

Ngano: Teaching Environmental Education Using the Shona Folktale

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Abstract

This paper examines the implications of using the Shona folktale as a tool and method for teaching environmental education (EE) which asserts that the folktale is a very effective means in teaching EE since it instructs while entertaining to enable learners to see all the concepts of the environment. These are the biophysical, the social, the political and economic aspects. Through participation in the folktale, learners are also able to bring out the possible environmental risks, crises and challenges surrounding an environmental issue; and they can also learn the importance of the application of environmental impact assessments (EIAs).

Introduction

Most people have a misconception about the environment. They think that the term 'environment' only applies to the nature 'around us'. In this limited view of the environment, they understand it as meaning plants, animals, mountains, etc. In *Guidelines for Secondary Teacher Training: Environmental Education in Zimbabwe*, the authors have corrected the misconception by pointing out that the concept environment has undergone some redefinition. It now includes social, economic and political components in addition to the traditional biophysical one (2004:1). This view of the environment emerged in the 1970s. Earlier on, the concept environment was mainly used to refer to nature or the biophysical elements of our surroundings. People appeared to be mainly concerned about impacts on nature, plants water and animals (O'Donoghue 1995 in *Rhodes University Certificate/Goldfields in Environmental Education: Theme 2 Handout*). The first guiding principle for effective environmental education also stresses the multifaceted nature of the environment when they assert that environmental education should, "consider the environment in its totality – natural and built, technological and social (economic, political, cultural – historical, moral, aesthetic)" (Tbilisi Principles Russia 1977). Thus, all the four major aspects of the environment are intertwined, an action that may appear to be political may have an impact on both the social, economic and biophysical environment. For example, the Rhodesian land tenure system (Johnson 2000:124) wherein Blacks were crammed in the over-populated rural areas, this led to over cultivation of the land, and to erosion since most people ended up cutting trees to clear the little space that was available for agriculture, and at the end, there was poverty, an economic consequence of a political decision that was taken for economic reasons – to cushion White Rhodesians. Therefore, some Africans the only way to survive was to become thieves if they were male or prostitutes if they were female, although all these means of survival are frowned upon socially.

Most Shona students are of the opinion that they will be coming across environmental education in geography and environmental science/education for the first time when in actual fact it has always been there in Shona tradition as is reflected in Shona educational vehicles such as folktales, proverbs (Munjanja 1969) and taboos (Tatira 2000). Thus, this paper seeks to focus on only one aspect, the environmental aspects which mainly looks at the social aspect of the environment, and examines the implications of the Shona folktale on environmental education with the understanding that the Shona folktale is used for both didactic and hedonistic purposes, and was used to teach good social behaviour as the hearers of the folktales learned to survive in their environment. Second, this paper also seeks to show the value of story telling in the teaching of environmental education currently via three folktales used to highlight three different social environments, and the impact they have on people today.

The first two folktales relate to the environment and the other is mainly on the social, but also focuses on the biophysical and economic environments to show the interrelatedness of environmental aspects. Hence, the intention of this study is to create awareness in the readership of the new changes taking place in the meaning of the environment as well as to show a possible method that may be used to stimulate dialogue and debate between participants in environmental education.

What is Environmental Education (EE)?

There are several environmental problems in Zimbabwe. These include poverty, AIDS, unemployment, juvenile delinquency, pollution and shortage of clean water. All these environmental problems show that everyone is affected either directly or indirectly. One method of responding to such adversities is environmental education. According to the Zimbabwean Ministry of Higher and Tertiary Education and the Flemish Office for Development and Technical Assistance (VVOB) draft booklet (2004:11):

Environmental education is a response to risks, issues and crises and opportunities arising from the biophysical, social, economic and political components of the environment. Environmental education includes varied learning processes that provide opportunities for people to develop knowledge, skills and attitudes, which enable them to act in an environmentally responsible way within their communities. These active teaching and learning processes may take place in formal and non-formal education as well as informal ways through information, communication and awareness campaigns.

It is important to note that among the issues that are highlighted in this definition is “varied learning processes”. This means that the learning processes are varied, thus the authors of this paper see folktales as one of them wherein environmental education also develops knowledge in people which empowers learners to know what is proper or improper (the focus of this paper is to make readers aware that folktales can play an important role in environmental education). And in the process, they also acquire skills that will enable them to act responsibly about, in and for the environment; it is hoped that this will lead to the change of attitudes in the learners.

Teaching about the environment is usually teacher-centred, thus the teacher is the transmitter of knowledge. Traditionally it was hoped that the knowledge imparted by the teacher would lead to behaviour change. Today it is part of an awareness campaign on what environmental education is all about, wherein learning of the environment has been about taking the learners outdoors to the biophysical environment. The purpose of such an approach was that it was hoped that by teaching in the environment, an emotional bond would be established between the learner and the environment.

And it was hoped that this would lead to a more positive attitude and behaviour towards the environment aimed towards developing knowledge and changing behaviour and attitudes to create an action competence for the environment. This type of teaching is based on dialogue, encounter and reflection, and the role of the teacher (in this case the *saruNgano*) is that of mediator between people and their perceptions of the world around them. “The mediator also provides a means for the world itself to contribute to the construction of knowledge, skills and behaviour” (MOHTE & VVOB 2004:12). In the traditional set up it is the *saruNgano* who teaches about, in and for the environment. She gives her audience room to ask questions and give suggestions for problem solving. Environmental education among the Shona is also found in taboos, proverbs and riddles, all of which were used to socialise youngsters and remind the adults of what was acceptable behaviour and values.

