DIVERGENT CATEGORIES OF LEXICAL ITEMS IN NANDI NAMES: A MORPHO-SEMANTIC APPROACH

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ABSTRACT

The study examined the divergent categories of the lexical items that form Nandi names using a morpho-semantic approach. Exploratory research was applied. The native Nandi dialect speakers from the Kalenjin language formed the target population. The study area covered 30 Nandi County wards in Kenya, which produced 240 respondents; comprising Nandi dialect speaking native elders. Focus group discussion was used to collect data from 30 groups consisting of 8 elders each. Data analysis used the morpho-semantical approach; thereby analysing people's names. Data was presented using tables and narratives. The findings showed that prefixes strengthen ownership of the noun in Nandi names. The suffix -et refers to itself, but, with the suffix deleted, prefixes 'kip' and 'jep' make names be owned by the noun used to signify son or daughter born during grasshopper invasion (son or daughter of the grasshopper). Suffixes are eliminated and prefixes affixed to impart significance to a name. The suffix -et in the phrase Koiyet indicates wealth, which is eliminated and the noun 'goi' is employed in naming. Names bearing the form of 'teknonymy', to refer to parents. 'Kobot Arusei' name means mother of the grey bull, and connects the nouns 'Kobot' and 'Arusei'. Most names come from time, seasons and events (which are linguistic nature). Majority of kinship phrases get derived from nouns; whereby several nouns compound to form kinship terms. The Nandi kinship names use plural marker to affinity connections names. This study contributes critical anthroponomical knowledge pertaining to the Nandi language and the understanding of the nature of Nandi identities. Emerging Nandi generations need to take cognizance of this lexical diversity to maintain the community values, traditions and the essence of naming. It is necessary for divergent lexical categories that have defined naming among the Nandi to be maintained under communal intervention.

KEYWORDS: Nandi, kinship names, morpho-semantic approach, lexical items, divergent categories

1. INTRODUCTION

Globally, babies are given names at birth to identify them, especially with the immediate culture into which they are born [1]. African cultures and identities are retained through personal and familial

names. Personal names are used to imply legality and social status [2]. Finch believes that personal names separate people and show social standing. Scholars examine onomasiology because names convey social relationships and identity [3]. The importance of personal and familial names in many communities has increased interest in them. Giriama names are more than labels, contributing to naming politics [4]. Names develop and govern family as well as social bonds. This hypothesis says names help us understand family interactions. Surnames are the easiest way to determine family links [2]. Parents name their children to express their identity and define their personality. According to Finch, forenames and surnames are vital for family identification in western countries like the UK.

Names bind people to families differently. Kinship names represent an individual's social identity and ties. Kinship names are handled for energetic benefit and reflect cultural family links [5]. Kinships facilitate complex cooperation, coordination and problem resolution. Social anthropologists believe kinship involves uniqueness and connection [6,7]. Name impacts personality and social inclusion [8]. However, social historians have empirically studied personal names to find family relationships. Finch [2] adds that people often have the same name throughout their lives, which is consistent in public identity and self-image. English and Chinese kinship names are important in worldwide communication. Kinship names indicate gender, clan position, and family. Miao [9] also thinks national character, childbearing attitude, and family and society structure affect English and Chinese kinship names. Verbs, adjectives, nouns, and pronouns assign Oromo personal names [3]. In addition, Tesfaye stresses that Oromo personal names feature gender-indicating suffixes.

