage in the manhood meaning that he is still fresh from the mountain. There are certain things that he can’t do and places he can’t go to. It also removes the effects of the white clay and gives him good luck. The isibindi shows that he is in the advanced stage of manhood”.

Concurring, one community member added that:

“It is believed that imbola is intended to remove the old life and bring in a new one. It is also a transitional sun screen”.

The other teacher added that, red clay (imbola) and later isibindi extract butter that was smeared over the body. Pertaining to food that the initiates have to eat, one teacher commented that:

“It prepares them for manhood. Drinking too much liquid and fatty food will interfere with the healing process…”

One community member agreed that dry food and in small quantities of fluids/water is good for initiates. However, he cautioned that people must be careful of dehydration. Concurring, another community member added that there is also a need to recommend appropriate diet, for example, when initiates have incommunicable diseases such as diabetes. In contrast to the community members’ and teachers’ views regarding food, one university student was radical and commented that:

“The diet is difficult to follow because the food is terrible in the early days. Food without salt is eaten and no meat is allowed. There is a belief that this is intended to help with the healing process”.

This comment points to the need to incorporate indigenous knowledge in school science so that students can be able to cross borders from one world view to another as proposed by [24]. That might enable them to see the connections between these thought systems.

**Sustainability and cultural identity**

Although these participants, in particular, teachers and community members realized that there some challenges associated with this cultural practice especially in some parts of the Eastern Cape, they indicated that it would be difficult to ignore it since it is an ancient cultural practice. To this end, one teacher commented that:

“…It has good results because it is in their minds that when they have undergone this practice they must behave like men and be respectful. Therefore, it has a psychological effect”.

This teacher further commented that:

“…I don’t want my child to be an outcast in his peers and the society at large. He will not be regarded as a man who can perform duties of a real men in the society. He will never enjoy any kind of dignity and will be a mockery in the community”.

The other teacher added that:

“We as amaXhosa is our practice that has to be done by every Xhosa boy. Also, my son won’t be taken by the community as a human being, I am a man with family and will not allow my child not to undergo this practice”
Another teacher cautioned that: “Every Xhosa man must go through it in order for him to be a real man. Women won’t agree to be married by a person who has never perform this practice”. In addition, one community member reiterated too that:

“...To be freely accepted by our community; to be accepted by his own future wife; in other cultural activities, e.g., imbiza yekhaya; preaching in church – you have to do the cultural practice as in my culture you don’t stay as a boy forever”.

Agreeing, another community member lamented that:

“in my culture it is a stage whereby a boy when he reaches a certain age he must do the practice and it becomes a problem for someone who didn’t undergo the practice in terms of behaviour and also the discrimination in the community.

In contract, one community member originally from former Transkei stated that:

“It depends on the situation but it should be done in consultation with other people in the community. In our days since children are born in hospitals and there may be no need for them to go to the circumcision school... Furthermore, a venue does not matter and what counts most is the child’s state of health. Isiko is dynamic and has to do with sitting down and agreeing. People have to accept knowledge from the west”.

Of course both teachers and community members identified some weaknesses associated with how this cultural practice is being done in our days. For instance, one teacher commented that:

“This cultural practice of passage to manhood is not done the way it was performed before. In the olden days the boy would wait until is old enough before he could go to the bush. By that time he would be strong enough to withstand the challenges associated with the practice of ulwaluko…”

Concurring, one community member commented that:

“This cultural practice is losing dignity as these young men come back and behave like boys and also make friends with people who did not undergo the practice. It is also much exposed to women more than before”.

To circumvent some of the challenges associated with this cultural practice, one teacher suggested that parents should always be hands-on during this process. Another parent concurred and emphasized that parents need to take responsibility during this period.

Lending support, one community member cautioned that we are slowly losing purpose of young men to become the real men as they come back from the bush and do worse criminal activities. He therefore categorically recommended that:

- Decisive intervention in the form of early education by road shows in communities, high schools and universities is needed;
- Involve parents – single and married;
- Intensive intervention for traditional doctors (iingcibi) and traditional nurses (amakhankatha);
- Formation of a man’s forum locally and nationally; and
- Discourage the community to see this culture as a source of income and instead they should look forward to assist in all respect.

4.5 Concluding remarks

The findings of this study have revealed that male isiXhosa speaking university students, teachers and community members of the Eastern Cape, Grahamstown, in particular, have some wealth of knowledge and wisdom on the cultural practice of passage to manhood (ukwaluka). Some of this knowledge, however, needs to be further researched. They emphasized that this cultural practice is a transition from boyhood to manhood and so it needs to be preserved. This finding thus gives credence to [6]’s assertion that there is a need for revitalization of cultural practices and heritage in South Africa. The participants in this study further believe that this cultural practice can play a pivotal role in maintaining and sustaining the cultural identity of isiXhosa speaking men in South Africa. Additionally, given the fact that there are so many diseases in our days, communicable and incommunicable, they acknowledged that there is a need to use western medicines in conjunction with this practice where it
is applicable. They however expressed concern and discredited commercialization of this cultural practice as inexperienced or unqualified practitioners are stigmatizing it at an alarming rate. They thus appealed to parents/guardians to be involved during this process. Similarly, they also proposed that there is a dire need for stringent measures to be taken as well as empowerment and monitoring of practitioners who are involved with this cultural practice.

It also emerged that embedded within this cultural practice there is a potential to investigate and extract some scientific knowledge associated with it. If this could be done, this could open up opportunities to explore ways of incorporating such IK into school science curriculum to make science relevant to learners’ everyday lives and hence reinforce meaningful learning. To make this a reality realizable, it is acknowledged, however, that there is a need for science teachers to be equipped with skills on how to incorporate traditional knowledge or indigenous knowledge in their science classrooms to enable their learners to do border crossing with ease in-between these knowledges.

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