



Ndebele spirituality as pathways to peace and healing in Zimbabwe

Submitted in fulfilment of the requirements for the degree of Master of
Management Sciences in Public Administration – Peace Studies

SETH THEMBELIHLE MOYO

SUPERVISORS: Prof R Bhagwan and Prof G T Harris

November 2021

Abstract

Recently there has been a call to deepen an understanding of African spirituality and its implications, in terms of understanding how it can strengthen the lives of Africans. Several scholars have written about different African groups thereby unveiling its richness and potential to act as a resource in dealing with many contemporary problems. Little however was done in relation to Ndebele spirituality, thereby prompting the need for this study. Furthermore, there have been arguments that peace and community building programs implemented in Zimbabwe are elitist, and therefore ignore the needs of ordinary people at grassroots level. This study sought to contribute to the growing body of scholarly work on African spirituality, by exploring Ndebele spirituality in particular. A qualitative research approach was used and was guided by ethnographic principles. Its primary aim was, to explore the values and principles underpinning Ndebele spirituality and to inquire about how its customs and healing methodologies can be used to rebuild community life. Purposive sampling and snow balling sampling were used to choose the sample which consisted of traditional healers and elders and community members. An interview guide was used to collect data, during semi-structured interviews that were held with these participants. The data reflected the following major themes viz. the philosophy underpinning Ndebele spirituality, values related to Ndebele spirituality, customs, rituals and healing methodologies. Ubuntu emerged as the overriding philosophy which guides every aspect of Ndebele spirituality. This means that Ndebele people approach their day-to-day life and spirituality in a collective manner. The Ndebele believe in the collective, hence healing methodologies are designed to restore and maintain both the individual, but mainly the collective. Therefore, the study recommended that people revert to the principles of Ubuntu which ensure working and living together

Declaration

I hereby declare that I am the sole author of this dissertation and that neither any part of this dissertation nor the whole has been submitted for a degree to any other university or institution.

I declare that, to the best of my knowledge, my dissertation does not infringe upon anyone's copyright or violate any proprietary rights, and that any ideas, techniques, quotations or any other material from the work of other people included in my dissertation, published or otherwise, are fully acknowledged in accordance with the standard referencing practices.

I declare that this is a true copy of my thesis, including any final revisions, as approved by my supervisors.

Seth T. Moyo

Dedication

This is dedicated to my Mother Zah and my sister Thandeka thank you for your support and patience.

Acknowledgements

A special thank you to my supervisor Professor R. Bhagwan, for the guidance, encouragement, and support. Mostly I would like to thank her for passing on knowledge, which not only assisted in conducting this research but will be relevant beyond this project.

I would also like to thank Durban University of Technology for the opportunity to register for the Master of Management Sciences: Peace Building. Another special thankyou goes to Prof. G. Harris who was ever available for assistance.

Sean Heather Tshuma and family for the assistance in getting my student permit.

Contents

Abstract.....	2
Dedication.....	4
ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS.....	5
Contents.....	6
List of Tables and Figures.....	10
List of Appendices.....	11
Chapter 1	12
Introduction	12
1.1.1 The Ndebele.....	13
1.2 Problem statement.....	14
1.3 Aim of the study.....	14
1.4 Objectives of the study.....	15
1.5 Research questions.....	15
1.6 Significance of the study.....	15
1.7 Spirituality.....	18
1.8 Theoretical Framework.....	19
1.8.1.1 The “self” and the “we” (The individual and the community)	20
1.8.1.3 The “Self” and the Universe.....	21
1.8.1.4 The “self”, the family, the ancestors and God.....	21
1.8.1.5 The “Self” and life as a flow of vital force.....	22
1.9 Overview of the research methodology	25
1.10 Structure of the dissertation	26
1.11 Conclusion.....	26
Chapter 2	28
Literature Review.....	28

2.1 Introduction	28
2.2 African Context	28
2.3 African Spirituality	30
2.4 God Images	33
2.4.1 Supreme Being.....	35
2.4.2 God as the Creator.....	36
2.5 Spirits, Divinities and Ancestors.....	37
2.5.1 Divinities	38
2.5.2 Ancestors	38
2.5.2 (a) Family Ancestors.....	41
2.5.2 (b) Tribal Ancestors.....	41
2.5.3 Spirits	42
2.6 Ubuntu	43
2.7 Family.....	44
2.8 Elders	46
2.9 Traditional healers.....	46
2.10 Healing and African spirituality.....	47
2.11 Mediation	49
2.12 Rituals	51
2.13 Conclusion.....	52
Chapter 3	53
Research methodology.....	53
3.1. Introduction	53
3.1. Introduction	Error! Bookmark not defined.
3.2 Research design	53
3.3 Study Setting.....	56
3.4 Study population.....	56
3.5 Study sample.....	56

3.6 Sampling process	57
3.6.1 Inclusion criteria	58
3.6.2 Exclusion criteria.....	59
3.7. Data collection process.....	59
3.7.1 Data collection tools	59
3.7.2 Interview Setting.....	61
3.7.3 Interview Process.....	62
3.8 Data capturing and data analysis.....	62
3.8.1 Data capturing	62
3.8.2 Data analysis	62
3.9 Ethical Considerations	65
3.9.1 Informed voluntary consent	66
3.9.2 Anonymity.....	67
3.9.3 Confidentiality	67
3.10 Credibility.....	67
3.11 Dependability.....	68
3.12 Confirmability	68
3.13 Limitations	68
3.14 Conclusion.....	69
Chapter 4	70
Analysis and discussion of findings.....	70
4.1 Introduction	70
4.2 Data presentation.....	70
4.3. Data Analysis.....	71
4.3.1. Theme 1: Notion of the Supreme Being	71
4.3.2 Theme 2: Philosophy of Ndebele spirituality.....	74
4.3.3 Theme 3: Values related to Ndebele spirituality (theme)	78
4.3.4 Theme 4: Customs and Rituals	81

4.3.5 Theme 5: Healing methods.....	84
4.4 Conclusion.....	88
CHAPTER 5	89
CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS.....	89
5.1 INTRODUCTION.....	89
5.2 Key findings.....	89
5.3Conclusions.....	93
5.4 Recommendations.....	94
References	96
Appendices	106

List of Tables and Figures

- 1.1 The spiritual dimension of the African being
- 2.1 An illustration of the African spirituality hierarchy
- 4.1 Themes and sub-themes derived from the data
- 5:1 Summary of themes and sub-themes

List of Appendices

Appendix 1 Letter of information (English version)

Appendix 2 Letter of information/Incwadi Yesaziso (Ndebele version)

Appendix 3 Consent form

Appendix 4 Consent form/Incwadi yesivumelwano

Appendix 5 Gatekeeper letter

Appendix 6 Interview guide

Appendix 7 Image

Chapter 1

Introduction

“Bringing people together is what I call ‘Ubuntu’ which means ‘I am because we are’ far too often people think of themselves as individuals separated from one another, whereas you are connected and what you do affects the whole world. When you do well, it spreads out; it is for humanity” - Desmond Tutu

1.1 Background of the study

Zimbabwe is found in the Southern African region and attained independence from Britain in 1980 after an armed struggle. The country has been plagued by violence, since attaining independence (Ranger 2004: 220; Murambadoro *et al.* 2015: 31). Furthermore, violence is politically motivated, and it has mostly been blamed on the ruling party ZANU PF, from the Matabeleland and Midlands repression in the 1980s, post-election violence in 2000 and post-election violence in 2008 (Murambadoro *et al.* 2015: 31). According to several authors this violence has had negative consequences on the ordinary lives of Zimbabweans and has resulted in family and community disintegration (Ranger 2004: 220; Madzivadondo 2012: 197; Murambadoro *et al.* 2015: 31).

According to several authors, these political tensions has caused polarisation, dividing the nation along political lines which has resulted in the marginalisation of other groups in the distribution of political goods (education, health, shelter, food security) (Ranger 2004: 216; BTI 2016: 3). Families and communities too have become divided along these political lines (Ranger 2004: 216).

In addition to socio-political tensions, Zimbabwe is experiencing an economic crisis which according to Bertelsmann Stiftung’s Transformation Index (BTI) report (2016: 4) on Zimbabwe, started in the late 1990s and reached its peak in 2008. This resulted in Zimbabwe abandoning the national currency (Zimbabwe dollar) for a multicurrency economy. Moreover, according to Madzivadondo (2012:198) this has added to family and community disintegration because families were separated as citizens migrated to other countries, in search of greener pastures. Chirozva *et al.* (2010: 5) echoed the

same sentiment pointing out that the economic crisis has had a negative impact on the family and community in Zimbabwe.

According to Jones (2010: 268) the economic crisis created a zig-zag economy which is characterised by corruption where moral codes are intentionally ignored or suspended in a bid to survive the harsh economic conditions created by the economic crisis. This has resulted in unethical conduct and criminal activities in order to transcend economic hardships. This has ultimately created a culture of corruption. Jones (2010: 293) further highlighted that participants in his study were aware that corrupt behaviour is immoral however, they said that it was necessary for their survival. Jones (2010: 294) argued that corruption emanated from the top going down and that is it emanates from the leadership to the ordinary citizens. The BTI (2016: 3) report stated that the government of Zimbabwe has been plagued by corruption however, the culprits have always managed to escape prosecution. Thus, the aim of the study was to explore how Ndebele spirituality can be used to distil ways that can reconstruct families and communities in the midst of the crises Zimbabwe has faced recently.

1.1.1 The Ndebele

The Ndebele people found in present day Zimbabwe, are of Nguni origins. They broke away from the Zulu kingdom led by Shaka Zulu in the 1800s (Ndlovu-Gatsheni 2009:27; Mazarire 2003: 2). According to Ndlovu-Gatsheni (2009: 17) the Ndebele left Zululand in 1820s, during a revolutionary period called *Mfecane*. This was a period which saw several Nguni groups clash over resources. Furthermore, this period also witnessed a state building exercise by the various Nguni groups as they clashed.

The Khumalo led by their charismatic leader Mzilikazi through coercion and consent assimilated the Sotho and Tswana into their group. The term Ndebele was derived from the Sotho word *Matebele*, however its meaning, before it was exclusively used on the Mzilikazi led people is controversial. The general agreement however is that it means “stranger” Mazarire (2003: 2). The Ndebele settled for a period at the Transvaal, until they were forced to cross the Limpopo in 1838 where they permanently settled in present day Zimbabwe. The state building process continued across the Limpopo with the assimilation of Rozvi and the Kalanga (Ndlovu- Gatsheni 2009:27). They permanently settled in what is present day Matabeleland. Mzilikazi

was their King and was succeeded by his son Lobengula. Lobengula was the last King of the Ndebele Kingdom. He was dislodged by colonial settlers.

Several authors have noted that even though the Nguni's made efforts to impose their culture on to the groups they assimilated, the assimilated groups also influenced the Ndebele culture (Mazarire 2003: 5; Ndlovu-Gatsheni 2009:27). Therefore, the aim of this study was to explore the spirituality of this culturally rich people to distil elements which can be used for family and community rebuilding in contemporary Zimbabwe.

1.2 Problem statement

Firstly, there exists a huge gap in the literature on African spirituality but more importantly Ndebele spirituality. Furthermore, indigenous knowledge worldviews, African spirituality and African worldviews are ignored at government and policy making level, which may potentially result in the initiatives and policies lacking an understanding of the African worldview. Zimbabwe has recurring acts of violence and family and community break down. However, the government peace initiatives have failed to address the needs and views of the ordinary people (Murambadoro 2015: 33; Dube, 2012: 299). Scholars such as Mtapuri (2013: 3) and Mabvurira (2013: 67) have expressed the need to include African spirituality in such initiatives. Therefore, the aim of the study is to explore Ndebele spirituality to distil the values, principles and philosophy that can contribute to reconstructing family and community life and hopefully greater peace. The family is a central part of African spirituality as it is the first connection an individual has with the rest of the universe (Ndumbe 2001: 4). Hence, it is a proper place to start rebuilding and reconstructing communities in the African context. The researcher believes that the values, principles and customs and rituals distilled from Ndebele Spirituality, can then be extended to peace and healing at a national level in Zimbabwe.

1.3 Aim of the study

To explore the values and principles underpinning Ndebele spirituality and to inquire how its customs and rituals can be used to rebuild community life.

1.4 Objectives of the study

1. To explore the values and principles that underpin Ndebele spirituality.
2. To explore the philosophy of Ndebele spirituality and its underpinning customs and rituals.
3. To inquire how families and communities understand the African God
4. To explore how Ndebele spirituality can be used to reconstruct and develop family and community life.

1.5 Research questions

1. What are the values and principles that underpin Ndebele spirituality?
2. What is the philosophy of Ndebele spirituality and its underpinning customs and rituals?
3. How do families and communities understand the African God?
4. How can Ndebele spirituality be used to reconstruct and develop family and community life?

1.6 Significance of the study

Zimbabwe attained independence from the British in 1980 after, an armed struggle.

Since then, there has been an escalation in violence, such as the Matabeleland and Midlands repression of the 1980s, popularly referred to as Gukurahundi in 1980-87 and post-election violence in 2000 and post-election violence in 2008 (Murambadoro

et al. 2015: 31). According to Murambandoro *et al* (2015: 33) government initiatives have been elitist and has concentrated on conflict resolution among the political elite. It has not included the opinions and needs of the ordinary people. These are the

Lancaster House Agreement in 1979, the Dumbutshena and Chihambakwe Commissions of Inquiry in 1981 and 1983, the Unity Accord in 1987, and the Global Political Agreement (GPA) in 2008.

The key point to note is the elitist approach of the government to conflict resolution and the elimination of ordinary citizens from the process. This according to Murambadoro *et al.* (2015: 33) and Dube *et. al* (2012: 299) has failed to achieve the desired goals of peace and reconciliation. The reason it has failed is because conflict resolution approaches do not take into consideration the culture and the needs of the ordinary citizens. Murambadoro *et al.* (2015: 34) and Dube *et al.* (2012: 300) suggested that there is a need for people-oriented approaches to peace building. Therefore, the aim of this study is to engage the Ndebele, to explore their spirituality, so that elements from its worldview may be distilled for family and community reconstruction. Moreover, provide policy makers with empirical document which on Ndebele spirituality.

Secondly there is a gap in the African spirituality literature, but very little on Ndebele spirituality. Authors in the study of African indigenous knowledge systems usually chose one two tribes to study then generalise the results to other African groups (Mutapuri 2013:3; Wiredu 2008: 17). Mbiti (1969: 10) claimed that there are more than a thousand different tribal groups in Africa, thus this research contributes to African spirituality, by adding a Ndebele perspective to the other African spiritual traditions. The study contributes by adding the Ndebele perspective to African spirituality.

Moreover, according to Nussbaum (2003: 1), African worldviews are inaccessible to the outside continent because they are mostly communicated orally. Hence other than contributing to the literature on African spirituality the study is significant, in that through engagement of the Ndebele it will produce a written document on Ndebele spirituality. In addition, several authors have claimed that mainstream initiatives have

failed to address African problems because they do not take African worldviews into consideration (Mtapuri 2013: 1; Mabvurira 2013: 65; Run 2013: 26).

For instance, Mtapuri *et al.* (2013: 4) stated that poverty alleviating programmes have yielded little results in Zimbabwe because the programs are ignorant of African spirituality and how it affects the people. Poverty in the African cosmology goes beyond lack of resources and monetary definition. However, they may be attributed to spiritual aspects causing an individual to be poor. Like several other authors Mtapuri *et al.* (2013: 4) have suggested the need to consider African indigenous knowledge systems in crafting programs for the solution of African programs (Mtapuri 2013: 4; Mabvurira 2013: 65; Gumo 2013: 523; Nassubaum 2003: 2; Ross 2010: 44). Run (2013: 30) stated that through misunderstanding and ulterior motives the African culture was systematically suppressed by the Europeans, who forced their ways onto African communities. However, the African culture survived through the resilience of its people thus, traditional aspects of conflict resolution can be adopted into mainstream thinking to solve various conflicts in Africa. Several authors have also highlighted several areas and situations where traditional African resolution tools were used for instance in the traditional court after the Rwandan genocide (OseiHwedie *et al.* 2012: 33; Kasomo 2010: 25).

Ross (2010: 44) and Mabvurira (2013:70) suggested the inclusion of African

spirituality in the field of social work. Both these authors highlighted that social work would become more relevant by taking African spirituality into consideration in its work with families and communities. Thus, Mabvurira (2013: 73) suggested that African spirituality and spirituality in general be included in the curriculum of social work. Ndlovu (2012: 185) highlighted that counsellors are incapable of addressing social issues such as marital problems because they do not possess adequate skills in addressing African problems since their education excludes African systems. Ross (2010: 47) suggested that social work as a field might benefit, by including African philosophies such Ubuntu.

Others have suggested the elimination of western knowledge systems and have called for the use of African knowledge indigenous systems in addressing African issues (Mazama 2010: 219). Mazama (2010: 219) a strong proponent of Afrocentrism suggested the adoption of African indigenous system for the progression of Africa as

a continent. His argument being that the problems affecting Africans are because of Western ideologies and their systematic suppression of African philosophies. Therefore, the study is important because the aim of the study is to explore Ndebele spirituality to distil elements which can be used for the family and community reconstruction.

1.7 Spirituality

The term spirituality lacks a precise definition. Several writers stated that this is because, the term has different connotations for different individuals (Huitt *et al.* 2003: 2; Wolfeich 2012: 329; Fisher 2011: 19) Furthermore, there are different activities which different people view as elements of spirituality and in some cases, these have no religious connections or seek a connection to a higher power (Wolfeich 2012: 329). Fisher (2011: 17) outlined the nature of spirituality and its different facets which include:

- Spirituality is innate which means its native

- Spirituality is emotive

- Spirituality and religion

- Spirituality is dynamic

Leonard *et al.* (2003) stated that the term spirituality originates from root-words in

Latin and Greek; the Latin word being spiritus which means to breathe, and the

Greek is pneuma which refers to the vital force or soul. Spirituality is defined by Wakefield (cited in Gumo 2012: 524) as “attitudes, beliefs and practices which animate people’s lives and help them reach out towards super-sensible realities.” Fisher (2011: 20) defined spirituality as being “concerned with a person’s awareness of the existence and experience of inner feelings and beliefs, which give purpose, meaning and value to life. Spirituality helps individuals to live at peace with themselves, to love (God and) their neighbor, and to live in harmony with the environment.” Wolfeich (2012: 331)

stated that spirituality is “a way of life embedded in a tradition woven together with relationships with God, self, neighbour, community and the created world”. However, spirituality does not always involve a Supreme Being (Huitt *et al.* 2003:2; Fisher 2011: 18).

Spirituality involves the knowledge that one’s life has meaning outside the routine everyday existence and the knowledge that one is part of a determined life in the universe. (Spencer 2012: 1). Further, Spencer (2012: 1) stated that spirituality “involves exploring certain universal themes – love, compassion, altruism, life after death, wisdom and truth...” Kasmbala (2005: 303) stated that African spirituality involves African people’s attitudes, beliefs and practices in an endeavour to reach out to the super-sensible realities, God, the Spirits and the universe.

Several scholars have stated that religion and spirituality share common aspects however, they are distinct concepts. According Huitt *et al.* (2003: 4) religion involves the organisation, institutionalisation, of a set of beliefs, teachings, and practices that are set to connect individuals to a specific expression of spirituality. Huitt *et al.* (2003: 2) highlighted that some people are spiritual however not religious while some are religious not spiritual. Fisher (2011: 21) stated that religion is viewed as a set of belief systems while spirituality is more about the expression of life. Wolfeich (2012: 331) highlighted that contemporary spirituality has been viewed as a free space by individuals who view religion as constricting. However, Wolfeich (2012: 331), highlighted that spirituality studies can benefit immensely if it partners with theology as the latter would provide a historical background which would benefit spirituality studies.