In the Eastern Cape Province of South Africa, Klerk and Bosch [10] examined Afrikaans, Xhosa and English naming patterns. The three scientists found disparities in infant names and name givers throughout the three civilizations, but naming was clearly socially and culturally oriented and centred on human interactions. Socio-onomastics behind social name-giving is intriguing. Ainiala [11] defines socio-onomastics as the sociolinguistic study of names in cultural, social, and situational contexts. Social inequalities in infant names are well documented [12]. Blount notes that Euro-American societies commonly grant three names, with the personal or Christian name being most significant. Official sur or family names assign the child to a kinship unit, usually the family in European societies. Blount also notes cultural variances in Korean and Chinese kinship unit names. According to him, the family name comes first, followed by the middle name, then the personal name. The scholar says a fixed system with higher naming limits assigns names. Blount avers that the government approves female and male names in Iceland, Denmark, Germany, and Finland. Kenyan clannish societies have varieties of names [12]. Blount claims such societies use the same surname for all family members and refer to the community. He also observes that the Luo give children at least three names, one of which is circumstantial and birth-related. A second name frequently links the child to the mother's family. Third biggest are inherited names, often clan names.

The Nandi community in Kenya may best illustrate naming. The Kalenjin subgroup has a rich culture. In western Kenya's highlands live the Nandi, or Chepngal. The Nandi are Kalenjin speakers from the

Chari-Nile sub-family of the Nilo-Saharan language family. Nandi marriage, circumcision and child-naming customs are strong. Weddings (Kaatunisyneet) were life-changing and brought together two people who may not have met before but were married by two families. Initiation was Nandi life's second big event for 12-18-year-old boys and girls. Besides circumcision, such initiation rites imparted tribal customs and hidden rituals. After four days of birth, Nandi children received ancestor-related spirit names. This was their biggest event. Three months later, the spirit name became a personal name. This complex Nandi naming system is permanent. The child also receives a clan name from numerous sources during a Kuurseet rite. Clan names like chebusi or chebusit (or pusit for men) stem from dead ancestors, lineage members, and the need to appease the soul of an animal the child's father killed. The third name category is often assigned at the beginning. Like other communities, the Nandi name each other for cultural and identity purposes. They honour and welcome disabled people with initiation procedures.

1.1 Statement of the Problem

The Nandi maintains a complex naming system. However, recent evidence indicates that the naming practices being utilized today lack anthropological considerations. Chebet-Choge [13] contends that the omission of anthroponomy disrupts the intricate naming system and the connection between present-day Nandi history and the past, as well as the way of life of the Nandi people. Chebet-Choge expresses concern regarding the potential loss of critical anthroponomical knowledge pertaining to the Nandi language. In light of the limited or non-existent contemporary evidence regarding the onomastics of personal and kinship names among the Nandi-speaking people, it was necessary to conduct a linguistic analysis of the Nandi's personal and kinship names using the morpho-semantic approach in order to address the concerns raised. This paper explores the divergent categories of the lexical items that constitute the Nandi names.

2. LITERATURE REVIEW

Naming systems are fundamental to communication, as they allow individuals to identify, classify and convey information about the world around them. One way in which naming systems can be categorized is based on lexical categories. In a study conducted by Watson [14], patterns of lexical correlation and divergence were observed in the Casamance region of Senegal. The study found that in Casamance, naming systems were divergent in terms of the lexical categories of nouns and verbs. Nouns were found to be highly correlated across different dialects, indicating that there was a shared understanding of objects, people and places. However, verbs showed significant divergence across dialects, with different verbs used to describe similar actions or events. The divergent naming system for verbs is indicative of the dynamic and varied nature of actions and events in the region. In contrast, the highly correlated nouns suggest that objects, people and places have a more static and agreed upon meaning. Overall, the study highlights the importance of understanding the lexical categories that underpin naming systems, as they reveal much about how people understand and classify the world around them. In the case of Casamance, the divergent categories of nouns and verbs suggest a rich and nuanced naming system that reflects the diversity of experiences and perspectives in the region.