Hence, environmental education is necessary because it helps people to identify risks, crisis and problems; a risk results from an action taken without the player knowing the impact of what might befall him/her after taking the course of action that s/he would have embarked on. Therefore there is a need to carry out an environmental impact assessment prior to any environmental activity, an assessment to the start of the development of a process in order to predict the environmental impact which can be social, political, biophysical or economic. Carrying out this environmental impact assessments minimises risks or hazardous issues that normally lead to crises/problems. In this context, Ekins (1993) says that a crisis is four-fold and can be manifested in all the four environmental aspects. For example, when people lose security, it is a crisis, and hunger and life-threatening situations are also examples of crises, because risk may then lead to challenges. However, not all these components of EE are new to the Shona, and of course, in traditional Shona education, EE was taught through different ways, hence through the method used of the folktale.

The Shona Folktale

The Shona folktale has been used and is still being used for didactic purposes; although there have been arguments that *Ngano* (the folktale) is a dying art, observations by these writers has shown that *Ngano* has adapted to a new environment, hence, among those who use it most are politicians and preachers. Considering that a lot can be learnt from the folktale in Shona and by extension other people in Africa as well, folktales contain lessons for life, which are applicable to real life situations that are not lesson specific, but like proverbs, they are general and can be applied to most themes as long as the teller picks an appropriate *Ngano* for the situation.

Hence, in this way, we can use the term *Ngano* to articulate our point, considering that the term *Ngano* is derived from word *zano*, which can mean either advice or plans with the plural being *mano* which means that *Ngano* is meant to give advice/ teaching to its adult and youngster hearers, although most people are of the erroneous idea that they are only for the youngsters. This means that as they grew up they would have learned a lot that is related to both environments. Therefore, *Ngano* becomes the platform where people learn the dos and don'ts, as well as the repercussions that would befall anyone who would violate an interdiction.

It is now widely known that the rural-urban bug has hit most people in Africa, although there are still many who live in the rural areas. For most of those in the rural areas oral literature continues to be part of their life, yet oral literature is adapting to the modern world, which allows it survival. Thus, . Mapanje and White (1983: *Introduction*) say:

So far from dying under the impact of western ways, oral literature remains a vigorous art, rooted in rural communities but flourishing too in the towns. It is adapting to modern circumstances just as it adapted to and reflected change in the past.

Indeed, the adaptability of *Ngano* can also be used in entrenching EE skills and values in people; and can be used as long as the right ones are chosen. Thus, the following *Ngano* are examples of those folktales that can be used in relationship to EE issues.

Folktale One: The Four Changelings (*Vakomana Vaisanduka Kuita Shumba*)

Kwaivepo nevakomana vana vaive nehushamwari hwepedyo. Zvino vakomana ava vaisanduka vachiita shumba. Rimwe zuva vakaenda kune imwe nzvimbo iri kure nekunyika yavo vachitsvaga vasikana vekuroora.

Vakasvika pane rimwe tsime ndokuona paine vasikana vana vaive vakanaka zvikuru. Vakati, "Vasikana tine kumbirawo mvura yekunwa tafa nenyota." Vasikana vava vakavapa mvura, ivo vakomana vava ndokukonza vasikana vaye ndokudii, ndokudiwa. Vasikana vava mushure mekuda vakomana vava vakavakoka kumusha kwavo asi nemhaka yekuti vakomana ava vane zvavaimhamyira vakati havaikwanisa kusvika kumba kwevadiwa wavo. Vasikanawo nepamusana pekutya kurasikirwa nevakomana vakanaka seava vakabva vangosarudza kuenda navo. Izvi zvakaitika mushure mekunge vakomana ava vati, "Chero tichidana, tinogona kutizisana nhasi." Vasikanawo vakati, "Ngatiende kana mune idi rekuti munozotiwana."

Pakapfimbwa vasikana ava nevakomana vavo vakange vaenda kutsime nekahanzvadzi kavo. Pavakafunga kutizira vakomana vavo nepamusana pekutya kurasikirwa nevakomana vakanaka seava vakaudza kahanzvadzi kavo kuti kadzoke kumba asi iko kakaramba. Vakazama mhindu dzese kusanganisira kukarova asi zvakashaya basa. Kumagumo vakazowirirana kuti vaende nako.

Vakabva varitanga runo rwendo rurefu. Pakudoka kwezuva vakomana vava vakati, “Madzimai, zuva radoka. Ngatitsvage patinorara usiku hwanhasi. Hatingafambi nehusiku sezvinonzi tiri kutiza mumwe munhu kana kubav kune imwe nzvimbo.” Vasikana vakabvuma sezvo vavive vanetawo nekuswerofamba. Vakomana vava vakatsvaga pachuru pane zvimiti pavakabatidza moto. Vakabika sadza sezvo vakomana ava vaive vatakura upfu nechimukuyu. Sadza parakanga raibva vakomana ava vakati kuvasikana vavo, “Mitemo yesango inoti kana madya nyama, musan’un’une mapfupa achisara acheni. Munofanira kusiya aine zvinyama kuitira imbwa dzesango dzenzvimbo yamunenge masvika. Rasirai mapfupa kanhambo kubva pamuri kuitira imbwa idzi.” Vakapa rairo iyi nechinangwa chekuti ivo vazomuke vachipwanyanya mapfupa ayah wave husiku madzimai avo akakotsira.

Mushure mekudya vakaenda kunorara, vakomana vava ndokusanduka kuita shumba. Vakatetena mabondo aya. Pavainakirwa kudai, kahanzvadzi kevasikana vava kaiona zvese zvaitika asi hakana kuudza hanzvadzi dzako. Vakuwashashumba ava havanawo kuziva kuti vaonekwa. Vakapedza kudya ndokurara.