Huitt *et al.* (2003: 9) stated that spirituality is important in the development of an individual, highlighting that studies in America have shown that lack of spiritual development results in risk behaviour, overeating low-self-esteem and bad health. Barney *et al.* (2012: 57) also stated that spirituality is important to individuals who find themselves in serious illness. He further, outlined how spirituality, was crucial to HIV and AIDS patient in research conducted in South Africa.

1.8 Theoretical Framework

A theoretical framework can be described as a guide or frame of reference which provides the researcher with a context to examine the problem (Grant *et al.* 2014; Sinclair 2007 39:40;). This sub-section presents a set of interconnected ideas which explain the spiritual dimension of the African being and how it was used as a guide and a frame of reference to African spirituality.

The theoretical framework for the study is the African spiritual paradigm. It comprises various spiritual dimensions which make up the African being. According to Ndumbe (2001: 2), the spiritual dimensions of the African Human being are interconnected with essential values that are widely accepted in African societies. Several authors have asserted it is difficult to identify homogenous values for Africa, due to the diverse societies found in Africa (Mbiti 1969: 10; Ndumbe 2001: 1; Kasambala 2005: 300). However, it is not the aim of this study to elucidate these values but to understand how they influence Ndebele spirituality which is being explored as one thread, within the broader fabric of African spirituality. The various spiritual dimensions of the African being are discussed below.

1.8.1.1 The “self” and the “we” (The individual and the community)

According to Ndumbe (2001: 2), the individual in African Spirituality is defined by the community. This means that the identity of the individual in the African worldview is defined by the community. Okolo (2008: 213) asserted that in the African worldview the individual “... becomes real only in their relationship with others in the community, that is the individual does not exist without the community”. Thus Mbiti (1969: 108) defined the individual in African culture as “I am because we are and since we are therefore I am.” Ndumbe (2001: 2) elaborated on the definition to point out that the community involves the not yet born, the dead (ancestors) and ultimately the universe. Furthermore, Ndumbe (2001: 2) asserted that the individual understands that he/she is put in the universe to perform certain tasks. Okolo (2008: 213) claimed that “the universe to Africans is a series of interactions and interconnections.”

1.8.1.2 The “Self” and Nature

According to Ndumbe (2001: 2), the individual and nature are different elements of the universe and they have an interdependent relationship within the context of the African spirituality paradigm. Moreover, man does not dominate nature but, through understanding and respecting the laws of nature the individual uses nature to improve their quality of life. Gumo (2012: 527) highlighted the relationship that Africans have with nature specifically that their identity and spirituality was connected to nature. According to several authors nature provides a spiritual connection in African spirituality (Kasambala 2005: 300; Mazama 2002: 220; Gumo 2012: 530). Therefore, when the individual respects and lives in harmony with nature he/she becomes part of the universe.

1.8.1.3 The “Self” and the Universe

The next level of connection is the universe, this connection the individual only achieves when they live in harmony with nature (Ndumbe 2001: 3). Furthermore, the individual (human being) is not the centre of creation but a conscious and active part of creation (Ndumbe 2001: 3). Nantambu (1996 cited in Mazama 2002: 223) concurred, describing African spirituality as spirituality which is in direct connection with nature, the cosmos, the universe, and that spiritual God-force Amen-Ra. In addition, when the individual connects to the universe he transcends the physical and material world (Ndumbe 2001:3).

1.8.1.4 The “self”, the family, the ancestors and God

According to Ndumbe (2001: 4) the individual is born into a family created by the parents and the ancestors with a duty and it is up to the individual to distinguish and carry out the special duty. Ross (2010: 45) concurred stating that Africans from birth are socialised to be part of a family and community whereby proverbs, fables, rituals

and religious ceremonies are communicated via oral communication. According to several authors the African family involves the extended family and the ancestors (Mazama 2002: 220; Chirozva *et al.* 2014: 5; Kasambala 2005: 300) Ndumbe (2001:4) asserted that the individual leads a life which is caused and supported by the membership to the community which connects us to the universe and automatically to ancestors and the creator (God). Moreover, Ndumbe (2001:4) claimed that without the connection to the God, the primary source of life is meaningless.

1.8.1.5 The “Self” and life as a flow of vital force

Ndumbe (2001:4) asserted that life is made up of vital forces, of energy, which are usually observable with a naked eye, but can also be invisible. He further elaborated that the energy is “visible matter, measurable atoms, produces visible but also invisible connections and moves in the form of energy flows, but this energy also moves beings in a kind of energy-vehicle.” The human being through intimate connection and meditation transcends his material life and reaches an immaterial height of being. This is achieved only when joy and happiness, beauty and light, solidarity and interconnection have come together in an individual.

When the flow of energy is disrupted illness, stress and conflict ensue. Furthermore, if the energy escapes then human death follows. Ndumbe (2001:4) stated that conflict aims to disrupt the flow of energy and finally dissolve the energy. Ndumbe (2001:4) asserted that the restoration process of the flow of energy involves the family, both the living and the dead, the community, the universe and God that is all of these elements have to come together and be willing to restore the flow of energy.

Grant *et al.* (2014:12) asserted that a theoretical framework provides a basis for the research that is the theoretical framework, anchors research because it serves as the foundational understanding of knowledge. Therefore, the spiritual dimension of the African being is a set of interconnected ideas which explains the spirituality of an African provides the researcher with the foundational knowledge and context to explain Ndebele spirituality as an African spirituality.

The theoretical framework functions as a guide to the study hence, the theoretical framework guides the aim and objectives of the study. Firstly, Ndumbe (2001:4) mentioned that the values he presented, presents a problem in being used as standards for the whole of Africa because of the diverse societies found in Africa.

The theory possesses a limit, which provides a gap which this study seeks to fill.

Therefore, the first objective is to explore the values and principles that underpin Ndebele spirituality. The second objective is to explore the philosophy of Ndebele spirituality and its central customs and values. The next objective is to explore their understanding of God. Lastly, it intends to explore how Ndebele spirituality can be used to reconstruct and build family and community life.

The spiritual dimension of the African being postulates, that the community defines and gives purposes to the individual in the African worldview that is the individual does not exist outside the community. Therefore, the key to understanding Ndebele spirituality as an African spirituality is in understanding how the community defines the individual and the roles it prescribes.

The theory further asserts even though the community defines the individual, the family is the first spiritual point of connection. Moreover, through his/her spiritual connection to the family (living and living dead), he/she connects to nature, universe and God and conquers the material world to the immaterial world. Thus, the aim of the study is to explore Ndebele spirituality so as to distil which customs and values can be used to reconstruct family and community life. The researcher, guided by this theoretical framework, believes that if these customs and values could be extended to the nation as a whole, then reconstruction can start to occur.

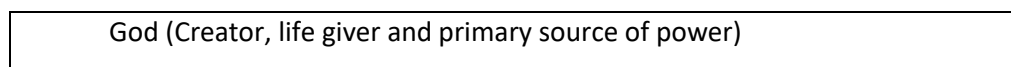
A theory explains the intricate relationships amongst various interconnected ideas (Sinclair 2007: 39; Rockinson-Szapkiw 2012: 3; Grant *et al.* 2014: 12). The spiritual dimension of the African being is based on the relationships the African being has with various components which are found in African spirituality. This provides the researcher with a basic understanding of African spirituality and provides an empirical guide for the data collection and data analysis in exploring how the Ndebele people as African beings relate to family, community, universe and God.

The theory also defines life as energy, vital forces which flow from the creator (God) and that the continual flow of this energy ensures that the individual is healthy and happy. Furthermore, the disruption of the energy leads to conflict, stress and illness. Moreover, if the conflict intends to dissolve the energy and if the energy is dissolved death follows. The restoration process involves all elements of African spirituality to come together and restore the proper flow of energy. This provides the researcher

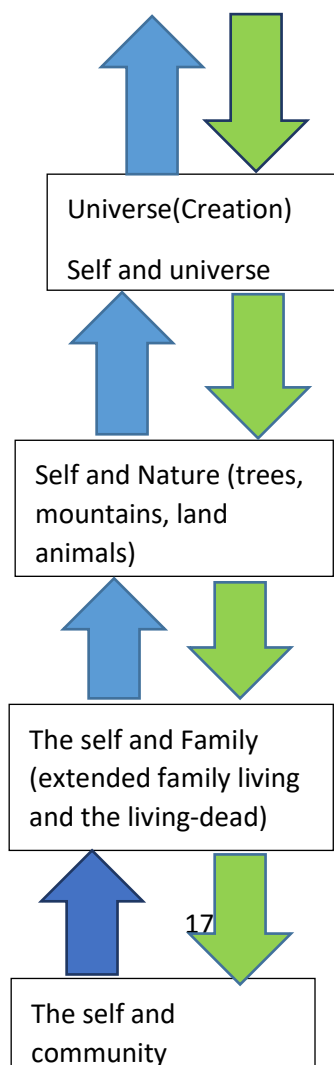
with an empirical basis to explore and analyse the spiritual restoration process of Ndebele spirituality.

The spiritual dimension of the African being provides an overview of African spirituality, which provides the researcher with a guide and empirical reference for the study. The theoretical framework also provides the research with a context in which to qualify Ndebele spirituality as a thread of African spirituality.

Figure 1.1 The spiritual dimension of the African being



1.9 Research methodology



A qualitative research approach was used for this research. Qualitative research approaches involve the investigation of people's ideas, attitudes, perspectives, A qualitative research approach was used for this research. Qualitative research approaches involve the investigation of people's ideas, attitudes, perspectives, motives and intentions thorough the collection of massive data from a small sample size (Flick 2014: 47; Henn *et al.* 2009: 49; May 2011: 99). Flick (2014: 47) stated that qualitative research is an umbrella term which involves several research techniques with different aims and procedures which are grounded theory, ethnography, life history and conversational analysis. Ethnography specifically guided this inquiry. The goal of ethnography is to produce a comprehensive and careful description of the context and topic under research (Flick 2014: 47). Thus, it was the choice for this study as the goal was to produce a comprehensive and careful description of Ndebele spirituality.

Purposive sampling was used to select the samples. Palys (2008: 697) defined "purposive sampling as a series of strategic choices, about who, where and how a researcher carries out his/her research guided by his or her objectives". An in-depth semi structured interview was used to collect data. The semi structured interview is most suitable data collection tool in qualitative research because it can capture rich and detailed data (Henn *et al.* 2009: 187; Sarantakos 2005: 45; Neuman 2006: 396).

1.10 Structure of the dissertation

Chapter One: Introduction

Chapter Two: Literature Review

Chapter Three: Research Methodology

Chapter Four: Data presentation and Data Analysis

Chapter Five: Conclusion and Recommendations

1.11 Conclusion

This chapter served as an introductory chapter and provided a background to the study. It highlighted the research problem that necessitated this research study. The chapter also presented the aim and objectives, the significance of the study and research questions that guided this research. The next chapter provides a review of relevant literature.

Chapter 2

Literature Review

2.1 Introduction

This chapter contains a review of pertinent literature. It involves a critical analysis and evaluation of literature related to the topic. The goal is to identify previous knowledge, identify gaps in knowledge related to the topic and to strategically position the current research this body of knowledge.

Corin (2008:38) defined a literature review as an objective, in-depth summary and critical analysis of pertinent accessible research and non-research on the topic being studied. Rowe (2014: 243) stated that a literature review “synthesizes past knowledge on the topic or domain interest, identifies important biases and knowledge gaps in the literature and proposes corresponding future research directions.” Fink (2010:3) added that a literature review is a “systematic, explicit and reproducible method for identifying, evaluating and synthesizing the existing body of completed and recorded work produced by researchers, scholars, and practitioners.” The literature review that follows is organised thematically, and highlights major aspects identified in the literature on African spirituality.

2.2 African Context

Scholars for several years have advocated for the recognition of Africa’s input into the development of solutions of the continent’s problems. Several scholars have highlighted that the prescribed solutions to African problems fail to yield the desired results, because they are incompatible with the African way of life hence they fail (Mtapuri 2013: 2). Therefore, some have advocated for the consideration of African ideas in creating solutions for Africa. Some have advocated for the partnering of African worldviews and mainstream ideas for the creation of solution to African problems. Scholars such as Mtapuri *et al.* (2013: 4) have stated that poverty alleviation programs in Zimbabwe have failed to take into consideration the spiritual aspects of the people specifically the spiritual implications of poverty. Another example is the

research of Christie *et al.* (2003: 1) which stated that when mainstream western views are interweaved, with African traditional approaches, the programme is more accepted by the local people. Magesa (2015:119) stated that the world has major problems which can be solved by allowing the people of the world to have conversations where people's respective knowledge systems are respected.

Kasambula (2005: 300) and Cillier (2008:10) highlighted that it is important for Christianity to understand and appreciate African worldviews and spirituality because some these worldviews can be incorporated into Christianity which would create an African Christian spirituality. However, Mazama (2002: 219) is of the idea that Christianity is the enemy of African spirituality. He supports his idea with historical evidence of how Christianity has tried to eradicate African spirituality. He advocates for the recovery of a pure African spirituality. Cillier (2008: 2) warned that it is naïve to believe in the recovery of a pure African past because it is impossible. The common thread in these studies is the importance of recognising African worldviews and their continual influence on African people.

The aim of this study was to explore Ndebele spirituality, so that data from the research, would become more applicable and relevant in terms of solving contemporary issues. Mbiti (1969: 6) stated that African spirituality has not been immune to the influence of outside religion such as Christianity and Islam. Therefore, the aim of this research is to explore Ndebele spirituality and extract ways which can be used for conflict resolution at a family and community level.

The historical suppression of African worldview(s) and knowledge systems by the western civilisation led to Africans being considered, a people incapable of creating knowledge. Run (2013: 26) outlined the different degrading ideologies about Africans and their way of life which European explorers and missionaries had written about Africa. He claimed that these distorted stories of Africa, for example Joseph Conrad's *Heart of Darkness*, led to the belief that African traditions were evil, hence the missionaries' objective to sanctify the continent. However African worldviews and spirituality have survived this onslaught and is still relevant to Africans (Mazama 2002: 219). The problem is that even in post-colonial Africa, African worldviews have not been brought fully into mainstream life.

To understand African Spirituality, it is important to define terms which will be used prominently in this chapter and the rest of the research. Firstly, the term African worldview, Freud (1964 cited in Funk 2001: 1) defined a worldview as an “intellectual construction which solves all the problems of our existence uniformly on the basis of one overriding hypothesis, which accordingly leaves no question unanswered in which everything that interests us finds its fixed place. Rusbult (2011: 2) defined a worldview as a “framework of ideas and attitudes about the world, us and life. Funk (2001: 2) added that a worldview is “the set of beliefs about fundamental aspects of reality that ground and influence all one’s perceiving, thinking knowing and doing”.

Nkabahona (2007: 5) stated that the “African World View is, how the Africans perceive(d) and locate(d) themselves in the interplay and inter-relationships of a complexity of reality-loosely translated as the Universe.” Therefore, in the context of this research African worldview(s) are those set of beliefs, which Africans subscribe to and believe to be true about their universe. The researcher adopted the idea of Gumo *et al* (2012: 524) who used the plural term African worldviews in the acknowledgement of the complexity of African worldviews. Mbiti (1969:6) claimed there is more than a thousand diverse groups Africa with different worldviews. Therefore, studies on African spirituality have been about the similarities that these group share (Ross 2010:45).

Kasambula (2005:310) defined African cosmology as “the way African people have incorporated the mystery of the unseen into their lives recognising the beyondness of human life.” The *Worldmark Encyclopedia of Religious Practices* (2005: 5) simply defined African cosmology as “the explanation of the universe.”

2.3 African Spirituality

Spirituality is defined by Wakefield (1983 cited in Gumo 2012: 524) as “attitudes, beliefs and practices which animate people’s lives and help them reach out towards super-sensible realities.” According to Kasmbala (2005:310), African spirituality involves African people’s attitudes, beliefs and practices in an endeavour to reach out to the super-sensible realities God, the Spirits and the universe. Nantambu (1996 cited in Mazama 2002: 45) said that it involves “a direct connectedness/ interrelatedness with nature, the cosmos, the universe and that spiritual God-force Amen-Ra the giver of

life.” Kasambala (2005: 302) stated African spirituality is difficult to define because it “covers the whole range of life, including but goes beyond human beings, which makes it even more difficult to understand its composition.

Mbiti (1969: 9) claimed that Africans are highly spiritual, therefore every aspect of an African is influenced by spirituality. Furthermore, Mbiti (1969: 9) stated that Africans do not separate between the sacred and the secular because everything involves spirituality. Africans approach their spirituality in a communal and cooperative manner, which is influenced by the belief that an individual only realizes his identity and survival within the context of the community (Ndumbe 2001: 2). Without the community the individual has no identity and cannot survive. Kasambala (2005: 302) stated that African spirituality is mainly about those intricate relationships that man (human beings) has with family both living and dead (ancestors) the spirits, the universe and ultimately the Supreme being. According to African cosmology African spirituality has a hierarchy, Nkabahona (2007: 6) presented an illustration of this hierarchy as reflected in figure 2:1.

Figure: 2.1 An illustration of the African spirituality hierarchy

Spiritual Realm

God, the supreme being The source and giver of all Life)

Spiritual Mediums (the "Gods") God of fertility God of rain and sunshine, God of the floods God of healing others

The Ancestors Includes exemplary family, clan or tribal heads while they lived in the physical world. They now occupy this prestigious position in the physical world. They now occupy this prestigious position

The Living Dead

Are still much alive in peoples' minds/memory so much alive that they still enjoy a reserved place at the table during meals

Physical Realm

Kings, Queen Mothers, Heads of Tribes

Heads of Clans and Heads of Families

Family Members (includes the not yet born 25 in the wombs of expecting mothers)



According to several scholars, Africans believe in a Supreme Being who they believed to be at the apex of African spirituality (Mbiti 1969: 27; Kasambula 2005: 303; Ekeke 2010: 209). Furthermore, Kasambula (2005:304) explained that the spiritual realm is the upper level, which consists of God at the apex, then the spirits divinities and ancestors. He stated that the ancestors are the most important of these being after God because it is through them that the living communicates with the Supreme Being. Then, the lower level in Kasmbula (2005: 304) illustrates the living and nature.

Nkabahano (2007: 6) illustration is more elaborate because it illustrated the leadership hierarchy in the physical realm, which plays a key role in spirituality. For instance, Phiri (2009: 93) mentioned Tribal spirits, which protect the community, and the chief is the mediator in communicating with tribal spirits. The chief as their kin is the one who communicates with the tribal spirits on behalf of the community. Most traditional African groups viewed the King as the chief priest of the community (Ndlovu 2012:183).

2.4 God Images

Kirby (2007: 13-14) stated “the word ‘God’ is of Indo-European origin in the Sanskrit root gheu, meaning “to invoke” and “to pour, to offer sacrifice.” Ekeke (2010: 209) stated that “when we refer to the word God we are talking about the living eternal being who is the source of all living and whose life existed from the dateless past.” Furthermore, Kirby (2007: 14) asserted that God is beyond explanation, title, and class; “...God is an abstract and philosophical entity that possesses divine attributes.” Therefore, the discussion that follows outlines the different attributes attributed to the

Supreme being in the African context and how these influences the organisation of the African cosmology.

Africans before the advent of Western influence were part of a monistic religion and they believed in a Supreme Being (Mbiti 1969: 30; Essien 2013: 236). However, the notion that Africans, did not believe in a Supreme Being is a result of misunderstanding of the African being and his way of life by Western scholars and explorers (Run 2013: 26). Essien (2013: 237) stated that throughout Africa the Supreme Being is referred to by different names because of the difference in language and social background. In addition, Essien (2013: 237-38) stated that Africans view God as the creator of the universe thus the society.