Naming systems are fundamental in every culture as they help identify people, objects, places, and events. One of the studies on naming systems is Dimmendaal *et al.* [15], which focused on the historical morphology of Nilotic languages. The study findings revealed the divergent categories of the lexical categories. Nilotic languages are spoken in eastern and central Africa and include Nubian, Dinka, Luo and Maasai. Dimmendaal *et al.*'s study shows that Nilotic languages use different categories to name people and things, depending on their characteristics. For instance, they use gender categories to distinguish male and female, age categories to differentiate between the old and the young, and occupation categories to denote people's professions. Moreover, the study highlights how Nilotic languages use physical characteristics such as body shape, height, skin colour, and hair texture to categorize people. They also use environmental categories such as plants, animals, and natural elements like water and soil to name places and events. In conclusion, the study by Dimmendaal *et al.* emphasizes the importance of divergent categories in naming systems. It illustrates that different languages use different categories to name people, objects, and places based on their unique characteristics. Understanding these categories in naming systems can help us gain a better appreciation and respect for the cultures and languages that use them.

Naming systems are used to identify, categorize, and organize information. A study conducted by Aabedi *et al*. [16] suggests that naming systems can be categorized into divergent categories of the lexical categories based on their ability to retrieve information. The study explored the convergence of heteromodal lexical retrieval in the lateral prefrontal cortex, which is a region of the brain associated with higher-level cognitive functions. The researchers used a variety of stimuli to activate different lexical categories, including objects, actions and emotions. Based on their findings, Aabedi *et al*. suggest that naming systems can be divided into divergent categories based on the lexical categories they activate. For example, a naming system based on object categories would involve categorizing items based on their physical attributes, while a system based on action categories would involve categorizing items based on their function or use. These divergent categories can be useful in developing naming systems that are tailored to specific needs. For example, a healthcare provider may develop a naming system based on the body's organs and systems to aid in diagnosing and treating medical conditions. In conclusion, the study by Aabedi *et al*. highlights the importance of divergent categories of lexical categories in the development of naming systems. By understanding these categories, we can develop more effective naming systems that facilitate the organization and retrieval of information.

Sasala *et al*. [17] conducted a study on the Nandi names and found some divergent categories of lexical items that formed the names. Using a morpho-semantic approach, the findings shed light on the intricate nature of the Nandi naming practices. One of the significant discoveries was the presence of morphological components in the Nandi names, which formed the basis of its meaning. These morphemes comprised prefixes, roots, and suffixes, which gave meaning to different parts of the name. Furthermore, the study revealed that some of the lexical items had semiotic functions, indicating some cultural significance in the name's usage. These items reflected the Nandi people's beliefs, practices

and values, indicating that the name had deeper meaning beyond a mere identification label. Additionally, the study found that some of the lexical items used to form the Nandi name had variations, suggesting the language's dynamic nature. These variations showed that the name was subject to cultural, social and linguistic changes, which affected its meaning and usage. Overall, the morpho-semantic approach used in the study helped to provide an in-depth understanding of the Nandi name. The study showed that the name was more than just a label and had a rich cultural and linguistic heritage that was worth preserving and celebrating.

3. Methodology
3.1 Study Design
Exploratory investigation was applied in the study. The choice of exploratory design for the study was based on phenomena of personal and kinship names being a complicated subject, which required abundant of descriptive material. That morpho-semantic examination of Nandi names was anchored in interpretivism attempting to draw comprehension of their intricacy and meaning in the particular Nandi local context. The study hoped the identification of morpho-semantics of Nandi names would maximize leading to a fuller knowledge of the how, why and when they were and still are given.

3.2 Target Population and sample Size
The study targeted both male and female personal and kinship names in native Nandi speakers. The target audience was all native Nandi dialect speakers from the Kalenjin language, taken from 30 Nandi County wards in Kenya. Considering that Nandi County has a countably significant number of Nandi native speakers, the study used a study population that included 8 local elders picked from each of the 30 wards of Nandi County. Choice of 8 elders from each ward was based on its suitability for a focus group discussion. It has been proposed that the ideal size of a focus group is between 8 to 10 subjects [18]. Choosing the elders was based on their position to provide incisive information on birth order words, contextual names, and other meanings and structural components. In retrospect, the study population composed of 240 local elders who were native speakers of the Nandi dialect. A sample of 240 elders was recruited. Morse [19] states that for grounded theory research such as exploratory investigations, 30-50 respondents is recognized as the appropriate number in studies that aim at using categories.