Rechimangwana vakatangana narwo rwendo rwavo. Pazuva iri vakadzokorora zvainge zvaitika nezuro wacho. Mangwanani ezuva rechitatu vakomana ava vakati vaienda kurukova rwaive pedyo kundogezwa. Pavakasimuka kunda kurwizi, kakomana kaya kakasara kakaudza hanzvadzi dzako kuti vakomana vavo vaive vakamira sei. Kakati, “Vakomana venyu vanosanduka kuita shumba.” Vasikana ava havana kugashira mashoko aya. Vakatotuka kahanzvadzi kavo vachit, “Unonyepa. Ndosaka tanga tisingadi kuuya newe.” Kakomana kaya kakabva karamba kakanyarara.

Pazuva rechina vakasvika pane rimwe bako, vakomana vava vakaudza vasikana vavo kuti vaive vasvika pamba pavo. Vasikana vakaratidzwa kwekuchera mvura. Vasikana vava vakanyumwa vakatanga kufunga kuti dzimwe nguva hanzvadzi yavo yaireva idi nguva dzose. Pazuva reshana vakomana vava vakakoka tsano wavo kuti vaende navo kunovhima. Vasvika kwavaivhimira vakuwasha vava vakati, “Tsano, musango muno mune mhuka dzakawanda dzinotyisa. Hatidi kuti muvhunduke, saka tichakusungirai mumushunje weuswa tokuturikai mumuti. Kana tapedza kuvhima tozokuburutsai. Tsano vakabvuma mashoko evakuwasha wavo aya. Vakuwasha vava vakazovaisa mumwanda weusaw uya ndokuvaturika mumuti mavakavasungirira. Chinangwa chavo chaive chekuti tsano vavo vasavaone vachisanduka kuita shumba. Tsano vava pavakapeura mwanda uya vakaona vakuwasha vavo vachisandukazve kuita shumba. Mushure mekuvhima vakadzoka kumba. Vaive nenyama yakawanda.

Vakadzokorora nzendo dzavo dzekunovhima idzi kakomana kaya kakayambira hanzvadzi dzako asi havana kumuteerera kunze kwemumwe chete. Rimwe zuva mukomana uyu akatanga kuimba rwiyo rwekuti:

Mushauri: Vana vedu marema

Vadaviri: Kutevera zvine miswe yazvo kutevera

Mushauri: Vana vedu marema

Vadaviri: Kutevera zvine miswe yazvo kutevera

Rwiyo urwu rwakaita kuti vasikana vaye vatambudzike mupfungwa. Musi uyu vakomana vavo vakauya vasina chavabata. Vakasvikodavirira rwiyo rwaiimbwa natsano vavo asi vaiedza kuti tsano wavo vasabudisa chokwadi chekuti ivo vaive majandukwa.

Panguva yese yaaiudza hanzvadzi dzake, mukomana uyu airuka chidendere. Pakadzoka vakuwasha vake rimwezve zuva vasina chavakabata vave nenzara varonga kuzodya vakadzi vavo natsano iye akasanovaona vachiri kure. Pavakange vave kusvika pedyo nebako riya iye akakwidza hanzvadzi dzake mudendere muya vachibva vabhururuka vachidzoka kumusha kwavo (recreated by Mapara and Nyota).

English Translation

There were four young men who were very close friends. They were also changelings because they could change into lions. They could also turn into human beings when they wanted to interact and cheat human beings. One day they went to a certain place in search of marriage partners.

They got to a certain well where they saw four beautiful women. They were pleased with what they saw. They greeted the young women and asked for water to drink. After the drink, they proposed to the young women who readily accepted the young men's proposals. They then invited the young men to their home to meet their parents as according to their tradition but the suitors were in a hurry. The young women feared to lose such handsome young men so they readily followed them. This is after the suitors had said to them they would be brides, "As long as we love one another we can elope". The women said, "Let us go as long as you are sure that you will get married to us".

These women had gone to the well with their young brother. When they were eloping with their newfound love, they feared that they would lose getting married to such handsome young men. They then advised their brother to go back home but he refused. They tried all tricks but all was in vain. They ultimately resolved to go with him.

They then embarked on a very long journey. At sunset the young men said, “Ladies, the sun has set. Let us find where we can put up for the night. We cannot travel at night as if we are running away from someone or a place. The women agreed for they were also very tired after a day of hard walking. The young men made a fire by an anthill. They prepared *sadza* (thick meal porridge). This was made possible because the young men had carried with them a bag of mealie-meal and dried meat (*biltong*). When the meal was ready, they said to the women, “The rules of the forests say that if you eat meat in it, do not eat and clean the bones of all flesh. You should leave some flesh on the bones for the dogs of the host area. Throw the bones a distance away for the benefit of these dogs. They gave this instruction so that they would eat and crush the bones later when the women and their brother would be asleep.

After the meal, they went to sleep and the young men changed into lions. They then feasted on the bones. As they enjoyed themselves, the young women’s brother observed all that was taking place but said nothing to his sisters. The changelings did not also realise that their brother-in-law had come to know what they really were.

They continued on their journey on the second day and the same act was repeated at night. On the third morning, the changelings said that they were going to a nearby river for a bath. It was when they had left for the river that the young brother told his sisters about what their would-be husbands really were. He said, “Your husbands are changelings. They change into lions”. The sisters did not believe this and they said to him, “You are a liar. That’s why we wanted you not to come with us”. The little brother then kept quiet.