The source of misunderstanding results most from the belief common in most African religions the belief that God as a Supreme being is transcendent and cannot be approached directly. This belief is that because of God's supremacy he cannot be approached and interact with mere mortals, hence he is approached through lesser spiritual beings yet more powerful than the living. These are divinities and Ancestors. This is the cornerstone of African spirituality. However, Africans believe that God is both transcendent and immanent. This is a phenomenon Mbiti (1969: 32) referred to as paradoxically complementary. According to him (Mbiti 1969: 32) paradoxically complementary this means "...He is 'Far' (transcendental) that means men cannot reach Him; yet He is so 'near' (immanent) that he comes close to men." Ekeke *et al.* (2010: 211) further explained the transcendence of God in African terms saying ○

God is not restricted to a precise place and time as human beings are.

○ God lives outside the natural world in which human beings live.

○ Human beings can never fully comprehend the will and thoughts of God. He is beyond understanding.

○ God is always first, He is the creator of all things and initiator of events.

○ Human beings feel awe when they remember the presence of God, He is good and trustworthy in a way they are not.

This ideology is the cornerstone of African spirituality as it shapes African spirituality whereby God appears to the outsider, as absent because God is approached and communicated with through a hierarchy. Kasambula (2005: 304) stated that Africans have a hierarchical approach to their spirituality which means that even though they believe God is ever present, He is to be approached through the hierarchy (see Figure 2:1).

Furthermore, Kasambula (2005: 304) claimed that Africans approach their spirituality, as a political hierarchy whereby the Chief deals with big issues and the smaller issues are dealt with by those, below the Chief in the hierarchy. Hence, they believe that God is the Chief and cannot be bothered by small issues, as these are left to the divinities and ancestors below God within the hierarchy. Therefore, outsiders mistake the interaction between the African people and ancestors as the absence of God and worshipping of ancestors.

2.4.1 Supreme Being

God is mostly defined as the Supreme Being in African spirituality, the one above all things (Kasambula 2005: 305; Mbiti 1969: 30; Mtapuri *et al.* 2013: 2; Gumo *et al.* 2012: 524). Mtapuri *et al.* (2013: 2) stated that the Shona of Zimbabwe refer to God as *Mwari* which means the Supreme Being. According to several scholars the Yoruba of Nigeria, refer to the God as *Oludumare* (Mbiti 1969: 30; Essien 2013: 236; Ekeke

2010: 214). According to Ekeke (2010: 214) *Oludumare* in Yoruba means “Chief or King who wields authority and is unique”.

Kasambula (2005: 305) stated that the Zulu people of South Africa also believe in a Supreme Being who they refer to as *uNkulunkulu*, which means Great one. The Ndebele of Zimbabwe also believe in a Supreme being who they refer to as *Nkulunkulu* (Nyathi 2001: 3). Nyathi (2001: 3) explained that He (Supreme being) is referred to as *uNkulunkulu*, because the Ndebele believed he was the first man through death who became the first ancestor, hence he is the ancient one. Ndlovu (2012: 170) concurred stating that the Ndebele do refer to their Supreme Being as *uNkulunkulu*, which means

the Great one. The similarities in the definition of God by the Ndebele and Zulu might be attributed to their shared Nguni origins.

The Akan of Ghana refer to their God as Nyame (Absolute satisfier) or *Onyankopon* which means "... he who alone is Great" (Wiredu 1998: 23). The names highlight the attributes that are associated with the Supreme Being in African ontology. Several authors have suggested that Africans believe that the Supreme Being is unique, the ultimate authority and oversees everything (Mbiti 1969: 30; Essien 2013: 237; Ekeke 2010: 210).

Furthermore, the Supreme Being supremacy is attributed to his omnipresence and omniscience. In African ontology, the Supreme Being is omnipresent and omniscient, which means Africans believe that God is everywhere, and he is all knowing. Mbiti (1969: 32) asserted that in subscribing that God is omniscient, Africans are placing Him at the highest position of honour and respect because in African societies wisdom commands profound respect. Mbiti (1969: 32) supports the notion by giving example of the Zulu and Banyarwanda who refer to God as the "Wise One". Furthermore, the Yoruba saying, 'Only God is wise'. These attributes add on to the concept that Africans believe that God is unique and almighty.

2.4.2 God as the Creator

Africans not only view God as the Supreme Being but as the Creator. Africans believe that God is the Supreme Being, the universe; nature and human being are testimony of his existence and his power because he is the Creator (Gumo *et al* 2012: 524; Mbiti 1969: 32). According Ekeke (2010: 211) the Igbo of Nigeria refer to God as *Chineke* meaning the source of being who creates all things and *Chukwu* source of being which connotes the Great one from who being originates". The Nupe of Nigeria refer to God as *Soko* which means Creator or Supreme deity, who resides in heaven and the Edo of Nigeria refer to God as *Osanobua* or *Osanobwa* "the source of all things who carries and sustains the world or universe" (Mbiti 1969: 32).

Attached to these names are the numerous stories of creation in Africa. According to the *Worldmark Encyclopaedia of Religious Practices in African society*, the myths of creation are flexible, and they vary from generation to generation, however they have a fixed simple structure and the goal to explain the creation and order of the universe.

These stories usually involve super-human entities, demigods, spirits and ancestors. These stories feature the Supreme Being creating the world with the help of the divinities and in some case with thought process. Furthermore, the elements of balance and duality are common themes in the creation stories. The stories of creation in explain how Africans organise their world that is laws, roles and duties that individuals must perform to keep a balance society (Kirby 2007: 17). Peace and healing methods are designed to restore the balance. The laws enacted in traditional African societies were believed to be received from God hence their infringement was not only against the community but God as well.

Even though Africans believe in a Supreme Being who is the creator, provider and is omnipresent and omniscient, they believed that due to His supremacy he is beyond human approach and interactions. Therefore, Africans approach him through lesser beings yet more powerful than humans. These are divinities and ancestors. Secondly, they believe that the Supreme Being is benevolent to an extent that misfortune is rarely or ever associated with Him. Ancestors and divinities are the ones who are associated with misfortune, which is perceived as judgement for infringing on the laws of the land.

2.5 Spirits, Divinities and Ancestors

Mbiti (1969: 29) stated that the African spiritually is heavily populated with divinities, spirits and the living-dead (ancestors). The divinities are a category, which features beings which, are created in the ontological category of the spirits. The divinities are associated with the Supreme Being. According to Mbiti (1969:29), the divinities “stand for His (Supreme Being) activities or manifestations either as personifications or as the spiritual beings in charge of these major objects or phenomena of nature”. The concept of divinities is not common to the whole of Africa, it is popular in West Africa. Therefore, it would not be discussed in detail in this study.

2.5.1 Divinities

The concept of divinities is widely popular in West Africa. There are several examples among West African groups, which believe in divinities reportedly the Ashanti, which refer to the pantheon of divinities as *abosom*. The Yoruba has a thousand and seven hundred divinities in their pantheon, the *Orisa*. The divinities are believed to be intermediaries between the people and the Supreme Being. They carry out various duties on behalf of the Supreme Being and are under His control. The aspect of divinities will not be discussed at length, in this research because the idea of divinities is not prominent in Zimbabwe and southern Africa however, it is worth mentioning.

2.5.2 Ancestors

Ancestors play a pivotal role in African spirituality. Several scholars have noted that the ancestors are intermediaries between the spirit world and the physical world. Africans believe that death is not the end, but it marks the beginning of life in a different existence (Mazama 2002: 220). The Chewa of Zambia believed that when a person dies, his life continues after death such that he gains immortality and eternity. Scott (cited in Phiri 2009:92) said “the ancestral spirits are the spirits of the departed who were once alive and are now dead. These are known as *azimu* (spirits). The Chewa believed that the spirits of their dead relatives survive physical death and remain alive. At death, the spirit leaves the body and flies away like wind or air and becomes God like and goes to live in the spirit world.” However, most African scholars challenge notions such as those of Scott, who asserted that ancestors become Godlike. Furthermore, such notions resulted in the misunderstanding of African spirituality by western scholars who concluded that in the African context the concept of the Supreme Being is absent.

The ancestral phenomenon is a contentious one in African spirituality. Mbiti (1969: 80) claimed that the terms ancestors and ancestral spirits are unnecessarily limiting, in understanding the African spiritual world. The spiritual world of Africans is densely populated with spirits, divinities, ancestors and God at the top. West African spirituality is the one in which divinities are widely popular therefore, little attention is paid to them

in this study. The agreed upon notion is that ancestors play a pivotal role in African spirituality, however the debate is around the identity of ancestors.

Mbiti (1969: 81) claimed that the terms ancestral spirits and ancestors is limiting in that it leaves out those who do not qualify to be ancestors. Hence, he proposed the term the living-dead, which is more inclusive.

Firstly, to understand Mbiti's (1969: 79) argument it is significant, to understand that ancestry is considered a prestigious state among most African societies. According to Kasambala (2005: 315) in some African communities, the clan decides if one is to be considered an ancestor. Kasambala (2005: 315) stated a person is considered an ancestor after death if the person lived a good exemplary life. He used characteristics of ancestors as postulated by Mawewe (cited in Kasambula 2005: 315) to support his standpoint. These are Mawewe (cited in Kasambula 2005: 315) characteristics:

- Founders of the clan
- People who bore children (Procreation)
- Those who lived a good life to their ripe age
- Those who were skilled in some profession (people of good counsel farmers, hunters and healers).

Moreover, according to Mawewe (cited Kasambula 2005: 315) murders, witches, people who committed suicide and those who were killed by lightning do not make it to ancestry. Nkabahona (2007: 7) described them, as clan leaders and exemplary members of the family while there were alive. According to Dubeet *al.* (2012: 298), one of the requests from the people in Matabeleland and Midlands was for proper burial for the victims of *gukurahundi* buried in mass grave so that their spirits can find peace and take their rightful place as ancestors.

Mawewe's (cited in Kasambula 2005: 315) criteria of an ancestor is more inclusive compared to Nkabahona (1994: 7) because, as a parent, one qualifies to be an ancestor and those who live to their ripe old age. On the other hand, Nkabahona's

(1994:7) categorisation only involves clan leaders and exemplary members.

Therefore, Mbiti's (1969: 79) argument is merited. However, the confusion is that Nkabahona (1994: 6) in his illustration of African spirituality reflects that the livingdead is a category which includes those members of the family which are not ancestors but are still in the memories of the living, so much that they have a place at the table. Furthermore, Mazama (2002: 219) used the terms living-dead and ancestors as synonyms. Mbiti's (1969: 79) stated that the living dead perform the duties of the ancestors, which are to protect, guide and intercede on behalf of the living.

Furthermore, Nyathi (2001: 4) in explaining Ndebele religion stated that there are good and bad ancestors. In the Ndebele spirituality good ancestors, are the one who are responsible for the protection, guidance and prosperity of the living and report to *uNkulunkulu* (God). The bad ancestors are responsible for the negative aspects and they are the ones who provide powers to witchcraft. Nyathi (2001:4) asserted that the Ndebele are silent, about who is at the top of these bad ancestors. The concept of bad ancestors contradicts the mostly accepted notion of ancestry as being a prestigious position reserved for those who lived a good exemplary life. However, it qualifies if the definition proposed by ancestors Scott (cited in Phiri 2009: 92) is used, because the definition does not involve the concept of prestige but implies that one simply becomes an ancestor after death.

The term ancestors will be used for purpose of this research to refer to those spiritual beings who are the spirit of the dead which Africans believe, are there to guide, protect and provide for the living. The role of ancestors as mediators highlights a valuable tool in peace and healing mediation. Mediation is one of the processes involved in ensuring peace and healing.

Ancestors play a pivotal role in African spirituality, because they are intermediaries which connect the living with the Supreme Being. The category of ancestors is divided into family spirits, clan or tribal spirits. Africans believe in life after death hence Mazama (2002: 219) stated that death in the African context, marks the start of a new life in a different form that is in spirit form. The general belief among the Africans is that in death the people are elevated to a prestigious position of power over the living.

2.5.2 (a) Family Ancestors

Family is central in African societies, because African worldviews stipulate that the identity of an individual can only be defined through collective of the family and the community (Ndumbe 2001: 3). Therefore, the saying I am because we are, we are therefore I am. Several scholars stated that family in Africa does not only involve the husband, wife and children but the extended family and the ancestors. Mtapuri (2013:3) reported that in the Shona spirituality there are family ancestors (*vadzimu*).

Phiri (2009: 94) reported the same concept among the Chewa of Zambia *Midzimu Yamakolo*. The task of the family ancestors is “the protection of the family lineages, immediate and extended” (Gelfand cited in Mtapuri 2013:3). Amanze (2002: 146) stated that “they protect people from dangers such as disease, droughts, famine and witchcraft; but also, they punish people when they break traditional moral norms.”

Mbiti (1969: 81) identified the same category among the Acholi, which contains the known relatives of the living, and are believed to be benevolent and protective. The family ancestors are responsible for punishing those who do not uphold the moral code and are said to be responsible for the misfortune in the case of immorality. For instance, the *emizimu* (family spirits) among the Ankore are responsible for punishing misconduct.

The living ensures a proper relationship with the ancestors through performing rituals and sacrifices. The ancestors communicate with the living through dreams, visions and spiritual possession with only the diviners, who have the authority to interpret (Phiri 2009: 94). Ndlovu (2012: 180) highlighted that in the traditional society of the Ndebele in the case of a spiritual conflict, be it between the ancestors and the living or between the living, that have decided to involve the spirits (witchcraft), the diviners and spirit mediums are the qualified mediators of the conflict. The family ancestors are responsible for guidance, protection and prosperity of the immediate family and the clan or tribal ancestors are responsible for the community. The ancestors ensured peace because their counsel and intervention are accepted.

2.5.2 (b) Tribal Ancestors

The concept of tribal spirits has been reported in several groups in Africa and their responsibility is to oversee the welfare of the whole community (Mbiti 1969; Phiri 2009; Mtapuri 2013). Mbiti (1969: 81) claimed that the Gikuyu of Kenya have the clan's spirits *ngoma cia moherga*, who are involved in issues pertaining to the whole community. The Shona have the same spirits which they refer to as *Mhondoro* and their responsibility is to ensure that the people kept to the code (hunhu). The Zulu and the Ndebele have the same code, Ubuntu (Mtapuri 2013: 3). *Ubuntu/Hunhu* are the moral code of living which everyone in the community must adhere to, to keep the wrath of the ancestors at bay. Phiri (2009: 94) asserted that tribal spirits are also found among the Chewa.

According to Phiri (2009: 94), the Chewa believe that when the chief dies, he gains more power than an ordinary person dies and is inducted into the category of tribal ancestors. Secondly, they believe that the chieftaincy continues even after death hence when there are state problems, the people approach the chief as they believe he can mediate for them as the relative of the tribal ancestors. Ndlovu (2012: 182) stated that the traditional society of the Ndebele viewed the King as the chief priest and he presided over the national events.

Several scholars have asserted that ancestors as guardians of the people are responsible for ensuring that the community is intact. Hence, misfortunes are firstly viewed as a sign that ancestors are upset with the living (Washington 2010: 27). Tribal ancestors are key in issues of conflict resolution, because in the traditional courts disputants, adjudicators and mediators must swear an oath to the tribal ancestors to tell the truth (Ajayi 2014). Furthermore, Ajayi (2014) stated that ancestral spirits might compel disputants to tell the truth as refusal to state the truth will invoke the wrath of the ancestors.

2.5.3 Spirits

Mbiti (1969: 79) claimed "myriads of spirits are reported from every African people...." However, their origins are not clearly stated. Some are believed to have been created but most people believe that "...spirits are what remain of human beings when they die physically". This section deals with those spirits who are not regarded as ancestors but are believed to be active in the lives of the living.

Physical Realm

African spirituality is divided into two parts, the spiritual realm and the physical realm (Nkabahona 2007: 6). Kasambula (2005: 305) referred to this physical realm as the lower level which consists of human beings (the living) and nature. This sub-section will discuss the aspects of the physical realm in African spirituality.

2.6 Ubuntu

Mbiti (1969: 10) asserted that central to African spirituality is the philosophy of communal existence “I am because we are, we are therefore I am.” According to Mbiti (1969: 10) because of this philosophy, Africans approach spirituality in a communal manner. Ndumbe (2001: 3) concurred stating that the African being is defined by his community and without the community an individual does not exist.

Ross (2010: 45) added that the African child is encultured to be part of the family and the community at large through oral literature.

Several scholars have claimed that the concept of communal, existence is the underpinning philosophy of African spirituality (Mbiti 1969: 10; Ndumbe 2001: 1; Washington 2010: 26). African spirituality is about the intricate and interlinked relationships that man shares with his fellow man and the spirit world.

The idea of communal existence is a philosophy found across Africa. The concept is expressed in different terms, yet it is the same philosophy. Among the Nguni people (Zulu, Xhosa, Ndebele) in Southern Africa it is referred to as ubuntu, which is best explained by the popular saying that should accompany it: *umuntu ngumuntu ngabantu* (a person is person through other persons) (Ross 2010: 45).

Ross (2010: 45) defined Ubuntu as “the foundational doctrine of traditional morals and ethics, and emphasises collective identity solidarity, caring and sharing, the relatedness between the physical and the metaphysical world, the value of interpersonal relationships or humanism”. Mtapuri *et al.* (2013:3) asserted that it is the mandate of the living to adhere to the guideline and principles of Ubuntu/Uhunu to ensure peace and harmony in the society and to keep the ancestors happy. Kasomo

(2010: 25) further stated that the ancestors are the distributor of morality, role models and teachers of wisdom.

Nussbaum (2003: 4) asserted that Ubuntu plays a key role in conflict prevention and conflict resolution in cases where conflict has ensued. Several authors have highlighted that traditional African society thrived on living and working together for a common goal, therefore, the goal of conflict resolution in the case of conflict is to mend the relations and once again work and live together for the benefit of the community (Mbiti 1969:10; Ndlovu 2012: 170).

Mawere (2010: 217) asserted that collective existence also meant collective guilt. Collective guilt meant that conflict resolution is approached collectively, for instance in the Shona culture if a member of one's family murders, the avenging spirit *Ngozi* affects the whole family of the murderer. The conflict resolution process involves the murderer's family asking for forgiveness and providing appeasement in the form of giving away their child for marriage to the victim's family. Mawere (2010: 217) asserted that the marriage part of the appeasement has been castigated by people who do not understand the symbolic gesture that symbolises continuity. Continuity was important to Africans therefore through marriage the victim would be replaced by the children of the couple.

Kasomo (2010: 25) highlighted that covenants such as marriage are used for conflict resolution. Ndumbe (2003: 5) asserted that conflict breaks the flow of energy in the society; hence the collective group must participate in the restoration of the energy flow. Therefore, peace and healing methods in African society are designed with a goal to restore social cohesion in the case that this is disrupted.

Furthermore, Washington (2010: 26) asserted that healing in the African context serves the purpose of restoring community. This is because misfortunes such as illness, bad behaviour and conflict are viewed as signs and symptoms of the collective breakdown. He echoed Ndumbe (2001: 3), by stating that healing involves the active participation of the community because healing is essential to restoring the life force that flows within the community connected to the Supreme Being.

2.7 Family

Family is the next level, which is presented as the smallest recognised unit in the African context. Scholars on African spirituality, defined family within the parameters of the traditional African family which identifies kinship as an important aspect of a family (Ndumbe 2001: 1; Mbiti 1969: 10). Chirozva *et al.* (2012: 5) said that “the traditional family organizations are founded on collective relationships Thus, when the term “family” is used, it does not usually refer to the nuclear or extended family based on the husband-wife relationship but to the extended family based on ancestry”. This definition is echoed by scholars on African spirituality, who point out that this relationship influences Africans approach to life including healing. However, Chirozva *et al.* (2012: 5) noted the changes, which have taken place and are continually taking place in the African family. Chirozva *et al.* (2012: 5) warned that the collective sense of the family is gradually fading in modern time.

Chirozva *et al.* (2012: 15) outlined the changes of the traditional African system and the influences, for instance globalisation, religion, migration and technology. They highlighted that the influences have both negative and positive effects on the

traditional African family. One of the changes is the family’s position as the institution responsible for socialisation has lessened. Ross (2010: 45) and Nassubaum (2005: 22) highlighted that African spirituality is encultured into the African child through oral tradition in the family. That is the family is responsible for teaching important values and norms however, this role is shared with the school and other institutions.