3.3 Research Instruments and Data Collection Procedure
The primary method used to gather data was focus group discussions, which involved 30 groups of 8 elders apiece, matching the 30 study wards. Utilizing the Koitalel arap Samoei Museum's depiction of Nandi culture, the second tool was a checklist for document analysis. The Nandi's social structure caught the attention of the checklist in particular. This is why there were three essential items on the checklist. The checklist's first objective was to define the family's place in Nandi culture. Its second goal was to investigate household duties, and its third item dealt with child-naming rituals. Face validity as well as content validity were used to validate the discussion guide for focus groups. Supervisors and colleagues were thus asked to evaluate the suitability of the guide based only on its

face value under face validity. Content validity was determined by supervisors who reviewed the material to make sure it addressed the necessary constructs and was in line with the body of existing literature. Many changes were proposed and put into practice. Regarding dependability, the investigators carefully trained the six selected research assistants in focus group documentation and moderation. In addition, the guide's questions were designed to be straightforward and extremely detailed.

3.4 Data Analysis and Presentation

Morpho-semantic analysis was done on the data. Morphosemantics refers to knowledge in linguistics, and offers morphological analysis and semantic interpretation of nouns and verbs among other things [20]. Using this method, the constituent morphemes were used to perform a semantic analysis of Nandi personal and kinship names. Finding the underlying meaning of names was the goal of this strategy. The researchers noted the four study objectives when presenting the data. As a result, the researchers first documented the intrinsic and extrinsic linguistic characteristics present in each of the different categories of names using the identified names. The researchers also looked at the different types of lexical items that make up kinship and personal names. The third section of the study involved a morphological analysis of the names to ascertain the origins of the different Nandi names and the structure of the morphemes that develop the names. In order to interpret Nandi personal and kinship names in terms of their function, occasion, and performed rituals, the researchers lastly carried out a semantic analysis.

3.5 Ethical Considerations

Ethical Consideration are a set of principles guiding a research designs and practices; and provide principles such as voluntary participation, anonymity, informed consent, potential for harm, confidentiality, and results communication [21]. By stating its purpose, the study maintained objectivity and integrity. All participants were asked for their permissions without using force or undue influence. There were no circumstances in the study that could have harmed the participants. Without getting their permission, the researchers did not use any vulnerable or special populations in the development of this study. Subject privacy was respected. Furthermore, participants were free to choose whether or not to participate in the study and to withdraw from it. Data confidentiality was carefully monitored. The researchers abstained from careless data analysis and findings reporting.

4. RESULTS

The study analysed lexical categories in Nandi names. In particular, the study was keen to assay the nature of lexical categories. From the focused group discussions conducted with the groups of elders together with an analysis of available archival documents, it was determined that lexical categories of Nandi names were largely open and included nouns, verbs and adjectives. Ifeoma [22] carried out a linguistic appraisal of the linguistic categories prevalent in Igbo names. In line to the findings of the current study, Nandi names, like the Igbo, are derived from lexical, phrasal and compound words. It was further discovered that Nandi names are based on the grammatical features inherent in Nandi

language. These results were contextualized through the Functional Theory of Grammar and Lexicon Contrast. Nandi names are formed from Nouns, verbs, and adjectives as discussed below.

4.1 Personal and Kinship Names derived from Nouns

The study revealed that most of the Nandi personal names are formed from nouns by inflection, where prefixes are affixed to nouns to denote gender, places or objects. These prefixes make noun terms to become names. Moreover, Nandi nouns generate names to suit the terminology, which is congruent with the nature of birth, events happening at birth, time at birth, and the season when the birth occurred. Some names such as Jerubet have no male equivalent variants. Jerubet, for instance, denotes hunger, which among the Nandi is a phenomenon that was not associated with men. Suffixes from common nouns are deleted to form names. The following provides a listing of some events, seasons, time and nature of birth, together with associated nouns, suffixes, full words and Nandi names (Table 1a and 1b).

