

Dedication

I dedicate this work, first and foremost, to my late mother, Vho-Nyadzani Rahele, whose fond memories I continue to cherish. To my dearest mother who passed on at my early age I say: “Ahee! Dau, Mudamani. Mukololo wa Dombo na Tshiembe.”

My wife Phodisho, and our boys: Mufhu, Ndivhu, Thendo and Teba. You allowed me to take away your precious time that I should have spent with you, so I could devote to this work, and you were patient with me even when it seemed not to come to an end.

My sisters: Florah, Lydia and my *mulamu* Willie Muthabi: for the love and support over the years. I recall with fond memories when my *mulamu* prophetically suggested, many years back during my teens, that I would become an educationist. I hope this work will pave a way towards that long journey.

My late uncle, VhaVenda Vho-John Rammbofheni: who taught me many things about the ways of the Venda. My uncle passed away when this work was under examination. He would be extremely proud to see his stories, which he narrated with great passion, retold to the world through this thesis.

My caring primary school teacher: Mukondeleli Nemukongwe. I never forgot your care and love, and the faith you demonstrated through your deeds.

Last, but not least, the children of Mbaleni and Mmbara primary schools in Venda and their teachers for allowing me to observe your schooling in the hope that I would one day contribute to the improvement of schooling in your area. I hope you will forgive me for the unintended hurt that may result from my ill-advised

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interpretation of your actions. I further hope that you, and others from your area, will one day find this work to be crucial as basis for further research on schooling in Venda.

Nndaa!

Fhulufhelo Azwihangwisi Edward Muthivhi

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