Madzivadondo (2012: 198) studied the effects of immigration on the family in Zimbabwe asserting that migration has resulted in the disintegration in the family in Zimbabwe. Thus, the aim of the research is to explore Ndebele spirituality, in order to distil from its richness, healing and peace interventions that are relevant for Zimbabwe.

Several authors have highlighted that the traditional African system recognised the family as the smallest unit. Ndumbe (2001) highlighted that the healing process involves the family. Moreover, family plays a pivotal in conflict resolution. Sentongo *et al.* (2012) stated that the conflict resolution mechanisms among the Baganda of Uganda starts at family level(ekika). Ademowo(2015) stated that family is part of the institutions which monitors and prevents conflict with the head of the family in charge of peace education, conflict resolution and mediation.

2.8 Elders

Elders are the next in line to be ancestors and are viewed as being wise by society. Kasomo (2010: 25) asserted that Elders in a traditional African society played the role of teachers, guardians and counsellors in terms of instilling moral values in the community. Elders involve the elderly, traditional leaders. Furthermore, elders are respected because in the African society, age affords one status in the community (Kariuki 2009: 3). Osei-Hwedie *et al.* (2012: 35) stated that elders in Ghana and

Botswana traditionally played a major role in the management and conflict resolution process. Mediators are selected from elders as they are seen as wise and intelligent, for instance the agba(elders) in the Yoruba culture (Ademowo 2015). Mohammad (2018) stated that in Ethiopia people still bring their cases to the elders so that they reconcile even though the cases have been dealt with in formal courts. Elders play a pivotal role not just in conflict resolution but in conflict management and prevention as they responsible for peace education and peacebuilding. Ndlovu *et al.* (2012: 182) stated that Elders were considered qualified mediators, in traditional Ndebele society.

In addition, Ndlovu (2012: 184) asserted that the concept of elders as mediators is still in use even at an international level with the use of old head of states in the mediation process. For instance, the former president of South Africa Thabo Mbeki, mediated in the political conflict in Zimbabwe. However, the institutions of elders such as other traditional systems are fading. Moreover, these systems are politicised and high jacked by the state for state propaganda hence their failure to prevent and manage conflict later on reconcile conflicting parties.

2.9 Traditional healers

Traditional healers hold a prestigious position in the African community, because they mediate between the living and the ancestors (Essien 2010: 242). Traditional healers are consulted during misfortune to determine the source of the problem and administer healing by neutralising the source or seeking forgiveness from the ancestors (Washington 2010: 25). Ndlovu (2012:181) stated that traditional healers are

considered, qualified mediators in the traditional Ndebele society, who were qualified to mediate in a spiritual conflict. There are various categories of traditional healers which include diviners, herbalists and weather workers (rain dancers) and medicine men (Washington 2010: 25; Essien 2010: 238).

2.10 Healing and African spirituality

Africans have a different approach to healing from the western form of healing. Mbiti (1969: 12) said Africans, do not distinguish between the secular and spiritual and everything is spiritual. This mind set extends even to healing. Ndumbe (2001: 6) asserted that healing for the African being is communal and involves spiritual reparations. This is because Africans believe that physical illness and conflict are signs and symptoms of spiritual breakdown. Therefore, Kasomo (2010: 25-26) added that peace restoration besides the conflicting parts engaging and repairing relationships, involves sacrifice, prayers, offerings and solemn oaths for the amendment the of spiritual relationship. The communal part involves participation of the family or community in the healing process.

Several scholars were concerned that western mechanisms are used in Africa, with little consideration for the African context. Mtpuri *et al* (2013: 6) stated that imported solutions fail in Africa, because they do not take into consideration the culture and spirituality of the people they are supposed to assist. Spirituality plays a pivotal role in the lives of many Africans but has been ignored largely. Kasomo (2010: 24) said it is important to take into consideration the culture of people in creating solutions for their problem. Several scholars have asserted that conflict management and resolution mechanisms are designed according to the principles of Ubuntu thus, they are designed to restore relations as subscribed by Ubuntu (Kasomo 2010: 25).

Mabvurira *et al.* (2013: 70) asserted that social workers who are concerned with healing must incorporate spirituality for their work to be relevant. Mabvurira *et al.* (2013: 71) echoed Mbiti (1969: 12) views, saying that Africans are highly spiritual, and their spirituality affects every aspect of life. Hence, it is important to incorporate African spirituality into healing practices. Ross (2010: 48) stated that some people in South Africa visit social workers for assistance with technical issues such as birth certificate,

and other government issues. However, for other psychological and health issues they prefer traditional healers because traditional healers acknowledge their cultural and spiritual background. Ndlovu *et al.* (2012: 183) claimed that “the so-called professional counsellors are often isolated or cut off from the community” because they neglect the spiritual and cultural background those they serve. Therefore, like Mabvurira *et. al* (2013: 70), Ross (2010: 47) suggested that it is important to consider the spirituality of people because spirituality has far reaching effects in people lives when they face problems.

Barney *et al.* (2012: 56) tackled issues of spirituality and illness (HIV and AIDS) highlighting the different response to the illness, due to different spiritual approaches. Barney *et al* (2012: 60) referred to this as negative experiences with ancestral spirits where the illness is viewed as a message from the ancestral spirits who need some form of appeasement or as a form of calling. This supports the African philosophy that illness is as a sign from the spiritual world.

Secondly, the view that witchcraft causes the disease, shows how Africans, believe that a disease might be a form of retaliation on a spiritual level. Hence the belief that healing should involve a spiritual component. More importantly, they said that even though some Africans have converted to Christianity, these philosophies still

influence their mind. Essien (2010: 242) echoed these sentiments stating that illness and misfortune are signs and symptoms of social disintegration and a breakdown of spiritual relationships.

Wessell *et al* (2001: 1) found in the positive benefits of incorporating mainstream healing methods into African spirituality. The study interweaved psychosocial intervention with African healing methods post-war, in Angola. The authors of the study highlighted the realisation that programs such as psychosocial intervention treat issues such as only trauma and stress as individual and medical illness. However, in the African context they are perceived from a social and spiritual viewpoint. Moreover, was the realisation that to reconstruct, the people had to be reminded of the concept of communal existence.

The other African healing intervention, that was incorporated was cleansing, which is a traditional purification ritual. Cleansing takes place to purify one of unwanted spirits. Kasomo (2010: 26) stated that rituals are conducted to cleanse those who have committed taboos and murder. In the case of this study cleansing, ensured that the former child soldier does not bring unwanted spirits into the village thereby contaminating the village. Wessells *et al* (2002: 13) said that the engagement of the community and their cultural contribution, assisted in the application of the program in the villages.

2.11 Mediation

Mediation has been identified as key methods for peace and healing in the African context (Ndlovu 2012: 169; Osei-Hwedie *et al.* 2012: 34). Sumbeiywo (2008) highlighted the use of mediation at national and international levels in Africa that is the successes and challenges in the African context. However, this study looks at mediation from a traditional African prescriptive concentrating on mediation use as a tool of conflict resolution traditional and in the manner it has been incorporated in contemporary times. Several authors have discussed the merits and demerits of mediation in Africa in countries such as Rwanda which has *abunzi* mediators (Ajayi *et al.* 2014; Mohammad 2018; Mutisi 2012; Sentogo *et al.* 2012).

Ademowo (2015: 5) defined mediation as “an old method of conflict management surrounded by secrecy. It involves non-coercive intervention of the mediators(s), called third party either to reduce or ... go beyond or bring conflict to peaceful settlement.” Mediators are usually elders selected from the disputants’ communities. Sentogo *et al.* 2008 stated among the Baganda under the *Ekika* system the head the family is expected to mediate conflict involving those under him as an elder.

Several authors have highlighted that traditional mediation works best because it is informal and because in the spirit of communal living it restores broken bonds which were broken by conflict mediators (Ajayi *et al.* 2014; Mohammad 2018; Mutisi 2012; Sentogo *et al.* 2012 Ndlovu 2012: 169; Osei-Hwedie *et al.* 2012: 34). Assefa (1995 cited in Mohammad 2018) captured this concept of reconciliation in the story of a murderer who asked forgiveness from his victim’s family to prevent a blood feud. This story further highlights the pivotal role played by elders in conflict resolutions as the

author stated that the elders mediated and the conflict was settled with the murderer paying compensation.

Mutisi (2012) discussed the use the *abunzi* mediators in Rwanda. Mutisi highlighted that the *abunzi* mediators are formal recognized by the government through the Organic Law No. 31/2006. Mutisi (2012) stated that *abunzi* means “those who reconcile”. Cases are taken to the *abunzi* if disputants have not found a solution at family or at village level. Several authors have highlighted that there is a hierarchy in conflict resolution which community members must follow in the African context. In the

case of Rwanda the cases have to be taken to the *abunzi* before they are taken to formal courts. Mutisi (2012) stated that the *abunzi* is defined ‘an organ meant for providing a framework of obligatory mediation prior to submission of a case before the first-degree courts.’ Mutisi (2012) highlighted that the *abunzi mediators* system is preferred because it is less formal and the mediators come from the community. Similar systems are recognized and are in use around Africa such as the *Judiyya* system in Sudan (El-Tom 2012: 99 Bronkhorst: 2012).

Ndlovu *et al.* (2012: 182) said that mediation was a significant part of conflict resolution, in the Ndebele traditional society and it featured at different levels of society viz. political, social and spiritual. Ndlovu *et al.* (2012: 170) highlighted that in the traditional society of the Ndebele people were taught as children to avoid conflict.

Passive mediation takes place before conflict reaches crisis levels. Active mediation takes place when conflict reaches a crisis level. The authors stated that the mediators are trained from an early age in the role of mediation. The study outlined in detail how mediation took place at different level.

At a political level *imbongi* (praise singer) was not just a praise singer but also a political mediator between the king and the people who enjoyed diplomatic immunity for critiques of the King. Furthermore, the king had a wife in every village that played the role of mediator between the king and the people. The other level of mediation is the spiritual level whereby conflict is spiritual. For instance, in cases where witchcraft

is involved traditional healers are the qualified mediators. Additionally, traditional healers mediate between the people and the spiritual world (ancestors).

At a social level, mediation involves social issue such as conflict within a family. At this level, the elders such as the grandfather, is highly respected and are close to the ancestors, hence disrespecting him is taboo. Therefore, his advice and counsel are highly regarded. Aunts and grandmothers are viewed as qualified mediators in terms of women social issues, as they have passively and actively mediated in women issues. The current study gives a historical background related to traditional Ndebele society, specifically on mediation as a significant tool for conflict resolution.

Ndlovu *et al.* (2012: 189) asserted that the mediation mechanism is not unique to the Ndebele community however, it is common across Africa. Ndlovu *et al.* (2012: 189) further, asserted that mediation as a device for conflict resolution is used in modern times even at the international level, citing the formal heads of state as mediators in times of conflict as they are viewed as elders. Ancestors are also considered mediators in African spirituality, as they mediate between the Supreme Being and the people.

However, mediation has some shortcomings firstly the institution of elders is in crisis as there are few elders who are trustworthy and have integrity. Moreover, Mutisi (2012) stated that the requirement of integrity is overestimated so much that other abilities such as the knowledge of the law and the skill of mediation. Therefore, mediators in the abunzi system fail to perform their duties adequately. In addition, some individuals might engage the abunzi out of obligation not willingly because the law demands it. Moreover, these traditional systems are hijacked by politics and are used as state instruments to oppress state enemies. Ademowo (2015) echoes Cillier (2010) in highlighting the need to cautiously approach African traditional systems and not to romanticize them too much. However, traditional mediation approached correctly bears reconciliation.

2.12 Rituals

Washington (2010: 36) stated that rituals “allow one to connect with that which is greater than them and is responsible for the energy that flows throughout their bodies.” Rituals are performed for various reasons in the African context, which include appeasement, cementing community bonds and celebrating achievements. Osei-Hwedie *et al.* (2012: 40) asserted that rituals are a significant part of peace and healing, because rituals symbolise the commitment of the participants to the process and the acknowledgement of the spiritual worlds.

2.13 Conclusion

The chapter outlined the literature on African spirituality and its relationship with peace and healing. The chapter also strategically positioned the current research in the body of knowledge by highlighting firstly the suggestion of various scholars to acknowledge and incorporate Africa spirituality into mainstream thinking because it affects the lives of the people they seek to serve. Secondly, the review outlined spiritual healing methodologies. The next chapter will outline the research methodology used in this study.

Chapter 3

Research methodology

3.1. Introduction

This chapter outlines the research design and the steps that informed the research process. Informed by the topic and the objectives of the study, the researcher chose to use the qualitative approach and to be guided by the ethnographic tradition. The sub-headings below capture the various stages in the research design. This chapter will focus on the research design, study setting, study population, study sample, sampling, inclusion criteria, exclusion criteria, data collection, data capturing and data analysis.

3.2 Research design

Sarantakos (2005: 111) stated that a research design is a methodical approach to the research procedure, which ensures that all components of the study are executed in the right order. A research design, therefore, can be taken as a guide which a researcher uses to ensure proper execution of the research procedure. Babbie (2013: 20) offered a more elaborate definition, which stated that the research design is more than a guide but is an active process of strategic decisions educated by the topic under study, population and the method to be used in conducting the research. In accordance with the topic, aim and objectives I chose to use the qualitative research design. Several authors have declared that qualitative research involves an understanding and description of the social production of events, issues and practices through the collection of massive data, from a small subset of the population (Creswell 2013: 45; Henn *et al.* 2009: 49; Neuman 2006: 220).

Henn *et al.* (2009: 49) asserted that qualitative research is more about understanding the underlying motivations people have for conducting themselves in the way they do and less about trying to test assumed theories on human behaviour. Therefore, for a qualitative researcher to understand human behaviour, the researcher must firstly comprehend the meanings that the people have of the world encompassing them, because meanings tend to direct their actions (Henn *et al.* 2009: 49). Denzin *et al.* (2013:17) concurred stating that qualitative researchers “seek answers to questions that stress how social experience is created and given meaning”. This is achieved through the capturing of participant’s perspectives through detailed interviewing and observation (Denzin *et al* 2013: 17). Furthermore, de Vos *et al* (2013: 308) elaborated that a qualitative researcher is “concerned with understanding rather than explanation, with naturalistic observation rather than controlled measurement, with the subjective exploration of reality from the perspective of the insider as opposed to that of an outside predominant in quantitative research.”

This means that qualitative research is about studying phenomena in their usual background in a bid to understand and interpret the phenomena through the meaning people place on them. Thus, Creswell (2013: 45) claimed that in qualitative research, the researcher is part of the research methodology. This is because through inductive and reasonable logic, qualitative researchers interpret the data. Therefore, in qualitative research the researcher is an important instrument.

According to de Vos *et al.* (2013: 268) qualitative research does not follow a linear process and does not have a static design like quantitative research. De Vos *et al.* (2013: 268) further, explained that qualitative researchers can create a research strategy which suits their research. Creswell (2013: 46) pointed out that one of the characteristics of qualitative research is that it has multiple methods. Therefore, unlike quantitative research, qualitative research is flexible.

Flick (2014: 46) indicated that “qualitative research is an umbrella term which covers a number of research programs with different aims and procedures.” These include grounded theory, case study, life history, conversational analysis and ethnography (Flick 2014: 46; Sarantakos 2005: 111; Neuman 2006: 224). I chose ethnography for this study, so sampling, data collection tool and data analysis were informed by the ethnographic approach.

I chose the ethnographic approach because the topic involved a study of Ndebele spirituality. The aim was to explore Ndebele spirituality to inquire which customs and practices can be used to rebuild community life. Flick (2014: 222) stated that the aim of ethnography is to produce a comprehensive and careful description of the topic under study. Therefore, ethnography is the most suitable approach for this research, as the goal was to use an ethnographic approach to enter and immerse the researcher in the Ndebele community, to produce a comprehensive description of Ndebele spirituality. The latter was to distil aspects that can be used for community rebuilding in Zimbabwe.

Neuman (2006: 320) asserted that ethnography is a term made up of two words *ethno* which means people and *graphy* which entails, describing something. He, therefore, defined ethnography as the description of culture and understanding life from the viewpoint of the native. Flick (2014:222) agreed stating that most ethnographic studies centre on issues and practices from the perspective of the participants' experiences. Hence, I chose to use the ethnographic approach because the goal was to produce a comprehensive description of Ndebele spirituality from the experiences of Ndebele people. According to Henn *et al.* (2009: 50) ethnographic studies are more suitable for researching a relatively under-researched institution, group, or setting. Therefore, I used the ethnographic approach because there is little known on Ndebele spirituality and on a broader scale African spirituality.

Furthermore, the research procedure was informed more specifically by the tenets of ethnography, for instance the sampling process which involved the selection of the most knowledgeable people on Ndebele spirituality who are referred to as key informants (Gobo 2008: 20; Neuman 2006: 320; May 2011: 40). Sarantakos (2005: 111) stated that a research design simply explains how a researcher will conduct his/her research. Therefore, as stated in the introduction, this chapter will explain the various research steps which were informed by the qualitative research design more specifically ethnography. This means that the sampling method, data collection tools and the data collection process were all influenced by the ethnographic tradition.

3.3 Study Setting

The research took place in Matabeleland South, Zimbabwe. I chose Mapane district Gwanda in Matabeleland South as the study setting because it was most accessible. Ndebele people constitute 14% of the population of Zimbabwe This is according to the website Indexmundi (2014) (Zimbabwe Demographics profile). The largest population of Ndebele people is found in Matabeleland which is divided into two areas viz. Matabeleland South and Matabeleland North.

3.4 Study population

May (2011: 99) stated that the study population is the universe to be sampled. According to Henn *et al.* (2009: 153) a population is the group under study. The group under study was Ndebele people.

3.5 Study sample

According to De Vos *et al.* (2013: 328), a study sample, contains subsets of the population considered for actual inclusion into the study. The subsets for this study are called key informants. According to various scholars, in an ethnographic study key informant are units who are knowledgeable about the topic under study (Neuman 2006: 224; Gobo 2008: 30; Flick 2014: 114). Therefore, for the study sample, I picked participants who were knowledgeable in Ndebele spirituality. There were three sample units in the sample used; sample one contained traditional leaders and healers, the second sample contained elders and the third contained community members. The study commenced with these participants and data was collected to saturation that is I conducted interviews till I gained a thorough understanding of the topic. The sample size was informed by the qualitative research design. Neuman (2006: 221) asserted that in qualitative research, samples are small because, the goal of the researcher is to select units so as extract in-depth and rich information for a deeper understanding unlike in quantitative where the samples are large. Furthermore, unlike in quantitative research samples in qualitative research, are selected using non-probability sampling.

3.6 Sampling process

Non-probability sampling involves the selection of units without using the rules of probability theory (De Vos *et al.* 2013: 325; Neuman 2006: 222). I employed two forms of non-probability sampling purposive sampling and snowball sampling. Palys (2008: 697) defined purposive sampling as a series of strategic choices, about who, where and how a researcher carries out his/her research guided by his or her objectives. The aim of the research was to explore the values and principles underpinning the philosophy Ndebele spirituality and to inquire about how its customs and rituals can be used to rebuild community life.

Therefore, I chose Ndebele people as the study population and the study sample came from Ndebele people. Individuals with more knowledge and experience on Ndebele culture and spirituality were chosen for the interviews. May (2011: 100) stated

that purposive sampling is used when selection encompasses a known characteristic. For instance, the selection of traditional healers was because they are immersed in Ndebele spirituality as they are the spiritual mediators who mediate between the ancestors and the living. Therefore, their spiritual understanding of the Ndebele spiritual meant they were suitable for selection. The elders are individuals who because of age have more experience and with experience come more knowledge. However, some elderly people confessed limited understanding on Ndebele spirituality and were left out of the research.