Table 1a: Suffixes -ur and -siek

Event/season/time/nature of birth	Noun	Suffix	Full word	Nandi derived name
Day (time) days	Bet	-ut-singular -siek—Plural	Betut Betusiek	Kibet or Jebet (one who holds whole day). Note: suffix is deleted for child to own noun, i.e. *ut* becomes *bet*
Night (time)	Kemboi	-ut -siek	Kembout Kembousie	Kipkemboi or Jepkemboi (belong to the night)
Dry season	Kemei	-ut	Kemeut	Kipkemei or jepkemei (belonging to dry season)
Dry seasons	Kemei	-siek	Kemeusiek	
Veranda	Keter	-ut	Keterut	Kipketer or Jepketer (of the veranda)
Veranda	Keter	-siek	Keterusiek	
Late evening	Lagat	-ut	Lagatut	Kiplagat or Jelagat (belong to early night)
Late evenings	Lagat	-siek	Lagatusiek	

Source: Authors (2023)

Table 1b: Suffixes -et and -ik

Event/season/time/nature of birth	Noun	Suffix	Full name	Derived Nandi Name
Born at the door	Kurg	-et	Kurget	Kipkurgat or Jepkurgat
Doors	Kurg	-ik	Kurgotik	
Born in the granary	Choge	-et	Choget	Kipchoge or Jepchoge
Granaries	Choge	-ik	Chogenik	
Born during grasshopper invasion	Talam	-et	Talamwet	Kiptalam or Jeptalam (male or female child of grasshoppers)
Grasshoppers	Talam	-ik	Talamik	
Arrival of maize to Nandi	Bande	-k	Bandek	Kibande or Jebande (of the maize)

Source: Authors (2023)

It is necessary to observe here that the study established that several linguistic processes involving lexical items take place during name formation. Noun suffixes are, for instance, deleted to enable the name own the noun. Otherwise, with the suffix in place, the noun is owned by itself. Prefixes are inserted to strengthen ownership of the noun by the name. Take for instance the noun *talamwet* (grasshopper). When used with the suffix -et then it refers to itself; however, with the suffix deleted, prefixes kip- and jep- are inserted and the noun is now owned by the name (Kiptalam or Jeptalam) and used to imply son or daughter born during grasshopper invasion (son or daughter of the grasshopper).

Nouns are also used to derive praise names. Like in the cases of other names, suffixes are deleted and prefixes affixed to assign meaning to the name. For instance, Tapbagoi is a name used in Nandi to denote a woman of plenty or wealthy woman. In this name, the suffix -et in the term Koiyet, which means wealth is deleted and the noun goi is used to derive a name. The prefix tap- is affixed to add the meaning woman of. Meanwhile, in the name Tapjore, which means a woman of the Jore family, the prefix tap- is affixed on the name of a person named jore to initiate the name. Similarly, in the name Taptuwei, which means woman of the black bull, the prefix tap- is affixed to the name tuwei, which denotes black bull to initialize the name. From the information gathered during discussions, it appeared as though all praise names were referencing women. On inquiring, one male participant noted thus:

> …yes, only women were praised. Among this community, men were deemed to be fearless and therefore no man worth his salt was supposed to be praised … (Participant, FGD 12).