On the fourth day, they got to a cave and the changelings said that they had finally arrived at the place that was their home. The women were shown where to fetch water and firewood. They then became suspicious and wondered whether their young brother had been right all along. On the fifth day, the husbands invited their brother-in-law to accompany them on a hunting expedition. When they got to the place they said to him, “Brother-in-law, there are many frightening animals in this forest. We do not want you to be scared, so what we will do is bind you in a bundle of grass and take you up a tree and tie you up there so that you will not see what is happening. After the hunt we will bring you down”. The young brother-in-law agreed to the terms. The changelings bound him in a bundle and put him up a tree where they tied him up. Their intention was to ensure that he would not see them turn into lions. When they had left, the brother-in-law made a little opening in the bundle and he saw all that was taking place. He saw them changing into lions. After the hunt, they went back to the cave, which was now home. They had with them a lot of meat.

They repeated these hunting expeditions on several occasions and the little brother warned his sisters but they did not take heed except one. One day he started singing. The song went like this:

Leader: Our daughters are fools.

Chorus: They followed creatures with tails.

Leader: Our daughters are fools

Chorus: They followed creatures with tails.

This song caused the young women to get worried about their situation. On this day, their husbands came back empty handed. Their husbands joined in the singing but they sang in an attempt to suppress the truth about their identity that was being made bare by their in-law. They feared exposure.

In between his discussions with his sisters, the young brother had woven a winnowing basket. On one of these days, the four changelings came back as lions. For the past few days, they had failed to catch a single animal. They were famished and they decided to eat their wives and their little brother. When they were nearing the cave, the young brother got into the winnowing basket with his sisters and flew away.

Implications for Environmental Education (EE)

This folktale shows consequences of disregarding environmental issues before carrying out a project which has implications on environmental education and on environmental issues. The first thing that is observed is that before people embark on a project, there is always the need for them to assess the situation on the ground and see whether it will really permit them to carry out their intentions, regarding needs analysis and feasibility studies. Even in marriage people do not just meet and elope there needs to be an environmental impact assessments, in the same way a project may look quite promising and beneficial to the target group when it may later turn out to be a problem. Thus this problem is noted if an assessment is carried out. This is what happened to these young women. They never thought that these handsome young men could turn out to be a threat to their lives. Had they stopped to assess their situation they would have been reminded of the Shona proverb *rooranai vamatongo* (You should only get married to those you know). The parents and maternal aunts would have investigated the suitors' background. The costly social and moral stress would have been avoided. In environmental issues, environmental audits are also important. The young brother constantly monitored his new brothers-in-law to ensure that they did not turn back and eat them. When the young men came back as lions, he had already taken precautionary measures. This is what led to their survival.

This folktale also shows that it is important to appreciate everyone in all developmental issues. Size and age are important, but being young and inexperienced should not lead to exclusion. These young women were saved from the jaws of death by their little and inexperienced brother. They thought they knew so much about the world but ensuing events showed that no one is master of the world. This clearly amplified by the proverbs *Svosve akatuma Nzou* (Ant sent Elephant on an errand) and *Mhou yakamwa mhuru* (The cow breast-fed from the calf). The same is true when it comes to community projects. All projects should evolve and include all those who are interested wherein everyone has the right to be heard.

From this folktale, readers learn the importance of environmental impact assessments (EIAs) where there is always a need to weigh risks prior to carrying out an action. The young women in this folktale did not assess the behaviour of their would-be husbands. This led to a crisis when they were almost eaten by their husbands who had turned into lions. In this folktale, the reader is also exposed to the fact that at times crises lead to challenges which this folktale shows through the young women's brother who realised that they had a crisis thus he made a flying winnowing basket, which he used with his sisters to escape from the jaws of death, and last, it is also clear from this story that crises make people resourceful.

Folktale Two: The Scabby and Warty One (*Chinyamapezi*)

Mumwe murume nemukadzi wake vaive nemwanasikana wavo aive akanaka zvikuru. Vakomana vazhinji vaimuchemerera vachimuda. Musikana uyu aiti mukomana wose amupfimba omuda zvisinei kuti kuti akanaka here kana kuti akashata.

Zvaiitika ndezvekuti vabereki vemusikana uyu vaive vakagara kuseri kwerimwe gomo, veruzhinji vari kune rimwe divi. Zvino musikana uyu aiti zuva iroro raadanana nemukomana aibvuma kusimuka. Vabereki vake vaitotendera izvi sezvo vaiziva kuti mhiko yemwanasikana wavo yaive yekuti haadariki gomo iri achienda rimwe divi. Aiti akatanga kuimba vave pagomo paye mukomana wake akangoti cheu kuti amutarise chete nekunakirwa nekuimba kwaiita musikana uyu, musikana uyu aibva atodzoka kumba. Iye musikana aingoziwa kuti kana ndikada mukomana upi noupi akangotanga kuimba chete ava pagomo paye ndinobva ndadzoka.

Zvino kwakasvikawo mumwe mukomana akati, "Ndauyawo musikana." Vakakwazisana mukomana akapinzwa mumba. Vakakonzana vakadana. Musikana akazivisa mukomana wake kuvabereki vake achiti, "A-a imi amai nababa, ndomukomana wandada uyu." Ivo vakaindura, "Nhaiwo? Zvitsvene." Musikana akati aitoda kuenda nemukomana uyu zuva iroro. Ivo vakabvuma nekuti vaiziva kuti akasvika pagomo riya aidzoka.