The characteristics for selection in this study were individuals who were well informed about Ndebele spirituality. Neuman (2006: 222) claimed that there are three instances, when to use purposive sampling. Firstly, the researcher needs to select special units which are informative. For instance, traditional leaders were targeted because they deal with conflict and use traditional (Ndebele tradition) customs and values to resolve conflict. This is the same for traditional healers which one participant referred to as the most informative as their spiritual abilities means they know the past, present and future. Therefore, I picked them for the interviews so as to learn more on Ndebele spirituality. Secondly it can be employed to choose members of a "...difficult- to- reach

specialized population” (Neuman 2006: 222). The third case is when a researcher seeks a particular group for in-depth investigation.

I highlighted that one of the key reasons in the significance of the study was that there is little empirical study on Ndebele spirituality hence to fill the gap there was need to produce comprehensive report on Ndebele spirituality. Thus, I chose the Ndebele as the study population because they were the group whose culture and spirituality was under study. Furthermore, from within the Ndebele people, I selected those individuals with a better understanding and are more knowledgeable on Ndebele spirituality.

One of the challenges I encountered was finding key informants hence to overcome this I used snowballing sampling. Henn *et al.* (2009: 153) defined snowball sampling as the creation of a network of subsets through the referral of initial participants of the same population. Neuman (2006: 223) agreed stating, that snowball sampling is a non-random sample technique, whereby the researcher starts with one case (participant) then uses the initial participant to identify other cases (participants). I used the initial participants to help me identify more participants. However, one of the individuals I was referred to declined to comment because they thought that their participation was going to place them in trouble political hence, they were afraid of the political reprisals. At the end of each interview, I would ask the participants “is there anyone you believe will provide more information or answer those questions you felt you could not answer?”.

3.6.1 Inclusion criteria

The target population for the study were the Northern Ndebele situated in Zimbabwe. I conducted the data collection in the Mapane district Gwanda Matabeleland South, because it was more accessible. Through purposive sampling and snowball sampling I selected participants judged them to be well informed regarding Ndebele spirituality.

Sample one contained traditional leaders and healers. These were selected because, traditional leaders are perceived as pillars of the community and custodians of this culture. Traditional healers are the custodians of Ndebele spirituality. I interviewed two

traditional healers and two traditional leaders who provided in-depth data on Ndebele spirituality (see appendix 6).

Sample two consisted of elders, who were the older people in the community. Several scholars on African spirituality have asserted that elders are the custodians of culture and are believed to be well informed about spirituality (Ndumbe 2001: 3). The researcher held two in-depth interviews with two elders (See appendix 6).

The third sample consisted of community members. The researcher interviewed three community members (See appendix 6).

3.6.2 Exclusion criteria

The study was on Ndebele spirituality therefore the Ndebele were the target population, as a study conducted in Zimbabwe Northern Ndebele were the target group not the Southern Ndebele found in South Africa. Moreover, Zimbabwe is a multicultural nation made up of several diverse groups but, since this research was on Ndebele spirituality, other cultural groups were excluded from the research.

3.7. Data collection process

The following section will outline the data collection process and the data collection tools used for data collection.

3.7.1 Data collection tools

The data collection tool used was an interview guide to facilitate semi-structured interviews for all three samples. Appendix 6 contains the interview guides for samples 1 and 2 and 3 accordingly. I employed the interview schedule for data collection. Multiple scholars have asserted that a semi-structured interview is an interaction, where the researcher does not use a formal questionnaire to conduct the interview, but only uses an interview schedule which guides the interview process (Neuman 2006: 305; May Henn *et al.* 2009: 187).

De Vos defined *et al.* (2013: 328) an interview schedule as a set of questions prepared by the researcher before the interview. Furthermore, several scholars have defined an interview guide as a set of questions, which are guided by the aim and objectives of the researcher which, the researcher hopes the participants will answer freely

(Neuman 2006: 305; Henn *et al.* 2009: 187). The preparation of questions prior to the interview ensures that the research creates questions which are set to answer the research questions and achieve the objectives of the study (De Vos 2013: 328). Furthermore, the preparation of the interview guide ensures that the researcher eliminates problematic questions which would negatively affect the interview.

According to Flick (2014: 149) the questions on the interview guide do not have to be asked in order, thus making the process more flexible and natural. In a semi structured interview, the researcher and participants conduct themselves as if in a conversation. This allows the researcher to further inquire about aspects that emerge during the interview and this gives the participant the opportunity to elaborate further (De Vos 2013: 328).

According to De Vos *et al.* (2013: 328) an interview is a social association designed to exchange information between the researcher and the participants. Neuman (2006: 301) defined it as temporary social interaction, between two strangers designed for one person to acquire information from the other.

I interviewed key informants to obtain in-depth information on Ndebele spirituality. According to May (2011: 130) interviews produce rich acumens into people's life experiences, values, opinions, aspirations attitudes and feelings. The aim of the research was to capture the experiences, values, attitudes, feelings and opinions of the Ndebele people, specifically Ndebele spirituality and therefore was an appropriate

approach. Therefore, I found the use of the semi-structured appreciate in data collection.

The semi-structured interview allows the participant to communicate their experiences from their perspective, hence allowing the researcher to gain insight into the participant's experience (Gobo 2008: 169; Neuman 2006: 306; Henn *et al.* 2009: 188). During the interviewing process participants talked about their experience for instance of the participant told of their experience at Njele and some of the rituals which happened at Njele.

The nature of the interview allowed the researcher to probe and to ask questions which arose during the interview to gain rich detailed data from the interviews. One advantage of semi-structured interviews is that it allows the researcher to probe further, when interesting ideas are presented during the interview. This raises new dimensions in the research process as the probing of participants might raise unexpected insights. Flick(2014: 150) advised that if the researcher seeks to get the best out of the participants, they have to be strategic as to how they probe and ask questions in the course of the interview. Gobo (2008: 196) proclaimed that probes

- a. encourage the interviewees to talk;
- b. break down their defences;
- c. help them make themselves clear;
- d. check that the researcher has correctly understood the replies;
- e. get the interviewee to elaborate on stereotypical answers.

According to Gobo (2008: 196) these probes can either be "...verbal, para-verbal (interjections like 'mm', 'ah', 'uh') or non-verbal i.e. bodily expressions like nods of the head or smiles." The probe, researcher and the setting play a huge role in extracting rich detailed information from the participant.

3.7.2 Interview Setting

The study took place in Matabeleland South. The actual interviews took place in the participants' natural settings that is homes, chief court and place of work (traditional healers' hut). According to numerous scholars the advantage of qualitative research is that it takes place in the participants' natural setting which assists the researcher in the data collection process (Neuman 2006: 396; May 2011: 134). Participants are more relaxed in their setting and the researcher gets first-hand information on certain aspects i.e. they witness them as they take place. For instance, one of the interviews

took place in the traditional healer's healing room, the participant pointed out at some things as the interview went took place.

3.7.3 Interview Process

I started each interview by introducing myself and the purpose of the study and what it entailed. The next step involved explaining further the letter of information, which was translated to Ndebele. See appendices 1 and 2 and which was the information letter, that explained to the participants the aim and objectives of the study. I followed this up with explaining what voluntary consent involved and getting the consent forms signed. I asked each participant if I could use the recorder, during the interview and constantly reminded the participants that their confidentiality and anonymity was being protected.

I took notes of the key ideas and questions which needed follow up. I relied heavily on the recorder because others have advised that writing makes the researcher seem distant from the participant (Neuman 2006: 396; May 2011: 134;). Therefore, I minimised the writing, so as to make the participant feel relaxed by constantly engaging the participants and building a rapport. In the interviews, participants were guarded at the beginning however as the interviews progress they relaxed and opened up provided rich data.

3.8 Data capturing and data analysis

3.8.1 Data capturing

I used a recorder and note pad for data capturing. The recorder was the main instrument for data collection and the notes were a secondary instrument which was used to highlight key points and note interesting questions for further investigation. Data was collected to saturation.

3.8.2 Data analysis

Sangasubana (2011:571) suggested the use of Roper and Shapira's (2000)

ethnographic analysis. The method involves coding for descriptive labels, sorting for patterns, generalising constructs and theories and memoes with reflective remarks. Qualitative research encompasses a collection of massive data therefore the first goal is to organise the data in manageable sizes (Nueman 2006: 467; Gobo 2008: 200; Sangasubana 2011: 571). Multiple authors also advised that to avoid complications in data analysis, it is better for it to take place concurrently with data collection.

Gobo (2008: 200) postulated that analysing ethnographic data involves three steps viz. deconstruction (open coding), construction (axial coding) and confirmation

(selective coding). Deconstruction (open coding) is the first step in data analysis which, encompasses grouping data into codes, using the similarity and dissimilarity criteria. According to Roper and Shapira (2000, cited in Sangasubana 2011) the first stage is to code for descriptive patterns, which involves grouping the data into meaningful labels or categories. Neuman (2006: 474) defined open coding as the preliminary stage whereby the researcher reduces data to initial analytic categories.

At this stage the researcher, is sorting the data into categories and identifies motifs. Neuman (2006: 467) stated that this process is usually guided by the research question(s). Therefore, data analysis started as I transcribe the recordings noting the recurring themes which the participant kept repeating such as the aspect of ubuntu. After, all the data was transcribed I sorted out the data into categories guided by the research question. For instance, the data that dealt with aspect of God were placed under the research question 'How do families and communities understand the African God?'. In addition, I started to develop some themes which I believed answered the research questions.

The second phase according to Roper and Shapira (2000, cited in Sangasubana 2011: 573), is sorting for patterns which involves the sorting of data into smaller sets and themes. It is at this stage that connections emerge in the information. According to Gobo (2008: 203) the second stage is the construction stage, whereby the researcher deals with the initial categories. The initial categories are compared, contrasted and linked to each other. Neuman (2006: 467) claimed that at this stage, the researcher might combine themes, decide to drop certain themes and new ones might emerge. Overall, this is the stage where the researcher develops key analytic themes and links

them together. At this stage I developed key analytic themes such as philosophy underpinning Ndebele spirituality and then developed sub-themes such as ubuntu, collective existence, ancestors. I realized that the data highlighted that ubuntu underpins collective existence in that it is a code which is used to guide the community. Therefore, there was need for a Sub-theme which dealt with collective existence (community) describing what it entailed and its relation to community building. The themes discussed in chapter four were developed at this stage with their Sub-themes.

The next stage of data analysis in ethnographic data analysis is selective coding. Gobo (2008: 204) suggested selective coding as the last stage, where the researcher scans the data, so as to search for data to support the themes found in the second phase. Neuman (2006: 467) agreed stating that at this stage the researcher goes through the data once again, with the goal to search for data, which supports themes which were produced in the previous phase. Roper and Shapira (cited in Sangasubana 2011: 568) call this stage generalising constructs and theories, where the patterns are related to theories, so as to make sense of the rich information. At this stage I was going back to the data to extract data which best describe and supported themes and Sub-themes. Chapter four is structure in a manner where I start with quotes from participants which best supported the themes and Sub-themes then below is the discussion where the themes are related to the theoretical framework discussed in chapter one.

Neuman (2006 :464) suggested a specialised kind of note taking for data collection which he termed an analytic memo. Roper and Shapira's (2000, cited in Sangasubana 2011: 569) data analysis method, contains a step they termed 'memoing with reflective remarks', which they stated are insights or ideas the researcher writes about the data. According to Neuman (2006 :464) analytic memos ties the link between raw data and abstract theoretical thinking. Roper and Shapira (2000) asserted that these memos assist the researcher keep track of their biases, assumptions and opinions throughout the research process. Data analysis is an ongoing process which starts during the data collection and continues after data collection. Hence, I took notes and marked concepts and ideas that emerged. For instance, one participant stated that Njele was

not original part of the Nguni Ndebele spiritual system, but it was incorporated in after the Ndebele settle in what today is Zimbabwe. Therefore, I noted this for further inquiry. Furthermore, as I went through the stages of data analysis, I wrote reflective remarks on the data transcripts some write aspect of the theoretical framework it was related to or the theme it linked.

I employed the ethnographic data analysis method suggested by Gobo (2008: 205) and Roper and Shapira (2000) to the data, collected for this study. The method was applied to the data transcripts, step by step during and after the data collection. The data analysis is found in detail on chapter four.

3.9 Ethical Considerations

Neuman (2006: 480) stated that ethical considerations in research requires a balance between the quest for scientific knowledge and protecting the interests of the people understudy. Flick (2014: 35) echoed these sentiments and he provided a further list of research ethics principles as stipulated by Schnell and Heinritz (2006). These involve:

- a. The researcher being able to justify the necessity for the research;
- b. The researcher must explain the aim of the research and the criteria used for selecting who participate;
- c. The researcher must be able to elaborate their methodological procedure in their research;
- d. The researcher must be able to assess potential damage and violation which might take arise during the course of the study;
- e. The researcher must take steps to prevent damage or violation;
- f. The researcher must not make false statements about the usefulness of their research;
- g. The researcher has to abide by the current rules of data collection.

The above ethical principles are some of the ethical considerations one has to adhere to in the course of conducting research. I adhered to principles (a) and (b) in Chapter one, of the study where I provided the significance of the study and in the field. This was undertaken by giving key informants letters of information which explained the aim and justification of the study. Principle (c) is dealt with in this Chapter, where I explain the methodology used.

Halai (2006: 2) postulated that there are five key ethical principles; informed voluntary consent, confidentiality, anonymity, beneficence or no harm to participants and reciprocity. Below I will outline some of these in relation to their applicability to the research.

3.9.1 Informed voluntary consent

According to several authors informed voluntary consent, involves willing participation of the participant after they have been well educated on the aim, objectives and significance of the study (Flick 2014: 36; Neuman 2006: 480; Halai 2006: 5). Therefore, the participants were provided with letters of information and consent forms which were written in Ndebele. Please see appendices 4 and 5. In addition, I verbally elaborated on these issues and informed participants. That they were free to leave at any point, they deemed fit. Neuman (2006: 480) and Halai (2006: 5) have separately raised the question of how informed is informed consent in a qualitative study? This is because informed consent involves informing the participant of the direction the research will take. However due to the nature of qualitative study the research might change because of the information provided by the participants.

Halai (2006: 7) warned that informed voluntary consent poses another challenge in qualitative research in that the research takes a long time and there is a lot of interaction required. For instance, if the researcher finds questions or points which need follow-up, the researcher may need to contact certain participants for clarity. Hence Halai (2006: 7) stated that informed voluntary consent is a process not an event therefore the researcher has to strategically renew consent when necessary.

3.9.2 Anonymity

According to Neuman (2006: 480) anonymity means that the participants' names are withheld and are not mentioned in the research. I did not include the names of the participants in the report for their protecting because as one individual I was referred to refused to be interviewed for fear of political reprisals even though I explained that the study was not political motivated. Flick (2014: 36) advised that if during the interview the personal information of the participant is mentioned, it is the duty of the researcher to remove it during the transcribing process before using it for the study. Therefore, any information related to the identity and privacy of the participants was removed during the transcribing process.

3.9.3 Confidentiality

Neuman (2006: 480) stated that confidentiality is where the researcher may attach names to the information but keeps it in secret and the information is released in such a manner that information is not linked to certain individuals. Therefore, I presented and analysed data in a manner that ensured that information is not linked to a certain individual.

3.10 Credibility

According to Gasson (2004:95), credibility in qualitative research involves “how we ensure rigor in the research process and how we communicate to others we have done so”. Therefore, Chapter 3 explains the steps taken in conducting the research. Further, data was collected to saturation. I have included some information related to the participants experience of Ndebele spirituality (*appendix 8*)

3.11 Dependability

Gasson (2004: 94) stated that dependability in qualitative research means that “the way in which the study is conducted should be consistent across time, researchers and the analysis technique. This means that the research methodology should produce findings that are clearly outlined and traceable. Thus, chapter 3 clearly outlines the research design, data collection tool and data analysis method. I have outlined the process which was used to produce the findings of the study.

3.12 Confirmability

According to Gasson (2004: 93) confirmability in qualitative research refers to the fact that “findings should represent as far as is (humanly) possible, the situation being researched rather than the beliefs, pet theories or biases of the researcher”. This is because of the acceptance that the research cannot be purely objective, however it is the duty of the researcher to eliminate biases as much as possible, from the research. Therefore, I have made every effort to describe the data as it was described by the participants.

3.13 Limitations

The research took place in the Mapane district Gwanda, Matabeleland South. Moreover, even though Zimbabwe is a diverse country made up of several cultural groups, this study concentrated on one group the Ndebele and its findings refer only to the communities where the data was collected.

3.14 Conclusion

The chapter dealt with the research methodology by outlining the steps that the researcher took in conducting the research. This entailed explaining the qualitative research approach and how it influenced sampling, data collection and data analysis. The following chapter contains the findings made from the analysis of the data.

Chapter 4

Analysis and discussion of findings

4.1 Introduction

This chapter presents the data collected and a discussion of the findings made. The data was collected using in-depth interviews, using an interview schedule designed to achieve the aim and objectives of the study. The aim of the study was to explore the values and principles underpinning the philosophy of Ndebele spirituality and to distil spiritual ways that could be used to rebuild community life. The data was analysed using qualitative data analysis as described in the preceding Chapter.

4.2 Data presentation

The data was analysed, and 5 themes emerged which are presented with their respective sub-themes in Table 1 below.

Table 4:1: Themes and sub-themes derived from the data

Themes	Sub-themes
1. Notion of the Supreme Being	<ul style="list-style-type: none">○ UNkulunkulu○ Almighty as creator and protector
2. Philosophy underpinning Ndebele spirituality	<ul style="list-style-type: none">○ Ubuntu○ Collective existence (community)

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Ancestors
3. Values related to Ndebele spirituality	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Respect for all humankind ○ Respect for the sacred
4. Customs and Rituals	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Symbolism ○ Rituals related to the ancestors
5. Healing Methodologies	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Importance of the extended family networks ○ Umthethelo ○ Spiritual mediums ○ Forgiveness

4.3. Data Analysis

This section focuses on a discussion of the findings made. The analysis and discussion are presented within the context of the five major themes derived from the data.

4.3.1. Theme 1: Notion of the Supreme Being

Sub-themes:

- UNkulunkulu

○ Almighty creator and protector

The following excerpts from the data reflect the first theme and its Sub-themes:

“They said they knew of uNkulunkulu who created heaven and earth. He is the creator of Heaven and earth, The Creator. He is the one who broke ground. (P4)

“The Ndebele describe Supreme Being as the Almighty with the power to do all things...We believe there is someone above everybody at the Apex point.” (P3)

“God is real an ancestor. He is first founder and ancient up there in terms of lineage. At some point he was living person but now he is hundred percent spirit, there are younger spirits than him, his own children when he was still a man (flesh)... He is remote in terms of space but superiority founder” (P1)

The excerpts above reflect that the Ndebele, believe in a Supreme Being who is both powerful and ancient. Most participants agreed that traditionally the Ndebele subscribed to the concept of a Supreme being. In the Ndebele tradition the Supreme being is at placed at the apex of Ndebele spirituality and He is believed to be remote in terms of space. That is, although He is far removed from the living, he is however ever present. This was viewed by Mbiti (1969:32) as being paradoxically complementary which meant that the Supreme Being was transcendental and immanent. The Ndebele refer to Him as *UNkulunkulu*, (Supreme being) and *uMdali* (Creator) the Almighty.

Sub-theme 1: UNkulunkulu

The Ndebele belief is that the Supreme Being was the first man that is, he was once flesh and spirit, then he died and became an ancestor. He was therefore viewed as the first ancestor. He was also the founder of the Ndebele clan. According to participants, the Ndebele also believed, that they are the progeny of the first man. He is ancient and understood to be great, hence the term *uNkulunkulu*. The term *uNkulunkulu* embodies the concept of the Supreme Being as both ancient and the Almighty.