Another category of names that largely uses the lexical category of nouns affixed with prefixes is that of initiation names. The nouns in this case include names of fathers, bulls or departed kinsmen. The study revealed that all male off springs in the Nandi sub-tribe are bestowed initiation names that are purely patronymics and are affixed with the prefix Arap denoting son of. For example, Arap Lelei is used to mean son of the white bull. In this name, the prefix arap is affixed to the name Lelei, which

combines Lel synonym for white and new, with ei, which means bull. Chumo on the other hand is a name that denotes one of the seven age sets of the Nandi. When affixed with the prefix Arap, the name becomes Arap Chumo and signifies son of Chumo. Similarly, Maiyo means local beer/brew derived from the bearers named Kimaiyo. When affixed with the prefix Arap, the birth name prefix kip is deleted and the initiate is known as Arap Maiyo meaning the son of the beer.

Use of nouns as lexical items also features significantly in marriage names bestowed only to women during marriage ceremonies. These names take the form of teknonymy, in the sense that they refer to parents. It emerged from the focus group discussions that marriage names were generated by combining two nouns, Kobot denoting mother of and a proper name. The name Kobot Arusei, for instance, is interpreted to mean mother of the grey bull, and brings together the noun Kobot and the noun Arusei. Arus means grey and ei means bull and hence Kobot Arusei. The name Kobot Lulei, used to denote mother of the annexed (prisoners of war), brings together the noun Kobot and the noun Lulei. The word Lulei is broken down into Lul indicating annex or forceful take away; and ei denoting bull. On the other hand, the marriage name Kobot Kipkoech is used to mean mother of Kipkoech and brings together the nouns Kobot and Kipkoech. The name Kipkoech comprises the prefix kip used for a male child and koech, which denotes sunrise.

4.2 Personal Names derived from Verbs

The analysis of the information gathered from focus group discussions also revealed that verbs form a key aspect of open lexical categories used in deriving Nandi personal and kinship names. In the Nandi culture, personal and kinship names reflect interaction between language and society and are used to refer to specific and unique entities. Verbs used to derive Nandi names reflect activities that take place during birth, or happened at the time of birth or the manner in which the birth occurred. For example, the name Kipkogei for a boy or Jepkogei, in the case of a girl is derived from the act showing that the umbilical cord had tied itself round the baby. The verb in this case is Kokoigei denoting the act of winding round an entity. Typical names bearing the verb stem are as depicted in Table 2.

Table 2: Names derived from Verbs

Name	Verb	Interpretation
Kimaru	ru	Sleep
Kipruto/Jeruto	ruto	Visit
Kipngeny/Jepngeny	ngeny	Give salt licks to cows
Kesumo	kesumo	Request food by offering free labour
Kipkosgei/Jepkosgei	kosgei	Shake or nimble
Kiptanui/Jeptanui	tanui	Faint
Kibichii/Jebichii	bichii	Harsh parent or relative
Kiptarbei	tar	Tar-bei-run out of water

Kipchirchir/Jepchirchir	chirchiren	Hurry
Kirwa	kerwai	Run
Kibungei/Jebungei	ungei	Hide — mainly used in hidden pregnancy
Kipkigen/Jepkigen	kigen	Wait — used in cases of delayed birth.
Kipkinyor/Jepkinyor	Kenyor	Being found — used when abandoned babies are found
Tabsabei	sab	Wade — used to praise woman who wades towards water source
Taprondich	rany	Keep cattle together — used to praise a woman who tenders a home
Tapkili	kiliegei	Ruffle, disturb or annoy used for a woman who is unruffled and remains loving and caring.

Source: Authors (2023)

These findings show that the Nandi people, just like most other African communities, employ verbs in their systematic way of naming children. Most of the names are attributed to time, seasons and events thereby making names to be of a linguistic nature.

4.3 Personal Names derived from Adjectives

The study established that the Nandi people also employ adjectives in naming children albeit, to a smaller degree. Adjectives are used in naming for purposes of providing a description of the persona but not the name bestowed. In the few instances that the Nandi people have used adjectives in naming children, the motivation has been to describe the physical appearance of the baby at birth. Moreover, deriving a name from an adjective is aimed at bringing out perceptions held by others with regards to the individual. Table 3 indicates some of the few Nandi names derived from adjectives.