Musikana uyu akarongedza mbatya dzake dzakafanira shomanana semunhu aiziva kuti anonodzoka kana asvika pagomo. Vakasimuka vakapinda munzira nemukomana wake, mukomana ari mberi uyu musikana ari mumashure. Vakafamba, ndokufamba, vakafamba. Zvino vakati vatanga kusvika pagomo iri. Musikana ndokuti basa rangu rekumba rasvika. Akatanga kuimba zvino:

Mushauri: Gomo riya chariwana chariwana ndehande.

Vadaviri: Chariwana ndehande.

Mushauri: Ukadaro ndodzokera shure , ndehande.

Vadaviri: Chariwana ndehande.

Mushauri: Ndi ndi ndi ndihe ndereha ndehande.

Vadaviri: Chariwana ndehande.

Mushauri: Ndi ndi ndi ndihe ndereha ndehande.

Vadaviri: Chariwana ndehande.

Mushauri: Gomo riya chariwana chariwana ndehande.

Vadaviri: Chariwana ndehande.

Mushauri: Gomo riya chariwana chariwana ndehande.

Vadaviri: Chariwana ndehande.

Mushauri: Ukadaro ndodzokera shure , ndehande.

Vadaviri: Chariwana ndehande.

Mushauri: Ndi ndi ndi ndihe ndereha ndehande.

Vadaviri: Chariwana ndehande.

Mushauri: Ndi ndi ndi ndihe ndereha ndehande.

Vadaviri: Chariwana ndehande.

Zvino kuimba uku kwakanakidza mukomana uyu, ndokubva acheuka kuti atarise musikana, ndokubva asara angova egani, akati, “Heya, ndozvinonzi musikana uyu haatoreki nhai? Zvakanaka.” Mukomana uya akaenda apera simba.

Zvino zvaakasvika kumusha kwake mukomana uyu akaudzawo vamwe kuti musikana uyu haarambi munhu asi pagomo hapana anodarika naye. Vamwe vakomana vakaita nharo vachiti vaisvikomutora. Iye mukomana uya akati, “Endai muone.”

Vakomana vazhinji vakaedza kuti vatore musikana uyu asi vese vakangogumira pagomo paye naye iye achibva adzoka mushure mekunge vacheuka. Zvino kwakazoita mumwe mukomana. Uyu mukomana aive akaipisisa uye aine mapopo kana mhezi. Mashatire ake aive ekuti aisambofanira kuva mukomana angafambire musikana. Akabva aendawo zvake kumusikana uye mushure mekunge audza mai vake vakamuti aipedza nguva sezvo pasina musikana aimuda. Vamwe vakomana vakamuseka vakati aipedza nguva yake iye akati, “Aiwa vakomana. Ndomboedza. Mhanza mambure.”

Mukomana uyu ainzi Chinyamapezi, nepamusana pemhezi dzaaive nadzo akapinda munzira ndokufamba kunanga kumba kwemusikana uye. Akapfimba musikana uye ndokudiwa. Semazuva ose musikana akada mukomana aine pfungwa yekuti aizodzokerera pagomo paye. Akatora mbatya shomanene semunhu aitarisra kuti raizodoka atova pamba pevabereki vake. Vasimuka vakatanga rwendo rwavo. Vasvika pagomo riya musikana uya akati atanga kuimba:

Mushauri: Gomo riya chariwana chariwana ndehande.

Vadaviri: Chariwana ndehande.

Mushauri: Ukadaro ndodzokera shure , ndehande.

Vadaviri: Chariwana ndehande.

Mushauri: Ndi ndi ndi ndihe ndereha ndehande.

Vadaviri: Chariwana ndehande.

Mushauri: Ndi ndi ndi ndihe ndereha ndehande.

Vadaviri: Chariwana ndehande.

Mushauri: Gomo riya chariwana chariwana ndehande.

Vadaviri: Chariwana ndehande.

Mushauri: Gomo riya chariwana chariwana ndehande.

Vadaviri: Chariwana ndehande.

Mushauri: Ukadaro ndodzokera shure , ndehande.

Vadaviri: Chariwana ndehande.

Mushauri: Ndi ndi ndi ndihe ndereha ndehande.

Vadaviri: Chariwana ndehande.

Mushauri: Ndi ndi ndi ndihe ndereha ndehande.

Vadaviri: Chariwana ndehande.

Paaimba musikana Chinyamapezi ndokuramba akati nganganda mutsipa asingacheuki. Musikana akati, “Zvazoipa nhasi.” Akaedza kutamba achienda neparutivi uye kumberi kwemukomana asi mukomana aibva atarisa rumwe rutivi. Musikana akaedza, akatamba akachirika asi hazvina kubatsira. Vakaramba vachingodaro kusvika vapfuura pamusoro gomo riya. Musikana akazotanga kuchema aona kuti pane mumwe akazomupfuudza gomo iri. Aingoimba rwiyo rwake rwuya. Chinyamapezi akaramba akashinga chete kusvika vadarika pamusoro pegomo ndiye pote kuseri musikana achingoimba. Kuzoti vave kuseri mukomana uya akazotarisa musikana ndokuti, “Chinyarara kani mudiwa wangu. Ko, unochemeiko? Ini ndakuda iwe ukandidawo. Zvino taa kutoenda kumusha.”

Musikana uyu akava nekuchema kukuru kwazvo. Chinyamapezi paakasvika nemusikana vabereki vake vakafara kuona auya nemusikana akanaka zvikuru. Vakashamisika kuti Chinyamapezi aishorwa nevamwe aive auya nemusikana akanaka zvikuru. Vakomana vose vazhinji vakange vatadza kutora musikana uyu vakashamiswa kunzwa kuti Chinyamapezi wavaishora ndiye akange atora musikana uye. Musikana uye akadziisira mukomana wake mvura ndokusvuura mazimhezi aya ose, vanhu ndokuona kuti uyu mukomana aive akanaka. Musikana wake akafara akati, “Tichatogara tose. Hezvo mukomana wangu afananawo nevamwe.”