Some of the participants likened the Supreme Being in Ndebele spirituality to the Christian God, saying that they are essentially the same. However, they stressed that traditionally Ndebele people acknowledged the existence of a Supreme Being, long before the advent of Christianity and colonisation which institutionalised Christianity. Mbiti (1969: 17) asserted that African spirituality has had to face the onslaught of the influences of other religions such as Christianity and Islam. Ndebele spirituality has not been immune to these influences, mainly Christianity which became the predominant religion in Zimbabwe. In fact, Cilliers (2010: 3) warned that it is not possible to recover the pure African culture which existed before colonisation.

The concept of the Supreme Being being a Progenitor is a Nguni concept. However, the people who the Ndebele assimilated when they settled on the Zimbabwean plateau had their own understanding of the Supreme Being, who they believed dwelled in the Njele hills. This concept of the Supreme Being was incorporated into Ndebele spirituality.

Several participants referred to Njele and alluded that the spirit of the Supreme Being was found in Njele hills. However, one participant stressed that even though the Njele mythology is popular, it is not original Nguni. Furthermore, according to participants the Ndebele believed that the Supreme Being was transcendental and powerful hence, He could only be approached through the ancestors. This illustrates two other principles that govern Ndebele society, which are respect and seniority. The concepts of respect and seniority also applies to spirituality where, the living report to the immediate ancestors who are young in the lineage and who then pass on the message to the next ancestor upward, until it reaches the Supreme being at the apex. There might however be differences in the understanding of the Supreme Being and foreign influence in the narrative of the Supreme being in the Ndebele society. The general belief was that He is powerful, ancient, the Creator and transcendent.

Kirby (2007: 17) stated that stories of creation are important in understanding African cosmology, because Africans use these stories to explain, the way they organise their

lives. The encyclopaedia for African religion asserted that the stories of creation and origin vary from generation to generation, but maintain the same theme, and the stories serve as a blueprint for society's way of life. The story of uNkulunkulu and how the Ndebele are his progeny, is the one used to support the philosophy of Ubuntu (collective existence).

Sub-theme 2: Almighty Creator and Protector

The sample, also referred to the Supreme Being as a Creator and Protector. The sample highlighted that the Supreme Being was the Creator. Traditionally the Ndebele believed that a man came to be He, then created everything, and that the Ndebele are his children. Therefore, the Ndebele are his progeny. Secondly, the Ndebele believe that Supreme Being provides for His creation in the form of rain hence the annual visit to Njele to ask for rain. The Ndebele like most Africans believe that rain is a form of blessing from the Supreme Being.

4.3.2 Theme 2: Philosophy of Ndebele spirituality

The second theme that emerged from the data analysis was the philosophy of Ndebele spirituality. Participants expressed that this philosophy was the one that the Ndebele used to organise their lives. The two recurring sub-themes that emerged from this theme were Ubuntu and ancestors. They are reflected in the excerpts below:

Sub-themes

- Ubuntu

- Ancestors

The following excerpts from the data reflect the first theme and its Sub-themes:

“Africa gives emphasis not to individuals but groups. The interests of the group are more important than those of the individual. The second most important aspect is the relationship between individuals that is how these individuals relate one to the other. That is how you keep good relations within the group which happens when we

understand the shared and common values. Ubuntu... We are all connected hence they have a right to control your behaviour Zonelwa yimvu yinye” (P1)

“Umtwana ngowo muntu wonke. A child belongs to everyone therefore, every adult is responsible for every child...” (P2)

“Living and working together for good of the community. This starts from family, extended family... the uncles are responsible for the nephews and the aunts are responsible for the nieces... the uncles teach a young man what is expected of him as man especial in marriage same goes for the aunts and nieces.” (P4)

Sub-theme 1: Ubuntu (collective existence)

Ubuntu emerged as sub-theme from the second major theme viz. the philosophy of Ndebele spirituality. The sample emphasised that the underpinning philosophy of the Ndebele people is Ubuntu, the concept of collective existence. The concept of collective existence places importance on the group, hence the Ndebele saying *umuntu ngumuntu ngabantu*, that is a person is because of the collective.

Furthermore, the Ndebele believed that prosperity and healthy living could only be achieved through working and living together in harmony. Hence, the Ndebele

traditional approach deals with every aspect of life, particularly spirituality from a collective perspective. Individuals from childhood are socialised to be part of the collective and the collective provides security. Ross (2010: 44) asserted that a child in Africa is socialised to be part of the community through oral literature such as poems, songs and folktales.

The extended family is the smallest recognised part of the collective and through relationships the collective is created and maintained. The Ndebele believe that they are progeny of the same man who they referred to as the first man and first ancestor. They believed that everyone is spiritually connected through blood and kinship, thus the actions of everyone affects the community. Therefore, the collective is responsible for each other and social breakdown and immorality results in the wrath of ancestors. Therefore, collective controls the behaviour of individuals and ensures that everyone

adheres to the code of conduct. Mawere (2010: 218) referred to this concept as collective guilt whereby the action of one person, brings about misfortune to the whole clan or community. The sample highlighted the importance of collective guilt, saying collective guilt ensured that people were responsible for each other and monitored bad behaviour to prevent the wrath of the ancestors.

The family is the first level of the collective, as it provides the individuals with security. The relationships that make up the extended family are important because individuals have a prescribed role, depending on how they relate one to the other. Hence Ndumbe (2001: 3) stated that the African being is, prescribed a role and duties at birth which s/he should perform for the success of the collective. For instance, as displayed in the excerpts the relationship between an aunt and niece prescribe that the aunt continually teaches and advises the niece throughout her life.

Amicable relationships among the members of the collective therefore, ensures the success of the collective. Therefore, peace and healing methodologies should endeavour to restore the collective. The participants emphasised that healing methods should be designed to bring the community together and eliminate any disruptive aspects. Therefore, the Ndebele believe that the healing process should involve the participation of the collective. Ndumbe (2001: 5) concurred with the views of the participants, regarding Ndebele ideology, saying that healing is also a collective endeavour for all African beings. On another level Ubuntu is also perceived as a code of conduct which an individual in the collective adhere to.

Sub-theme 2: Ancestors (Sub-theme)

The following excerpts from the data reflect the first theme and its Sub-themes:

“Well, essentially it is a relationship between the living and the living dead... the spirit world with its spirit people and their relationship with the material world (material and spirit). The dead are in spirit only. That relationship and communication is Ndebele spirituality...A two-way communication mainly for the benefit of the living through protection, guidance and assistance not the other way around... each man looks out for his children that is why we do umbuyiso, as a father when I die my children will

report to me and I will report to my father who would then report to his father so on and on till it reaches the top the first ancestor” (P1)

“Spirits will manifest some people would be possessed and through them the spirits will speak for instance some will saying singabogogo (grandmother) then they would ask for beer. Spirits are more powerful than the living” (P3)

“The philosophy is that things do not just take place there have to go to certain places to report. For instance, as a family people go to the grave site to report to the departed (ancestors)... People asked for prosperity, work and assistance in general”.
(P2)

“Ancestors fight for us against evil, so they deserve respect” (P4)

Participants constantly made reference to the ancestors during data collection. The ancestors are central to Ndebele spirituality, as one participant highlighted that Ndebele spirituality involves a two-way communication between the ancestors, especially for the benefit of the living. Ancestor veneration underpins Ndebele spirituality. This means that ancestors are highly respected and daily life is conducted in a manner that pleased the ancestors. One participant stated that God is in fact an Ancestor. The participants also highlighted that ancestors are approached in a linear hierarchy, whereby one reports to his father(living-dead), who then report to his and it follows this paternal lineage till it reach the first Ancestor (God/ Nkulunkulu) at the top. The Ndebele are a patriarchal society and therefore place importance on the paternal family lineage. Thus, a child is presented to his/her paternal ancestors for protection and guidance at an early age.

The ancestors are invited to protect the living through a ritual referred to as *Umbuyiso*. *Umbuyiso* is a ritual which is conducted a year after a person is dead whereby people visit a dead person’s grave, to invite their spirit home, to look after their children. The term *Umbuyiso* comes from the word *Ukubuyisa* which loosely translates to “bring back” in English. This is because the Ndebele believe that the relationships they had in life, also extends to the hereafter. Moreover, they believe that in death one is elevated to a powerful state and the power can be used to affect the life of the living.

Therefore, they believed that spiritual mediums are powerful and knowledgeable because they are in tune with the spirits.

Furthermore, traditionally the Ndebele believed that ancestors control the fate of the living hence prosperity, good health and on occasion misfortunes are attributed to the ancestors. Thus, the Ndebele believe the living must communicate with the ancestors to report on their endeavours, ask for good health, prosperity, protection and consult on misfortune. The communication process is referred to as Ukuthethela. This is one of the ways to consult ancestors and the other way is to visit the spirit mediums, who then consult the ancestors and pass on the message to the living. Therefore, in the case of misfortune such as illness and conflict the ancestors are consulted firstly to establish if they are the cause of the misfortune. Several scholars have asserted that in the African context misfortune is viewed as signs and symptoms of a social breakdown (Washington 2010: 30; Essien 2010: 239).

The ancestors perform the role of guardians ensuring social cohesion, by ensuring that the living upholds the moral code. Thus, firstly the process of healing involves the Ndebele consulting the ancestors with to regards the cause of the misfortune. If it is caused by the ancestors, then appeasements are in order. If it is other elements (witchcraft), the ancestors are requested to intervene by providing security. Therefore, ancestors are central to the Ndebele healing process, because they provide direction and guidance in the healing process.

4.3.3 Theme 3: Values related to Ndebele spirituality (theme)

Sub-themes

- Respect for all humankind

○ Respect for the sacred

The excerpts below reflect the aforementioned two sub-themes.

“Those would-be values of respect, respect other people, recognise their seniority. This why even when we eat the eldest pick first in terms of picking the meat in that order till it gets to the youngest. If you look at our way of life you would see this, eating habits is one of the activities that illustrate these values.” (P2)

“Elders were respected, children respected elders”. (P4)

“Respect of the sacred is important for instance the observation of the Wednesday... It is a belief we found which is observed by everyone despite their religion or spirituality it is the law of the land.”

This section deals with the values related to Ndebele spirituality. Respect is the second most important principle after Ubuntu. The sample highlighted that respect is important in ensuring and keeping the collective. Respect for all humankind and respect for the sacred are the two major sub-themes which emerged during the data analysis.

Sub-theme 1: Respect for all humankind

Respect and seniority are the most important principles of Ndebele spirituality alongside Ubuntu. Respect and seniority are related in that seniority is rewarded with respect. Ndebele people subscribe to the philosophy that elders must be respected because some individual gain more respect, with age. Ekeke (2010: 213: 210) asserted that elders in the African context gain respect because they are believed to be close to the ancestors. The Ndebele subscribe to the notion that with age comes wisdom hence, the saying *indlela ibuzwa kwabaphambili* which loosely translates to one enquires the way from those ahead, who have travelled it. Therefore, elders are

respected and perceived as guardians of the community. Thus, the elders play a pivotal role in peace and healing by providing counsel and advice to the younger generation.

The participants highlighted that adhering to these values ensured that there is peace in the community. Moreover, the participants lamented that the principle that every child belongs to all, is being eroded, which is leading children to disrespect elders in the community, because they have no power over them. The participants attributed the moral decay in their community, to the breakdown in this type of interconnectedness, which has weakened the values of respect and seniority. They stated that elders are disrespected, and seniority is no longer held highly by members of the community.

Sub-theme 2: Respect for the sacred

The Ndebele also respect sacred places and days, which they believe is a mandate from the ancestors. According to the participants, on a Wednesday or Thursday depending on the location, people do not work on the fields. One participant stated that in Matabeleland South people observe the Wednesday, then in Matabeleland North, the day is Thursday.

These are days of rest and anyone who works in the fields on this day is condemned and required to pay a fine to appease the ancestors. The disrespect of such days is believed to result in dire consequences from ancestors, for the whole community, hence it is the mandate of every member of the community to either guard or report against anyone who violates these days. This further illuminates the concept of collective guilt which is attached to the philosophy of collective existence. Collective guilt ensures that every member of the community is a lookout for moral decay.

Respect and seniority are valued principles of Ndebele spirituality which traditional people use to govern their daily lives. These principles are deployed to ensure order and social cohesion.

4.3.4 Theme 4: Customs and Rituals

Sub-themes

- Symbolism

- Rituals

The excerpts below reflect the two sub-themes in respect of customs and rituals.

“To fully understand it is important to understand the way Africans used and interpreted symbolism. A lot of people fail to understand the underpinnings and concentrate much of cultural practices which leads to misconceptions. The symbolism at work is not understood. Because fire burns, when it burns you end up with ashes. Where two have clashed like fire they cannot go back to before the conflict like ashes cannot go back to become a log. The two who are conflicting are taken out of the village to esilotherni (a place where ashes are disposed) and stand there on top of peace. This symbolise the irreversibility of the conflict it is important to realise you cannot go back to before the conflict” (P1)

“Some believe that there is a cow that belongs to the ancestors which is a symbol of their belief.” (P6)

“Umbuyiso (takes place after a year of a person’s death. This was a way of bringing the spirit of the dead back home. Therefore, traditional beer was prepared, and they would talk to the ancestors” (P5)

“Introducing a child to the ancestors, marriage customs and other customs have symbolic meaning which goes beyond activities. We the Ndebele are symbolic there is a lot of symbolism at play.” (P3)

Sub-theme 1: Symbolism

The participants expressed that to fully appreciate Ndebele spirituality, one has to be aware of the expansive use of symbolism in Ndebele society.

Symbolism underpins Ndebele spirituality heavily. Hence participants highlighted that this is the key to understanding Ndebele cosmology. The sample highlighted that to fully understand the customs, rituals and other cultural activities, symbolism must be taken into consideration. One of the participants said that the misunderstanding that surrounds Ndebele spirituality and African spirituality is the ignorance of symbolism in conducting and interpretation of Ndebele spirituality. Mawere (2010: 217) stated that some Shona cultural activities are demonised because, of ignorance of the spiritual symbolism that underpin these activities. Murithi (2006: 10) pointed out that not all cultural activities are empowering therefore they advised that in incorporating African indigenous systems, progressive cultural activities should be selected.

For instance, recently the cultural practice of lobola has been the centre of controversy and some have questioned its relevance. The participants highlighted that lobola and other activities that preceded marriage are conducted to cement relations between the two families. In the Ndebele society marriage involves more than the joining of the couple but the combination of the families of the marrying parties as one big family. Consequently, lobola symbolises the combination of the two families social and spiritual as one. The controversy surrounding lobola highlights the misunderstanding which caused by the ignorance of symbolism. One of the participants said that proper marriage procedures are followed then in times of marital crisis; the couple have a readily available support system in the form of the family.

The participants also stated that Ndebele language is rich with proverbs and idioms which employs symbolism. Proverbs are sayings which contain wisdom and advice. The participants asserted that proverbs contain wisdom which reflects the essence of Ndebele spirituality. The sample expressed that proverbs teach and impart wisdom. The wisdom contained in some of the proverbs might be harnessed and employed as part of peace and healing initiatives. For instance, the proverb *induku kayi wakhi umuzi* (*knobkeery does not build a home*), means that domestic violence does not build home. This can be used to counsel victims and perpetrators of domestic violence. The

Zimbabwe Broadcasting Corporation (2016) reported 15 300 cases of domestic violence in 2015, which reflect that there is a high prevalence of domestic violence in the country.

Therefore, organisations and practitioners dealing with issues of domestic violence can couple African wisdom and western methods of counselling to provide a holistic healing effective service for their people and communities. There are several proverbs which reflect principles of Ubuntu, such as *izandla ziyagezana (hand wash each other)*, which indicates that people assist each other. This encourages working and living together. Essentially, there is a proverb for every situation. Participants also expressed that mainstream institutions should incorporate proverbs into their programmes. However, they displayed little optimism, saying that African cultural ways are fading, due to the gravitation towards Western philosophies brought in by globalisation. A proper interpretation of these would therefore reveal ways of creating peace and methods of healing.

Sub-theme 2: Rituals related to ancestors

Participants expressed that there are rituals related to the ancestors which are conducted, to connect the individual to the ancestors for protection. Firstly, when a baby is born s/he is introduced and presented to them for security. The sample also highlighted, that the ritual termed Umbuyiso is important in Ndebele cosmology. This takes place a year after the death of a person and is done to invite the spirit of the dead person to come home and protect his/her children. Participants also expressed that the Ndebele believed that each person was responsible for his children in life and after death. Furthermore, the Ndebele subscribed to a spiritual hierarchy which, meant that in connecting with the ancestors the living connect with the immediate ancestor that is their father, who then report to his father and so on and on, till it reaches the Supreme Being. Kasambula (2005: 305) stated that African spirituality follows a hierarchy, whereby the Supreme Being is approached through the ancestors who then passes the message to the Almighty. In addition, the Supreme Being is responsible for the big issues and the smaller ones are left to the ancestors. An individual is chosen by the ancestors in this ceremony, the chosen person then leads the ritual of Umthethelo if ever it is required.

Umthethelo is a ritual whereby the Ndebele communicates with the family ancestors. One of the participants stated that Umthethelo, might be viewed as a prayer where people ask for protection and prosperity. Umthethelo is also conducted in times of crisis and allows the family to consult the ancestors to investigate what they have done wrong. This is because crises are viewed as a sign of anger from the ancestors. Hence Umthethelo is a ritual which is conducted to heal the family.

4.3.5 Theme 5: Healing methods

Sub-themes

- Importance of the extended family networks
- Umthethelo
- Spiritual mediums
- Forgiveness

It was established that Ubuntu is the philosophy, that underpins Ndebele spirituality. The Ndebele people subscribe to the ideology of collective existence, which prescribes living and working together for the prosperity of the community. Therefore, relationships are central to the survival of the collective. That is the way individuals are prescribed duties to the collective. Ndumbe (2001: 2) therefore, stated that the African is born into duties, which are prescribed by the collective. Hence, peace and healing methods are designed to ensure amicable relations within the collective, so that the collective thrives. Where there is conflict, the collective should go back to the remembering these norms and values.

Secondly, to fully appreciate and understand Ndebele spirituality one must appreciate the use of symbolism by the Ndebele. Ndebele proverbs and idioms illustrate the use of symbolism and they illustrate the Ndebele cosmology. Ngugi (1986: 6) asserted that language is the carrier of culture. Ross (2010: 44) echoed these sentiments stating that the African child is socialised to be part of the collective through oral literature.

Therefore, through idioms, proverbs, folktales and taboos a child is encultured to respect and protect the collective.

Thirdly, the Ndebele believe in a Supreme Being, who is considered the oldest ancestor and transcendent Being. Therefore, because of His superiority he is approached through lesser spirits. Furthermore, the Ndebele believe that family connections, continues into the afterlife. Essentially the Ndebele believe they are the children of uNkulunkulu. The spiritual connections follow the family lineage till it reaches the Almighty at the apex. The ancestors are responsible for the protection and guidance of the living. Ancestors punish the living if they break the moral code by withdrawing protection and causing misfortune such as bad luck and diseases.

Sub-theme 1: Importance of the extended family networks

Participants also expressed that the extended family provides a readily available support system for any member in need. The extended family is a support system which provides support in times of tragedy and crisis. Each family member is prescribed a role and duties in accordance, with their kinship. Ndumbe (2001: 3) asserted that healing in the African context involves, the whole family participating in the healing process. The extended as a support system, depends on the philosophy of Ubuntu and the belief that members are connected by blood and kinship. The participants stated that the social plight that plagues the community and the state at large, is because the fabric of the extended family is fading. They suggested that people revert to the traditional extended family system by reviving and cherishing those relationships that make up the extended family. Moreover, the broader community should learn to imbibe and live by this philosophy and its norms and values so as to bring about healing and healthier ways of living. This is especially important to deal with the various social ills that plague Zimbabwe.

Participants also stated that the extended family provides, individuals with security, guidance and support systems. For instance, the aunt in the extended family system is responsible for the niece, her role as an aunt is to teach the girl child how to be a responsible woman and wife. Furthermore, they act as mediators for their niece. The uncle is responsible for his nephew and performs similar duties as does the aunt with

the niece. The sample also highlighted that marital problems are because couples lack proper guidance and support which was previously provided by the extended family.