Table 3: Names derived from Adjectives

Name	Adjective	Interpretation
Jematia	matia	Baby with less or little body weight (prefix je is affixed to denote girls)
Tele	tele	Tiny and small in appearance and possibly underweight at birth for girls.
Kipkobel	kobel	A description of something that is physically too small (prefix affixed to denote an engendered name)
Tapkurgoi (Beautiful woman)	kurgoi	Pleasant and appealing appearance
Tapsiarka (a happy woman)	siarka	Happiness / open arms/welcoming

Source: Authors (2023)

4.4 Lexical Items in Nandi Names

The research explored divergent lexical categories that form Nandi kinship terms using the Functional Theory of the Grammar Lexicon. The study used this theory to underscore lexical components in Nandi kinship names. The study discovered that most of the kinship terms in Nandi are derived from nouns. The nominal terms used to derive these names were mostly proper nouns formed from single words or compounded. Equally, the study identified that some features are phrasal or sentential patterns forming kinship terms. Sentential pattern in kinship names are descriptive and explain the relationship identified.

For instance, 'Weribo tie' (nephew) literally describes whose son is identified; meaning 'the son of daughter'. Several other phrasal categories are employed in formulation of Nandi kinship names showing grammatical combination of several words to derive kinship names. Several cases of compounding of nouns to form kinship names are elaborately used by the Nandi to form kinship terms. Examples include the following names; 'chebo-taptel' (niece), 'chebo-mama' (aunt's daughter) and 'chebo-senge' (uncle's daughter). The descriptive aspect of the grammatical features is evident in compound words used in the naming patterns. Common nouns are employed to form most of Nandi kinship names. One notable grammatical feature of the Nandi kinship names is plural marker especially in affinity relations names. The null plural marker forms are used to address both in singular and plural. Explicit examples are from the lineal relation of parents- 'aba' (father) and 'karke' (mother, used for both singular and plural. Plurality is discerned to exist minimally in kinship terms. The researchers enquired further from one discussion group the reason behind the lack of plurality in most kinship terms, especially consanguine terms. The response was as follows:

> No individual has more than one relation in each kinship category especially parents and grandparents. It is rare to have many kinship relations of each category in one given situation to warrant the use of plural terms (FGD 7).

5. DISCUSSION

The study findings reflect those of Kinyua [23] who determined that Turkana personal names were formed from categories including nouns. According to Kinyua, positioner nouns were used to derive personal names. In this scenario, positioner nouns were either processor, ingressive, or agentive. For instance, in the name 'e-ka-banar', -banar- is the verb's root stem, meaning that the noun formed is agentive. Thus, the morpheme /e-/ is a prefix used to mark gender, /-ka-/ is a derivational morpheme, /-banar/ is a verb root. The derived personal name is 'Ekabanar'. The finding that Nandi names also included verbs and adjectives shows the desire among the Nandi people to employ personal names to convey vital information. It is argued that nouns and verbs play a crucial role in conveying information regarding various sociocultural aspects [24]. According to Zock and Gemechu, nouns present information in names, while verbs link such information.

The findings of this study regarding the diverse lexical categories in Nandi names further extend the legion of studies showing that proper names have meanings, make references, and have specific syntax [25]. Besides, the study findings showing such lexical categories in Nandi names are consistent with naming in other African communities [26,27]. For example, just like the Nandi who use open lexical categories, it has been demonstrated that the Bantu language Nyakyusa uses an independent and indispensable open category of adjectives [26]. That the lexical categories in Nandi names convey meaning and sociocultural lineage, corroborates arguments showing that names as Odonyms are not mere labels, but are significant indicators of political, social and cultural ideologies inherent in name givers [28]. Concurring with these views, Udoye [27] contends that, among the Igbo people, names form a significant aspect of their culture and reflect their values, meanings, ideas, and thoughts. Moreover, in addition to identifying bearers, names also motivate and raise aspirations among them. Among the Igbo names are structured to have simple nouns. They also prefix personal names to verbs and nouns [27]. For instance, in the Igbo Ukwu, dialect, 'Ume' meaning king is obligatorily prefixed. The personal name 'Umeibe' has 'Ume prefixed to Ibe to reflect king of my neighbour. Similarly, Umenweke has Ume (king) prefixed to Nweke, child of Eke to represent King of the child of Eke