Ndopakaperera saruNgano.

(abridged from: Fortune, G (ed) *Ngano Volume II*. Harare: Mercury Press (pp.43-5).

English Translation

A certain man and his wife had a very beautiful daughter. Many young men came and tried to win her hand in marriage. The young woman never turned down an eligible suitor no matter his appearance or status.

This young woman’s parents had built their home at the foot of a certain mountain. Most other people were on the other side of the mountain. The young woman would elope on the same day that she had been proposed to. Her parents even approved of this because they knew that fate had decreed that their daughter would not climb the mountain and go over to the other side. Whenever her suitor turned to look at her as he enjoyed her singing, the young woman disappeared and went back to her parents’ home. The young woman also knew that no matter whom she loved, whenever she started singing she would disappear and go back home.

It so happened that a certain young man came and proposed to the young woman. After the greetings he was invited into the house. The young man’s proposal was accepted and the young woman notified her parents. She said, “This is the suitor whose marriage proposal I have accepted.”

The parents responded, “Is that so? That is beautiful.” The parents accepted because they expected that as usual their daughter would come back when they reached the mountain.

The woman prepared only a few clothes because she expected to come back when they would have reached the mountain as soon as she would have started singing. They left the in-laws home with the young man in the lead. When they got to the mountain the young woman started singing:

Leader: That mountain has got it *ndehande*.
Chorus: It has got it *ndehande*.
Leader: If you do that, I will turn back, *ndehande*.
Chorus: It has got it *ndehande*.
Leader: *Ndi ndi ndi ndihe ndereha ndehande*.
Chorus: It has got it *ndehande*.
Leader: *Ndi ndi ndi ndihe ndereha ndehande*.
Chorus: It has got it *ndehande*.
Leader: That mountain has got it *ndehande*.
Chorus: It has got it *ndehande*.
Leader: That mountain has got it *ndehande*.
Chorus: It has got it *ndehande*.
Leader: If you do that, I will turn back, *ndehande*.
Chorus: It has got it *ndehande*.
Leader: *Ndi ndi ndi ndihe ndereha ndehande*.
Chorus: It has got it *ndehande*.
Leader: *Ndi ndi ndi ndihe ndereha ndehande*.
Chorus: It has got it *ndehande*.

The suitor then turned to look at the young woman and she disappeared. When the young suitor got home, he told others about the mysterious woman. When the other young men did not believe his story he said, "You go and try your luck."

Most young men tried their luck but they all always lost the woman at the mountain whenever they turned to look at her. It so happened that there was a certain young man who warts. This young man was very ugly that he was not even fit to try his hand in marriage. He went to try his luck and the other young men laughed at him. He said, "I will try my luck."

The young man was called Chinyamapezi (The Warty One), because of the warts that he had. He got on the way and got to the young woman's home. His proposal was a success. As usual the young woman did not take many clothes with her because she expected to go back home when they got to the mountain. They left and when they got to the mountain the woman, she started singing:

Leader: That mountain has got it *ndehande*.
 Chorus: It has got it *ndehande*.
 Leader: If you do that, I will turn back, *ndehande*.
 Chorus: It has got it *ndehande*.
 Leader: *Ndi ndi ndi ndihe ndereha ndehande*.
 Chorus: It has got it *ndehande*.
 Leader: *Ndi ndi ndi ndihe ndereha ndehande*.
 Chorus: It has got it *ndehande*.
 Leader: That mountain has got it *ndehande*.
 Chorus: It has got it *ndehande*.
 Leader: That mountain has got it *ndehande*.
 Chorus: It has got it *ndehande*.
 Leader: If you do that, I will turn back, *ndehande*.
 Chorus: It has got it *ndehande*.
 Leader: *Ndi ndi ndi ndihe ndereha ndehande*.
 Chorus: It has got it *ndehande*.
 Leader: *Ndi ndi ndi ndihe ndereha ndehande*.
 Chorus: It has got it *ndehande*.

When the woman was singing, Chinyamapezi did not turn to look at her. The woman tried to overtake Chinyamapezi and sing in front of him but the young man would turn and look the other way. She tried everything in her power including dancing but it was all in vain. They finally went over the mountain and the young woman started weeping when she realized that she was going to be Chinyamapezi's wife. She however continued singing her song. When they got to the other side of the mountain, Chinyamapezi looked at his would be wife and said, "Hush darling. Why do you weep? I love you and you confessed your love to me. We are now going home."

The young woman wept bitterly. When Chinyamapezi got home with his would be wife, his parents were very happy because he had come home with a very beautiful woman. They were surprised that the despised Chinyamapezi had a very beautiful woman. Most young men were also surprised to learn that Chinyamapezi had succeeded where they had failed. The young woman then cleaned her husband, removed all the warts, and discovered that Chinyamapezi was handsome. She was very happy and she said, "I am going to stay with him. My man is just like other young men."

Implications for EE

This folktale is very useful to those who deal with issues that relate to community development. Poverty, deformity and other so-called negative aspects need not be considered when dealing with people. Everyone on the surface appear have shortcomings which can not be ignored. However, everyone has to be taken seriously when it comes to issues that relate to their environment, especially when they feel that it will impact on their lives whether positively or negatively, and thus given a chance to prove themselves.