The extended family also produces mediators, who are important to recognise. According to Ndlovu (2012: 168) mediation was a major tool for conflict resolution in the traditional Ndebele society. Furthermore, it highlights that there are different roles for different individuals depending on the crisis. The participants highlighted that mediation is still a pertinent aspect of Ndebele spirituality. The mediation role depends on the nature of the conflict and parties involved. For instance, an aunt would be the ideal mediator if a couple has marital problems. The Aunt of the bride is then invited to give counselling.

The ideals of the extended family can be applied to restore families and communities. For example, health issues such as HIV and AIDS and other problems such as immigration are due to economic problems which has resulted in child headed families. Child headed families have emanated from various social ills such as drug abuse, sexual immorality and criminal behaviour. Therefore, if the ideas of Ubuntu such as a 'child belongs to the whole village' are applied, the children left behind would be the responsibility of the extended family and would be provided with guidance and security.

Sub-theme 2: Umthethelo

In Ndebele cosmology misfortune such as social crisis and illness are perceived to have spiritual roots. Hence holistic healing holistic is important as it addresses the physiological, physical and spiritual aspects. In order for it to be holistic, the spiritual cannot be overlooked. Mtapuri *et al.* (2013: 2) expressed that Western paradigms fail to address African problems because, they are ignorant of the spiritual aspect of the problem. Therefore, in times of crisis the Ndebele perform rituals referred to as *Umthethelo*. *Umthethelo* is where traditional beer is prepared, and a beast is slaughtered, as the family gathers to consult the family ancestors with regards to their problems and for good health and prosperity. The person chosen during the ritual of *Umbuyiso* leads the proceedings. The participants highlighted that after the rituals the individuals

are then confident of good health and prosperity. Washington (2010: 30) expressed that the purpose of rituals is to connect individuals with the source of power.

Sub-theme 3: Spirit Mediums

Traditional healers hold a prestigious position in traditional Ndebele society. Whilst their position is of lesser in contemporary times, they are still relevant to some people. The spirit mediums are crucial to the healing process because, they have a connection with the spirits. In Ndebele cosmology the spirits are believed to be powerful and control the destiny of the living. The belief is that the spirit knows the past, present and future, hence those connected with the spirits are well informed, with regards to the destiny of the community. The living consults the spirit medium with regards to their issues asking them to mediate on their behalf with the ancestors.

There are various types of spirits mediums namely, *isangoma* (diviners) and *inyanga* (medicine man). Participants also expressed that traditional healers offer direction by identifying the problem and leading the healing process through cleansing rituals.

Sub-theme 4: Forgiveness

The following excerpts reflect sub-theme 4.

“Ukukhumisana umlotha. The two who are conflicting are taken out of the village to esilotheni (a place where ashes are disposed) and stand there metaphorically for peace. This symbolises the irreversibility of the conflict. It is important to realise you cannot go back to before the conflict. they are to never to speak of it again after they drink the solution made from water and ashes. After that they talk and even pay condolences for the dead they did not remember...” (P1)

“...at family level people come together as a family and two conflicting parties will say everything that is troubling them. Occasionally people just want to be heard... The same happens at the community level, if someone does something wrong they are taken to the chief and the matter is discussed in front of the community then they ask for forgiveness from the victim and community. The goat they pay as fine is slaughtered and eaten at the court. The idea was less about punishment, more about mending relations... forgiveness was important” (P4)

These healing methods embraced by the Ndebele community are extremely powerful and have emerged to ensure the survival of the collective. They are therefore, encouraged to offload their grievances after that they are encouraged to forgive each other and forget so that they may start afresh start without grudges. One of the participants stated that some people only want to be heard. The act of saying how they feel and expressing their grievances is therapeutic. Most important is that forgiveness is achieved after dialogue. The Ndebele believe that dialogue is an important solution for conflict.

4.4 Conclusion

The data collectively reflects that the philosophy of Ubuntu, influences every aspect of Ndebele life. Traditionally the Ndebele believed that the philosophy of Ubuntu, was commanded by the Supreme Being and it has been passed down from generation to generation. The ancestors are the custodians of Ubuntu therefore, it is their duty to ensure that the living uphold the principles of Ubuntu, such as a collective existence. The Ndebele believed that the collective provides security and prosperity. Therefore, healing methods are designed to restore and maintain the collective. The participants highlighted that the traditional Ndebele were more interested in preventing conflict through principles such as respect and seniority which ensures amicable relations in the community. The following chapter reflects the conclusions reached and the recommendations for further research.

CHAPTER 5

Conclusions and recommendations

5.1 Introduction

The aim of this study was to explore the values and principles underpinning the philosophy of Ndebele spirituality and how its customs and rituals could be used to rebuild community life. The study was conducted using qualitative research methodology. The tool used for data collection tool was an interview schedule. Semi-structured interviews were used with the different samples. The data analysed produced 5 major themes and 12 sub-themes which were presented and discussed in Chapter 4. The discussion that follows, provides a summary of the key findings, conclusions made and recommendations for further research.

5.2 Key findings

The key findings are summarised in table 5.1.

Table 5:1 Summary of themes and sub-themes

Themes	Sub-themes
Notion of the Supreme Being	<ul style="list-style-type: none">○ UNkulunkulu○ Almighty as creator and protector
Philosophy underpinning Ndebele spirituality	<ul style="list-style-type: none">○ Ubuntu

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Collective existence (community) ○ Ancestors
Values related to Ndebele spirituality	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Respect for all humankind ○ Respect for the sacred
Customs and Rituals	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Symbolism ○ Rituals related to the ancestors
Healing Methodologies	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Importance of the extended family networks ○ Umthethelo ○ Spiritual mediums ○ Forgiveness

The primary aim of the study was to explore the values and principles underpinning Ndebele spirituality and to inquire how its customs and rituals can be used to rebuild community life. The first research question was ‘What are the values and principles of Ndebele spirituality?’ The data revealed that the main values and principles of Ndebele spirituality are:

- Ubuntu: Although this is part of the philosophy a key value, is also Ubuntu (collective existence), which prescribes living and working together for the good of the collective.
- Respect: the Ndebele valued respect, because respect ensures order and amicable relations amongst people.

- UNkulunkulu (Supreme Being): traditionally the Ndebele subscribe to a Supreme Being who is transcendent. He is seen as all powerful and hence he is approached through ancestors as opposed to directly, by mere mortals. This principle shapes the Ndebele cosmology which stipulates that their spirituality is ordered hierarchically, and the Ndebele need to follow this to reach for the super sensible. Kasambula (2005: 305) concurred stating that African spirituality has a hierarchy where the Supreme Being is approached through ancestors.
- Ancestral veneration: Ancestral veneration still plays an important part in the life of some people among the Ndebele. Hence, Murambadoro *et al.* (2015: 33) stated that survivors of gukurahundi in Matabeleland, have requested the exhumation of those buried in mass graves, so that proper burial rites may, be conducted so that they take their rightful place in the ancestral world. According to Murambadoro *et al.* (2015: 33), the refusal of the government to acknowledge this request has hindered reconciliation.

The second question was: what is the philosophy of Ndebele spirituality and its underpinning customs and rituals? The data revealed that Ubuntu was the primary underpinning philosophy of Ndebele spirituality. This can also be regarded as an important value as discussed above. Participants described Ubuntu as the most important philosophy, which the Supreme Being has passed down to the Ndebele people. The Ndebele approach every aspect of their life as a collective, with the family being the smallest recognised entity under Ubuntu. Thus, the saying *umuntu ngumuntu ngabantu* ('a person is because of the collective') (Mbiti 1969: 10; Ndumbe 2001: 2). Central to Ubuntu is the relationship which makes up the collective. Therefore, under the philosophy of Ubuntu the survival of the collective is more important than an individual. Therefore, even spirituality is approached collectively. That is rituals from birth rites to death rites are undertaken collectively as a community. This has huge significance then for peacebuilding rituals which means that communities need to collectively reconstruct peaceful ways of living and provide collective support for families in distress. Mbiti (1969: 10) echoed these sentiments arguing that Africans should approach their spirituality in a collective manner.

Masango (2006: 930) further stated that Ubuntu is a philosophy that is internalised, a code of conduct that is encultured from an early age. Hence getting families and communities to collectively consider new ways of living and supporting each other can create new healthier and peaceful families and communities within the context of Ubuntu.

The third question was 'How do families and communities understand the African God?' Participants agreed that the Ndebele believed in a Supreme Being who they called UNkulunkulu. The Ndebele believed that UNkulunkulu was the first man and the Ndebele are His progeny. They believe that after His death he became an ancestor. The sample revealed that this was a long time ago and no one has memory of it. However, UNkulunkulu was the first man who created the world. The sample also compared the Ndebele Supreme Being to the Christian concept of the Supreme Being. Mbiti (1969: 15) stated that this comparison was because African spirituality is dynamic and has been influenced by other religions such as Islam and Christianity. Others in the sample made reference to the Njele mythology, in their understanding of God in Ndebele spirituality. Moreover, the Ndebele believed that uNkulunkulu was approached through a hierarchy which follows the ancestral paternally lineage. That is a son reports to his father, who then reports to his until it reaches the Supreme Being. Prayer to this Supreme Being then forms an important way in which communities and families can give their problems to God and seek his guidance when difficulties present themselves in these contexts.

The fourth question was 'How can Ndebele spirituality be used to reconstruct and develop families and communities?' The philosophy of Ubuntu underpins every aspect of the Ndebele living. Hence healing methodologies are influenced by Ubuntu. The ideals of Ubuntu are for the success and survival of the collective, hence healing is set to repair the collective. The family is organised to provide support and security to its member and this principle is extended to the community. Healing is also approached as a collective. The Ndebele also believe that healing is a holistic endeavour which involves the physical and the spiritual hence, spirit mediums and ancestral rituals play an important part in the healing process. Healing is designed to restore relationships that are broken hence forgiveness forms an important healing tool. Hence the Ndebele healing process requires that conflicting parties forgive and forget so that they may

start afresh. This is done to ensure the survival and success of the collective because through it the members are guaranteed security.

5.3 Conclusions

The study found that the Ndebele believe in a Supreme Being with who they connect with through their ancestors. The study also found that Ndebele spirituality was underpinned by the philosophy of Ubuntu. The philosophy of Ubuntu places importance on collective existence that is working and living together. It is collective existence that provides security for its members. The sample revealed that collective existence ensures that every individual develops through the success of the collective. Hence it is important for the Ndebele, to revert to the ideals of Ubuntu.

Given this collective existence, the Ndebele approach even their spirituality and spiritual activities collectively. The data and literature both reflect that the values underpinning Ubuntu are fading due to people gravitating towards Western ideologies. Both sources have deeply lamented the resultant breakdown in family and community life.

Healing methodologies are designed to restore the collective, hence forgiveness and the participation of the collective in other important spiritual activities are important in the healing process. The extended family is organised in such a manner that it works as a support until, in times of crisis. Therefore, the need to realize the importance of the organisation and employ it for the development and restoration of family and community.

The data revealed that the sample viewed social degradation as result of disrespect. The data shows that the Ndebele valued respect, which was predicated on the principle that the young respect the elders and respect for the sacred. Thus, the sample was of the view that the behaviour of the people reflects a lack of respect for the sacred and each other in general. Therefore, there was a need to prioritise and encourage respect, care and collective well-being.

5.4 Recommendations

The following recommendations can be made:

- The study revealed that extended family networks are important and can be utilised to provide security to the members of the family. Therefore, these networks should be exploited to ensure that every member has a support system. For instance, this would put an end to child-headed

- families as every child would be the responsibility of the collective family and community thereby lessening the burden of children taking care of children. Therefore, these ideas and principles should be encouraged so that a society which lives and works together can be created.

- In rural areas, the old court system which encourages conflicting members of a community to openly air their grievances to the elders and community is still in existence. This allows conflicting parties to get help with their difficulties and forgive each other so as to restore good relations. Therefore, it is recommended that people living in urban areas establish councils of elders which would ensure that conflicting parts can resolve some issues before they are reported to the police. The council of elders will resolve issues using spirituality as their basis and ensure that neighbours forgive each other. This council of elders will also be in charge of community behaviour so as to create a community which makes community members accountable for their behaviour. This will ensure that grudges which might result from fines imposed within conventional law system are avoided.

- The study recommends that African spirituality be revived and sustained, as it has positive benefits for the Africans (Ndebele). Many have converted to Christianity, resulting in them distancing themselves from traditional values and ways of living which could be beneficial within the context of the current socio-economic climate. Thus,

honouring ancient wisdom and honouring traditional ways of living is critical.

- A further recommendation is for elders to delve further into healing methods used traditionally and to learn its application in contemporary society.
- Also, research into urban council of elders and how it can be used in conflict resolution can be probed.

References

Amanze, J., 2002. *African Traditional Religions and Culture in Botswana: A Comprehensive Textbook*. Gaborone: Pula Press.

Babbie, E. 2013. *The practice of social research*. 13th ed. Belmont California: Wardsworth Cengage Learning.

Barney, R.J. and Buckingham, S.L., 2012. HIV/AIDS and spirituality in a South African township: A qualitative study. *Journal of Religion & Spirituality in Social Work: Social Thought*, 31(1-2), pp.51-66. www.tandfonline.com/doi/pdf/10

Chirozva, C., Mubaya, C.P. and Mukamuri, B., 2010. The Traditional African Family in the Age of Globalization. Available: <http://beatafrica.org/htm/comm.pdf>. (Accessed 26 August 2016)

Christie, D.J., Wagner, R.V. and Winter, D.D., 2003. Peace, conflict and violence:

Peace psychology for the 21st century. *A Journal of Injury and Violence*

Prevention, 48. Available: <https://csop.cmu.ca/peace-conflict-and-violence/> (

Accessed 26 June 2016)

Cilliers, J.H., 2008, July. Formations and movements of Christian Spirituality in urban African contexts. In conference *Interkulturelle Religionshermeneutik–Das Verstehen des Fremden, Religion und Politik in Afrika*, Humboldt University, Berlin, 10. Available: http://academic.sun.ac.za/tsv/profiles/profile_documents/johan_cilliers_african_spirituality.pdf. (Accessed 12 July 2016)

Creswell, 2013. *Research design: Qualitative, quantitative, and mixed methods approaches*. Los Angeles, CA: Sage publications.

Cronin, P., Ryan, F. and Coughlan, M., 2008. Undertaking a literature review: a step by-step approach. *British journal of nursing*, 17(1),

38. Available: <http://www.tara.tcd.ie/bitstream/handle/2262/69915/Undertaking%20a%20literature%20Review%20%2829%2011%2007%29.pdf?sequence=1&isAllowed=y>. (Accessed 20 February 2017)

Denzin, N.K., 2013. *Interpretive autoethnography* (Vol. 17). Sage Publications.

De Vos, A. S., Strydom, H., Fouche, C., B, and Delport, C., S,L. 2013. *Research at grass roots. For the social sciences and human services professions*. 5th ed. Pretoria: Van Schaick Publishers.

Dube, D. and Makwerere, D., 2012. Zimbabwe: Towards a comprehensive peace infrastructure. http://www.ijhssnet.com/journals/Vol_2_No_18_October_2012/34.pdf.

Ekeke, E.C. and Chike, A.E., 2010. God, divinities and spirits in African traditional religious ontology. *American Journal of Social and Management Sciences*, 1(2), pp.209-218. <http://scihub.org/AJSMS/PDF/2010/2/AJSMS-1-2-209-218.pdf>.

Essien, E.D., 2013. Notions of healing and transcendence in the trajectory of African traditional religion: Paradigm and strategies. *International Review of Mission*, 102(2), pp.236-248

Funk, K. 2001. *What is a worldview?* Corvallis, OR: Oregon State University.

Available: <http://web.engr.oregonstate.edu/~funkk/Personal/worldview.html>.

(Accessed 30 June 2016)

Fisher, J., 2011. The four domains model: Connecting spirituality, health and wellbeing. *Religions*, 2(1), pp.17-28. Available: <http://www.mdpi.com/2077-1444/2/1/17>. (Accessed 20 November 2017)

Gasson, S. (2004). Rigor in grounded theory research: An interpretive perspective on generating theory from qualitative field studies. In M. E. Whitman & A. B. Woszczyński (Eds.), *The handbook of information systems research* (pp. 79–102).

Hershey: Idea group
http://www.bwgriffin.com/gsu/courses/edur7130/qualitative/9_Qual_Grounded_Explained_4.pdf.

Grant, C. and Osanloo, A., 2014. Understanding, Selecting, and Integrating a Theoretical Framework in Dissertation Research: Creating the Blueprint for Your". Available: <https://eric.ed.gov/?id=EJ1058505>. (Accessed 20 October 2016)

Gumo, S., Gisege, S.O., Raballah, E. and Ouma, C., 2012. Communicating African Spirituality through Ecology: Challenges and Prospects for the 21st Century. *Religions*, 3(2), 523-543. Available: <http://www.mdpi.com/2077-1444/3/2/523>. (Accessed 5 May 2016)

Halai, A., 2006. Ethics in qualitative research: Issues and challenges. EdQual A Research Programme Consortium on Implementing Education Quality in Low Income Countries. EdQual Working Paper Number, 4, 1-12. Available: https://www.edqual.org/publications/workingpaper/edqualwp4.pdf/at_download/file.pdf. (Accessed 12 September 2016)

Henn, M., Weinstein, M. and Foard, N., 2009. A critical introduction to social research. Sage Publications.

Huitt, W. and Robbins, J., 2003, October. An introduction to spiritual development.

In *11th Annual Conference: Applied Psychology in Education, Mental Health, and Business, Valdosta, GA, October* (Vol.

3). Available: <http://www.edpsycinteractive.org/papers/spirituality.pdf>. (Accessed 4

August 2016)

Kariuki, F., 2015. Conflict resolution by elders in Africa: Successes, challenges and opportunities. *Alternative Dispute Resolution*, 3(2), pp.30-53.

Available: <https://www.ciarb.org/docs/default-source/centenarydocs/speakerassets/francis-kariuki.pdf?sfvrsn=0>. (Accessed 16 June 2017)

Kasambala, A.E., 2005. The impact of an African spirituality and Cosmology on Godimages in Africa: a challenge to practical theology and pastoral ministry. *International*

Journal of Practical Theology, 9(2), 300-323. Available: <https://www.researchgate.net/> (Accessed 8 May 2016)

Kasomo, D., 2010. The position of African traditional religion in conflict prevention.

International Journal of Sociology and Anthropology, 2(2),

23. Available: http://www.academicjournals.org/article/article1379416346_Kasomo.pdf. (10 January 2017)

Kirby, J., 2007, March. Creation Stories; Uniting Humanity to Educe a Holistic understanding of the African Worldview. In *31st Annual National Council for Black Studies Conference, San Diego, California* (Vol. 17).

Available: <http://africana.library.cornell.edu/sites/default/files/imported/lecture/kirby.pdf>. (Accessed 21 July 2017)

Jones, J.L., 2010. 'Nothing is straight in Zimbabwe': The rise of the Kukiya-kiya economy 2000–2008. *Journal of Southern African Studies*, 36(2), 285-299.

Available: <http://www.tandfonline.com/doi/abs/10.1080/03057070.2010.485784>

(Accessed 20 May 2016)

Leininger, M.M., 1985. Ethnography and ethnonursing: Models and modes of qualitative data analysis. *Qualitative research methods in nursing*, 33-72. Available:

<http://www.sciepub.com/reference/37735> (Accessed 05 May 2016)

May, T., 2011. *Social research*. McGraw-Hill Education. London: McGraw Hill.