The practice of forming personal names from nouns and verbs by inflection as practiced by the Nandi community of Kenya is also reflected among the Turkana of Kenya. According to Kinyua [23], the Turkana have low occurrence of adjectives leaving them to rely more on verbal adjectives such as e-ke-cap-an, which means a skilled person in weeding derived from the verb root /-cap-/ meaning weed and used in a verbal sense to reflect a skilled male weeder. The frequency marker /-an-/ illustrating that the weeding is done a lot. Meanwhile a lot of Turkana personal names akin to those of the Nandi are derived from abstract and concrete nouns such as laughter, love, colour, as well as compound nouns. For instance, lo-koro, a-ka-dwar-aa-n, and a-ka-lioko-n are infinitive names derived from the abstract noun's greed, bitter and lie [23]. Thus, lokoro is a name bestowed to a boy with the habit eating too much, akadwaraan is a feminine name given to a girl born close to plants such aloe Vera that produce bitter substances. On the contrary, aliokon is a name reserved for a person who often lie.

The Nso people of north-west Cameroon also revere naming newly born children. Similar to other African communities' personal names among the Nso combines lexical information to establish a semantic representation of the utterances [29]. The lexical items in Nso names similar to lexical items in Nandi names designate family hierarchy, circumstances of birth, day of delivery, and babies' physical features at birth among others. In addition, affixes (C) V are employed to categorize Lamnso nouns, which fall into ten major classes [29]. The findings of this study, like others before, confirm that lexical categories involving nouns, verbs, and to a lesser extent, adjective extrinsively and intrinsively motivate the naming of newly born babies and remain relatively stable with time across the Nandi community of Kenya.

6. CONCLUSION

The Nandi people employ divergent categories of open lexical items to derive names for new-born babies and kinship terms. Names derived from nouns are used to depict time, season, place, and events taking place at birth. Names derived from verbs on the other hand reflect interaction between the Nandi language and the societal activities that take place during birth as well as the manner of birth. Meanwhile, in rare occasions when adjectives have been used to derive Nandi names, they have been employed to describe the physical appearance of the baby at birth and how others perceive the baby. Notably, diminutive description names are largely attributed to the girls. Kinship terms are derived from common nouns, compounded nouns and phrasal and sentential features. Regarding lexical categories forming Nandi names, there are three categories. Firstly, prefixes are affixed to nouns to reflect names of places, gender or objects. The names generated from the Nandi nouns are consistent with extrinsic and intrinsic features defining these names. For instance, the noun 'Bet' is affixed the suffix —ut- or —siek- to form the singular word 'Betut' or plural word 'Betusiek' leading to derived names Kibet or Jebet.

7. RECOMMENDATIONS

Nandi personal names are formed from divergent categories of the lexical items that have socio-cultural impact on both the society and individual. Such divergent lexical categories reveal the many preferences of name owners or givers. Emerging Nandi generations need to take cognizance of this lexical diversity to maintain the community values, traditions and the essence of naming. The practice of name clipping to form pet names remains a threat to the rich naming heritage among the Nandi. Use of nick names and pseudo-names overshadows the rich naming practice and erodes the socio-cultural aspects in names. It is necessary for divergent lexical categories that have defined naming among the Nandi to be maintained under communal intervention. The divergent logical semantics in bestowing names to children give expressions of much simpler and older sign forms that nevertheless maintains the indexical nature. This is particularly true for kinship names that were part of the basis for this study.

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