The other moral of this story is that at times the so-called masters and experts of the trade may proved to be failures when it comes to handling certain issues, and at other times, those who would have been sidelined would become the key to seemingly difficult problems. In Shona, there is a proverb that says “*Chako wega mukonde wesadza*” (What is yours is a plateful of *sadza*) which means that one can only claim the good things to be his/ hers, and that difficult things and situations need cooperation. Thus, the Shona were aware of their environment, as they told these folktales and also aware of their importance in different environmental areas be they social, political, economic or biophysical.

Third, the story also teaches about the importance of determination. What made Chinyamapezi succeed in getting married to the young woman was his determination. He was determined to get her. He was determined to get the young woman as his wife, and he got his heart’s desire.

Instructively, in the folktale, there is also a teaching on the importance of never underestimating the problem at hand. The young woman treated Chinyamapezi like everyone else who had come before; and she thought that she would succeed in going back home as she had done before, and she discovered to her horror that it was not to be. The moral here is that every environmental challenge has to be treated, as a new one since that is exactly what it will be; and if every challenge is handled as a new one, the people dealing with it will be psychologically prepared for any eventualities that may come forth, which is not possible when one has already made prior conclusions.

In continuation, there are also times when people appear to have failed in life. The most important thing they should do is not to cry and apportion blame to themselves when things do not work according to plan. The most important thing to do is to adjust and be at peace with the new environment if they fail to reverse the situation, because those who fail to adjust, perish.

The young woman in the *Ngano* adjusted to her new environment; she did not see Chinyamapezi as a problem but as a challenge; she stood up to the challenge and scrubbed him. It was after standing up to her challenge that she discovered that Chinyamapezi was as handsome as most young men were. Therefore, there is no need to dismiss someone before he/she has been given room to demonstrate his/her capabilities.

Folktale Three: One Who Refused Advice (*Ndambakuudzwa*)

Paive nemumwe murume aigara kune imwe nyika iri kure kure. Murume uyu aive akaoma musoro. Aisanzwa mazano kana mhangwa dzaaipihwa nevamwe. Aizviona saiye munhu akangwara kudarika vose pavanhu vakazvarwa nemukadzi. Nguva zhinji murume uyu aityora miko nezvierwa zvemunyika maaigara. Chaisaziva ndechekuti mukoma wake aigara akaenda kunoripira kwashe uye kumureverera kusvikiro remudunhu iri kuti aregererwe zvivi zvake. Akatanga kuzvikudza achizvirova dundundu pamwe nekunyomba mukoma wake nemudzimai wake achivaudza kuti zvese zvavainzwa zvaiva zvenhema pamusoro pezvinoera. Akati hapana chaizomuwira. Rume iri rakati, “Hapana chinondiwana. Zvese zvamakataura pamusoro pekuti dziva Magonamombe nedzimwe nzvimbo zvinoera ndezvenhema. Munofunga ndiri mucheche here anonyengerwa nyore? Zvierwa nemiko zvakaita seizvi zvakaitirwa vanhukadzi, vana nembwende dzakaita semi.” Mukoma wake nemudzimai havana kufara nekuzvitutumadza uku.

Mudzimai wake akamutsiura asi haana kugashira izvi akatoona seatarisirwa pasi nemunhukadzi. Akamuzamudzira zimbama rakakwidibira kumeso kwese. Mudzimai akaridza mhere mukuoma wake ndokumudzora achiti, “Hazvina kunaka kuti warova mukadzi wako nenyaya iyi. Iye neni tisu takakudzivirira kubva kuhasha dzemidzimu yenyia ino. Dai tisisu, ungadai wakafa kare kare. Unotofanira kutenda kuti takakuraramisa.”

Panzvimbo pekuti atende vaviri ava nerudo rwavo, akatotanga kutuka mukoma wake akamupa mhosva yekuti aidana nemudzimai wake. Akabva atandanisa mudzimai wake achimuramba ndokumudzorerera kumusha kwevabereki vake. Akati aizosara nevana. Pekutanga aifunga kuti zviri nyore kuti achengete vana. Pazvakamuremera akavaendesa kuna mai vake. Mai vake vakaramba vakati yaive mhosva yake nekuti ndiye akatandanisa mudzimai. Mushure mekugara kwesvondo mbiri zvakamuremera. Akaona zvakana kuti adzokererane nemudzimai wake. Murume uyu akafunga kuti dzimwe nguva mudzimai aizoramba kudzoka naye saka akafunga kuenda nevana parwendo rwake rwekutevera mudzimai. Akaudza mukoma wake nezverwendo urwu. Mukoma vake vakamuyeuchidza kuti aifanira kuteedza miko nezvierwa zve munzvimbo dzaaizopfuura nadzo. Iye akati aizoita izvi.

Akatanga rwendo rwake mangwanani aitevera. Akasvika pane mumwe muonde akadya maonde emo akanzwa asinganaki. Akasiya atuka muonde uyu. Ati fambei, akanzwa kuda kuenda mudondo kunozvibatsira. Akapinda musango raisatendwerwa vanhu kuti vaitire tsvinamo. Paakayambirwa nemumwe wevana vake, akamurova. Achangobva mukuita tsvina, tsvina iye yakatanga kumutevera. Akaedza kukwira mumuti tsvina iya ikamutevera. Akaedza mhindu dzakawanda asi hapana chakafamba.

Vakazozvisvika kwavatezvara vakafara chaizvo kuona vazukuru vavo. Vakaurayirwa zijongwe rekuti vasevese. Pavakange vari kudya, tsvina iya yakauya ichiimba ichiyeuchidza murume uyu kuti aive aitira tsvina musango risinganyerwi. Murume uyu akashungurudzika akabatwa nenyadzi. Akatora tsvina iya ndokuimedza. Musi uyu ndiwo waakarasikirwa nechimiro chake. Mudzimai wake akabva amuramba, madzitezvara akamutandanisa pamusha pavo vakamutorera vana vake vachiti aisagona kukudza vana ari ega. Murume uyu akarasikirwa nemhuri yake nekuti akaramba kuopangwa mazano.

(told to Mapara by his grandmother)

English Translation

There was a man who lived in a very far away country. This man was big headed. He never listened to anyone's advice. He saw himself as the wisest of all people born of woman. On many occasions, he was always breaching taboos of local areas. What he did not know was that his brother and wife always went to the chief and the local spirit medium to placate the anger of the ancestors. He became boastful and publicly ridiculed his brother and wife that nothing would befall him. He said, "Nothing will harm me. All that you have said about the sacredness of the pool Magonamombe and other places that are said to be sacred are all lies. Do you think that I am a small child who can be easily fooled? Such taboos are for women, children and cowards like you." His brother and wife were not happy about this boast.

His wife rebuked him for this but he did not take kindly to being rebuked by a woman. He slapped her on the face. There was an outcry and his elder brother intervened. He said to him, "It is not proper that you have beaten your wife. She and I have saved you from the wrath of the ancestors of the land. If it were not because of us, you would have perished a long way back. You should be grateful we did this to save you."

Instead of being grateful, he poured scorn on his brother and accused him of having an affair with his wife. He then kicked his wife out of the marital home and ordered her to go back to her parents. He said he would stay with his children. At first he thought that it would be easy for him to do this. When this task became too heavy for him, he sent his children to his mother.

His mother refused and said that it was his fault that his wife had left. After trying for another two weeks, he gave up. He decided to reconcile with his wife. He also feared that the wife might not accept to come back with him so he decided to take their children with him. He told his brother about the forthcoming journey. The brother warned him to observe the local taboos as he went after his wife. The young brother said that he would.

He set out on his journey the following morning. He came to a fig tree and took figs from it and then said that the figs were bad and cursed the fig tree. After a short distance, he felt that he had to relieve himself. He went into a forest where people are forbidden from relieving themselves. When one of his children warned him against doing this, he beat him up. Immediately after relieving himself, the faeces started following him. He went up a tree and they followed him. Every time he tried to evade them, he failed.

They finally came to his in-laws who were very happy to see him come with their grandchildren. A cock was killed for him and his children. As they were having their meal, the faeces came and started singing, reminding him that he had relieved himself in a forbidden forest. He became so distressed and confused that he took the faeces and swallowed them. This is the day the man lost all respect. His wife divorced him and his in-laws kicked him out of their homestead and said that they would bring up their grandchildren. They said that he was not fit to be a family man. The man lost his family because he refused to listen to advice.

Implications for EE

It pays to listen to other people's advice. This man lost his family because he did not listen to the teachings of others. The same is true when it comes to environmental issues. It pays to take heed when advice is given because a wrong may be done today but the consequences of such a deed may take long to manifest themselves. At times in life nothing may happen if people do bad things. In Shona there is a proverb, which says *Chisi hachieri musi wacharimwa* (Punishment for wrongdoing is not instant). It does not mean that it is proper to continue doing wrong despite being warned. There may be other people who will be cleaning or rectifying the wrong. It does not mean that these wrong doers are wise. They survive because some people care.

The story also teaches that the wrongs that were done in the past will always come to haunt the perpetrators. This man had defiled a given forest but what he did came after him. It does not mean that the faeces literally followed him. The point of the story is that at times some forests are at the source of rivers. To relieve one in such places would mean that the water that would be used by those downstream would not be good for their health. Hence, they would suffer from stomach like cholera and dysentery, which may prove to be fatal.

Socially this story is also important. The man in the story exposes not only himself, but also his family to ridicule. His children would become an example of a family that grows up without a father just because their father chose to ignore advice. The children will grow up in a social environment that is not conducive without a protector, a provider and a role model. Their physical, emotional and social security is also compromised, and also have the burden of looking after the family on her own, and also being stigmatised as a failure and not fully reintegrated into her family and community. To her friends she is a potential husband snatcher and therefore a threat to their social environment. The woman is also a burden to her family, and to men she is up for grabs. This is a source of psychological traumas for most women, and does not end with the women, their children will also be affected.

And last, it teaches that other issues like global warming have their origins in the errors and greedy of the past.

Why Ngano Use is Necessary

It is important to note that the folktale is handy to use because it is both a method and a tool, as a tool there is no expense incurred, and as a method, it is interesting, entertaining, simple, and general and does not accuse any person directly, hence it has the advantage of neutrality. The folktale is adaptable since the storyteller can adjust it to suit what s/he wants. Through *Ngano* s/he uses songs, verbal and non-verbal communication such as gestures, tonal variation etc. the folktale also has some talking points dialogue or participation by both the teacher and learners. Le Roux (1997:51) clearly points this out when she says, "...then the art of open and engaged conversation and storytelling is going to become increasingly important within environmental education processes. And in agreement, Taylor (1997:91) notes that "enthusiasm to find out jointly with participants rather than field work to cause change in the participants led to richer field work experiences."

Conclusion

This monograph shows that the Shona folktale is a very effective tool and method in the teaching of EE, and thus a more engaging method because it promotes reflective thinking and debates, as it teaches while entertaining and gives an opportunity for discussions to flourish. *Ngano* also acts as a reminder to listeners that people of ages gone by were aware of how to survive in their environment. Lessons derived from *Ngano* show environmental issues in need of attention; possible risks, crises and challenges that give learners an awareness of the need for EIAs, prior to any action or process.

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