Magesa, L., 2015. African Spirituality and the Environment: Some Principles, Theses, and Orientations. *Hekima Review*, (53), pp.119-128. Available: (Accessed 20 February 2017)

Mabvurira, V. and Nyanguru, A., 2015. Spiritually sensitive social work: a missing link in Zimbabwe. *African Journal of Social Work*, 3(1), 65-81. Available: <https://www.ajol.info/index.php/ajsw/article/view/127541> (Accessed 20 March 2016)

Masango, M.J., 2006. African spirituality that shapes the concept of Ubuntu. *Verbum et Ecclesia*, 27(3), pp.930-943. Available: <http://verbumeteccllesia.org.za/index.php/VE/article/view/195> (Accessed 20 March 2016)

Mawere, M., 2010. Indigenous Knowledge Systems'(IKSs) potential for establishing a moral, virtuous society: Lessons from selected IKSs in Zimbabwe and Mozambique. *Journal of Sustainable Development in Africa*, 12(7), pp.209-221. Available: http://www.jsdafrica.com/Jsda/V12No7_Winter2010_A/PDF/Indigenous%20Knowledge%20System%20Potential%20for%20Establishing%20a%20Moral%20Virtuous%20Society.pdf. (Accessed 21 March 2016)

Mazama, M.A., 2002. Afrocentricity and African spirituality. *Journal of Black Studies*, pp.218-234. Available: <http://journals.sagepub.com/doi/abs/10.1177/002193402237226>. (Accessed 13 May 2016)

Mazarire, G.C., 2003. Who are the Ndebele and Kalanga in Zimbabwe? *Konrad Adenauer Foundation Project on Ethnicity in Zimbabwe*, Available: ir.uz.ac.zw/jspui/bitstream/handle/10646/314/Mazarire-Ndebeleand-Kalanga.pdf (Accessed 15 October 2016)

Mbiti, J. 1969. *African Religions and Philosophy*, London: Edinburgh.

Mbiti, J. 1975. *The prayers of African religion*. New York: Orbis Books.

Miles, M. 2014. Huberman, A., M, and Saldana, J. *Qualitative Data Analysis. A Methods Sourcebook*. 3rd ed. Los Angeles: SAGE Publications.

Mohammed, Y.A., 2018. Assessing the role of elders in preserving peace and security: A case study in south Wollo, Ethiopia. *International Journal of Political Science and Development*, 6(3), pp.74-78.

Mpofu, S., 2014. *Public and diasporic online media in the discursive construction of national identity: A case of 'Zimbabwe'* Doctoral dissertation. Wired space.wits.ac.za/bitstream/.../Shepherd%20Mpofu%20Final%20P hD%20Thesis.pdf.

Mtapuri, O. and Mazengwa, P.J., 2013. Of spirituality and poverty: A Zimbabwean cultural perspective. *Indo-Pacific Journal of Phenomenology*, 13(1), pp.1-10.

Available:<http://www.tandfonline.com/doi/abs/10.2989/IPJP.2013.13.1.6.1172>

(Accessed 15 March 2016)

Murambadoro, R. and Wielenga, C., 2015. Reconciliation in Zimbabwe: The Conflict between a State-Centred and People-Centred Approach. *Strategic Review for Southern Africa*, 37(1), .31. Available:<http://hdl.handle.net/2263/52452> (Accessed 13 October 2016)

Mutisi, M. and Sansculotte-Greenidge, K., 2012. Integrating traditional and modern conflict resolution: experiences from selected cases in Eastern and the Horn of Africa. Available: <https://www.africportal.org/publications/integrating-traditional-and-modern-conflict-resolution-experiences-from-selected-cases-in-eastern-and-the-horn-of-africa/>. (Accessed (17 October 2019)

Murithi, T., 2006. African approaches to building peace and social solidarity. *African Journal on Conflict Resolution*, 6(2), pp.9-33. Available: <https://www.ajol.info/index.php/ajcr/article/view/39402> (Accessed (8 June 2016)

Ndlovu-Gatsheni, S.J., 2011. The Zimbabwean nation-state project: A historical diagnosis of identity and power-based conflicts in a postcolonial state. Available:<http://www.divaportal.org/smash/get/diva2:451275/FULLTEXT01.pdf>. (Accessed 13 October 2016)

Ndlovu-Gatsheni, S.J., 2009. Nation building in Zimbabwe and the challenges of

Ndebele particularism. *African Journal on Conflict Resolution*, 8(3), 27-56. Available: <https://www.ajol.info/index.php/ajcr/article/view/39430>. (Accessed 13 October 2016)

Ndlovu, S. and Ndlovu, L., 2012. Mediation as Conflict Resolution in Traditional Ndebele Society. *Africana*, 6, 168-92. Available: <http://africanajournal.org/mediation-as-conflict-resolution-in-traditional-ndebele-society/>. (Accessed 10 October 2016)

Ndumbe, K., 2001. The spiritual dimensions of resolution mechanisms in African countries. *University of Oslo, Unit for comparative and International Education, Institute for Educational Research, Accessed*, 23(02), p.01.

Available:

www.africavenir.org/.../NdumbeSpiritualDimensionConflictPrevention_04.pdf

Neuman, W. I., 2006. *Social research methods: Qualitative and quantitative approaches*. 6 ed. Cape Town: Pearson.

Nkabahona, D.A., 2007. Healing the wounds of conflict through reconciliation: the African paradigm. *The Author is the Coordinator MA Peace and Conflict Studies Program Faculty of Arts Makerere University–Kampala–Uganda*.

Available: <http://www.ipt.org/africa2007/PDFs/AlexNkabahona.pdf>. (Accessed 10 March 2017)

Nussbaum, B., 2003. African culture and Ubuntu. *Perspectives*, 17(1), 1-12. Available: barbaranussbaum.com/downloads/perspectives.pdf (Accessed March 2016)

Nyathi, P., 2001. *Traditional ceremonies of amaNdebele*. Mambo Press.

Okolo, C.B., 1992. Self as a problem in African philosophy. *International philosophical quarterly*, 32(4), pp.477-485. Available: <https://philpapers.org/rec/OKOSAA> (Accessed 10 March 2017)

Osei-Hwedie, K. and Rankopo, M.J., 2012. Indigenous conflict resolution in Africa: The case of Ghana and Botswana. *IPSHU English Research Report Series*, (29), 33-

51. Available: <http://home.hiroshima-u.ac.jp/heiwa/Pub/E29/e29-3.pdf>. (Accessed 13 September 2016)

Palys, T., 2008. Purposive sampling. *The Sage encyclopedia of qualitative research methods*, 2, 697-698. <https://www.sfu.ca/~palys/Purposive%20sampling.pdf>.

Polit, D.F. & Hungler, B.P., 1999: Nursing research: Principles and methods; 6th edition. Philadelphia: JB Lippincott.

Phiri, J.K. (2009). African Pentecostal Spirituality: A Study of the Emerging African Pentecostal Churches in Zambia, PhD thesis, University of Pretoria. <http://repository.up.ac.za/bitstream/handle/2263/28976/02chapters3-4.pdf?sequence=3>. (Accessed 20 March 2017)

Ranger, T., 2004. Nationalist historiography, patriotic history and the history of the nation: The struggle over the past in Zimbabwe. *Journal of Southern African Studies*, 30(2), pp.215-234.

Available: <https://www.tandfonline.com/doi/abs/10.1080/0305707042000215338>.

(Accessed 15 October 2016)

Ross, E., 2010. Inaugural lecture: African spirituality, ethics and traditional healing—implications for indigenous South African social work education and practice. *South African Journal of Bioethics and Law*, 3(1), 44-51. <http://www.sajbl.org.za/index.php/sajbl/article/view/103>.

Run, P., 2013. Reconsidering the crisis of confidence in indigenous African conflict resolution approaches: a postcolonial critique. *Journal of Pan African Studies*, 6(6), 26-40.

Available: https://espace.library.uq.edu.au/view/UQ:318925/UQ318925_OA.pdf. (15 May 2016)

Rusbult, C., 2011. What is a world view? Retrieved 23 June 2016 from: American Scientific Affiliation <http://www.asa3.org/ASA/education/views/index.html>.

Rockinson-Szapkiw, Amanda J. "The Importance of the Literature and the Theoretical Framework."

Available:[http://www.amandaszapkiw.com/artifacts/research-process-theoreticalframework/Research%20Process %20The Literature Review and Theoretical Framework.pdf](http://www.amandaszapkiw.com/artifacts/research-process-theoreticalframework/Research%20Process%20The%20Literature%20Review%20and%20Theoretical%20Framework.pdf). (Accessed 20 February 2017)

Sangasubana, N., 2011. How to conduct ethnographic research. *The Qualitative Report*, 16(2), 567-573.

Available: <http://nsuworks.nova.edu/cgi/viewcontent.cgi?article=1071&context=tqr> (Accessed 30 June 2016)

Sarantakos, S., 2005. Social Research. 3rd. Hampshire: Palgrave Macmillan.

Stiftung, B., 2016. BTI 2016–Zimbabwe country report. *Gütersloh: Bertelsmann Stiftung*, Available:https://www.btiproject.org/fileadmin/files/BTI/Downloads/Reports/2016/pdf/BTI_2016_Zimbabwe.pdf (accessed 16 April 2017).

Sinclair, M., 2007. A guide to understanding theoretical and conceptual frameworks. *Evidence-Based Midwifery*, 5(2), pp.39-40.

Available: <http://www.doctoralmidwiferysociety.org/portals/c8d3e3f8-9c01-4bf5-abd9-3fd6b4c510ae/marlneeditorialtheoreticlaframework.pdf>. (Accessed 20 October 2016)

Sumbeiywo, Lazaro 2008. To Be a Negotiator: Strategies and Tactics. Mediation Support Project, Swisspeace and CSS/ETH Zurich.

Washington, K., 2010. Zulu traditional healing, African worldview and the practice of Ubuntu: Deep thought for Afrikan/Black psychology. *The Journal of Pan African Studies*, 3(8), pp.24-39. Available:<http://www.jpanafrican.org/docs/vol3no8/3.8ZuluTraditional.pdf>. (Accessed 24 August 2017)

Wa Thiong'o, N., 1994. *Decolonising the mind: The politics of language in African literature*. East African Publishers.

Wessells, M. and Monteiro, C., 2001. Psychosocial interventions and post-war reconstruction in Angola: Interweaving Western and traditional approaches. *Peace, conflict, and violence: Peace psychology for the 21st century*, 262-275. Available:

(Accessed 18 July 2016)

Wiredu, K., 1998. Toward decolonizing African philosophy and religion. *African studies quarterly*, 1(4), pp.17-46.

Available:<https://pdfs.semanticscholar.org/ee5d/85952984bf35ca0af6925b5c4c45bf774480.pdf>. (Accessed 13 June 2017)

Wolfteich, C.E., 2012. Spirituality. *The Wiley-Blackwell companion to practical theology*, pp.328-336. Available:<https://www.bu.edu/sth/profile/claire-e-wolfteich/> (Accessed 6 October 2017)

Appendices



APPENDIX 1

LETTER OF INFORMATION

LETTER OF INFORMATION

Title of the Research Study: Ndebele Spirituality as pathways to peace and healing in Zimbabwe

Principal Investigator/researcher: Seth T. Moyo, Masters

Co-Investigator/s/supervisor/s: Professor Raisuyah Bhagwan

Dear Participant

Thank you for taking an interest in my research. My name is Seth T. Moyo; I am currently studying for a Master of management science in peacebuilding at Durban University of Technology. I wish to provide you with further information pertaining to my research study so that you have a clear understanding of what it is about.

African spirituality has been ignored or viewed in a negative light thus it has been eliminated from the mainstream discourse. However, there are aspects of African spirituality which can be used for positive transformation in our society for instance peace and healing. In this research, we aim to investigate how Ndebele spirituality can be used for peace and healing in Zimbabwe.

On choosing to become part of this research you will:

- **Voluntarily become active participant in ethnographic observations**
- **Voluntarily become active participant in discussions, interviews as advised by the researcher.**
- **Be kindly requested to treat all information discussed in these meetings as confidential.**

Please be advised your participation is voluntary and you may freely withdraw from participating in the discussions and interviews. You will not be paid for participating in the study and you will not be expected to pay anything to take part in the study. The individual interview sessions will be held at a time convenient to you.

Your names will not be used when reporting on the focus group or individual interviews. Your answers will be kept confidential and mainly for this research. However, by participating in this research you can express your views and comments without fear of being victimised.

Seth T Moyo



APPENDIX 2

Incwadi Yesaziso

Kuwe Mncedisi

Ngiyabonga kakhulu ngokutshengisa isifiso sokuphatheka kuphenyo engiluhubayo. Ibizo lami nginguSeth T. Moyo. Okwakhathesi ngiqhuba izifundo zangaphezulu kwezokwakhiwa ngokuthula ngasenyuvesi yaseThekwini kwezobuchwephetshe. Ngifisa ukukwazisa ngenjongo yophenyo lwami engiluhubayo ukuze uzwisise ukuthi lumayelana ngani. Isiqokoqela sophenyo lwami sithi, 'Ukusetshenziswa kwesiko lesiNdebele ukukwakha ukuthula lokupholisa amanxeba eZimbabwe.

Isiko(lozokholo) kwesizwe seAfrica bekukhangelwela phansi kwezemfundo, nguhulumende lezinye inhlanganisano eziphetheyo lezincedisana abantu. Injongo yaloluphenyo yidingisana ukuthi isiko lesiNdebele lisetshenziswa kanjani ukwakha ukuthula lokupholisa amanxeba emulini lasesigabeni. Impumela ezaphuma kuloluphenyo njengomfundi ngiyathemba kungasetshenziswa ezweni lonke jikelele ukwakha ukuthula eZimbabwe.

Uma ungakhetha ukuba yingxenye yaloluphenyo kuzadingakala okulandelayo ngakuwe:

1. Kuzadingakala ukuthi ngikhulumisane lawe manqamu sixoxisane sibabili ukuthi ungitshele mayelana lesiko lesiNdebeleni.
2. Lokungivumela ngibekhona umakusenziwa izinto zesiko lomdeni wakho.

Ukuphatheka kwakho kuloluphenyo kuyikuzikhethela njalo lokuthanda kwakho. Nxa ungafisa ukungaphatheki kukho uvunyelwe iloba ngasiphi isikhathi ukuthi utshiye njalo akulacala ongalwetheswa nxa ungacabanga ukutshiya ukuphatheka phakathi kwesikhathi. Uphenyo lolu lingokufisa lokuthanda kwakho ukuthi uphathise njalo akulankokhelo ekhona uma ungaphatheka njalo akudingakali ukuthi ukhokhe ukuze uphatheke.

Nxa sixoxisana ngenjongo zaloluphenyo, ibizo lakho aliyikuvezwa njalo lami uma sengibhala impumela zengxoxo zophenyo angisoze ngasebenzisa ibizo lakho. Impendulo zakho zizabonwa yimina kuphela.

Uma ulenkinga kumbe imibuzo mayelana ngophenyo lolu, ukhululekile ukungithinta (kulezi inombombo(+27606730503), kumbe ukuthinta umphathi wami uPhrofesa Raisuyah Bhagwan (+27761010693) kumbe ukuthinta ababona ngezophenyo (031 373 2900). Izikhalazo ungazibika kumphathi uPhrofesa F. Otieno (031 373 2382).

Ozithobayo

Seth T. Moyo



APPENDIX 3

CONSENT

Statement of Agreement to Participate in the Research Study:

- I hereby confirm that I have been informed by the researcher, Seth Thembelihle Moyo, about the nature, conduct, benefits and risks of this study - Research Ethics Clearance Number: _____,
- I have also received, read and understood the above written information (Participant Letter of Information) regarding the study.
- I am aware that the results of the study, including personal details regarding my sex, age, date of birth, initials and diagnosis will be anonymously processed into a study report.
- In view of the requirements of research, I agree that the data collected during this study can be processed in a computerised system by the researcher.
- I may, at any stage, without prejudice, withdraw my consent and participation in the study.
- I have had sufficient opportunity to ask questions and (of my own free will) declare myself prepared to participate in the study.
- I understand that significant new findings developed during the course of this research which may relate to my participation will be made available to me.

Full Name of Participant	Date	Time	Signature / Right
Thumbprint			

I, Seth Thembelihle Moyo herewith confirm that the above participant has been fully informed about the nature, conduct and risks of the above study.

Full Name of Researcher	Date	Signature
--------------------------------	-------------	------------------

Full Name of Witness (If applicable) Date

Signature

Full Name of Legal Guardian (If applicable) Date

Signature

APPENDIX 4



INCWADI

YESIVUMELWANO

Isivumelwano sokuthi uphatheke kuphenyo lwezifundo:

- Ngiyavuma ukuthi ngazisiwe ngumfundi waloluphenyo, _____ (ibizo lomfundi wophenyo), mayelana ngenjongo, lokuphatheka, lemivuzo njalo lezingozi ezingabakhona mayelana lophenyo lolu – Inombolo zomfundi zokunikezwa imvumo ngababona ngozokuphenya: _____,
- Ngitholile njalo ngafunda ngazwisisa isaziso esibhalwe ngaphezulu (Incwadi yesaziso kumncedisi) mayelana ngophenyo.
- Nginyanzelela ngempumela zophenyo, okugoqela uluhlwi mayelana ngobulili , iminyaka, ilanga lokuzalwa, lokunye nje kuzavezwa ngokufihlakeleyo uma umfundi esebhala impumela yophenyo.
- Mayelana lokufunakalayo kwezokuphenya, ngiyavuma ukuthi ulwazi olutholakeleyo ngesikhathi sophenyo lusetshenziswe ngumfundi ekubhaleni uphenyo lwakhe.
- Iloba kuliphi ibanga, kungelani lokukhetha, ngingaziba isivumelwano lesi lokuthi ngingaphatheki kuloluphenyo.
- Ngibeithuba eleneleyo ukubuza imibuzo (ngokufisa kwami) ngiyavuma ukuthi ngizimisele ukuphatheka kuloluphenyo.
- Ngiyazwisisa ukuthi impumela eziqakathekileyo ezizaphuma kuloluphenyo eziyabe zihambelana lokuphatheka kwami zizakwambula kimi.

_____ **Ibizo**
elipheleleyo lomncedisi llanga Isikhathi Ubufakazi

Mina _____ (ibizo lomfundi) ngiyavuma ukuthi umncedisi obhalwe ngaphezulu wazisiwe ngokugcweleyo mayelana lenjongo, lokuphathwa lengozi ezingavela ngophenyo ngaphezulu.

_____ **Ibizo lomfundi llanga Ubufakazi**

Ibizo eligcweleyo lomfakazi (nxa kuvuma) Ilanga

Ubufakazi



APPENDIX 5

Faculty of Management Sciences

Department of Public Management & Economics

Date:

The Chief

Dear Sir

RE: Permission to undertake research at your district 2015

I am a student at Durban University of Technology. I am currently doing my research on Ndebele spirituality as pathways to peace and healing as part of my studies towards a Masters degree in Peacebuilding at Durban University of Technology. I wish to be granted permission to undertake my research at

The aim of my research is to explore the values and principles underpinning the philosophy of Ndebele spirituality and to inquire about how its customs and rituals can be used to rebuild community life.

The data collection or study will involve:

1. The researcher to reside in your district so as to observe how Ndebele spirituality is used on a day to day basis
2. The researcher wishes to participate or be present during the conducting of rituals
3. the researcher will conduct in-depth interviews with key informants (people who are considered to be more knowledgeable on the subject in the case Ndebele spirituality)

Your permission to undertake the research would be greatly appreciated. Should you wish to discuss the study further, please feel free to contact me or my supervisor.

Yours faithfully

Seth T. Moyo

Masters student: Peacebuilding

Email: sethemo11@gmail.com

Contact number: +263 775 706 727

Prof. Raisuyah Bhagwan

Supervisor

Email: bhagwanr@dut.ac.za

Contact number: +27 **31 37 321 97**

APPENDIX 6



Interview Schedule for key informants

Title of the Research Study: Ndebele Spirituality as pathways to peace and healing in Zimbabwe.

Student/Researcher: Seth T. Moyo **Date:**

Time:

Consent Process

Thank you for agreeing to participate. We are very interested to hear your valuable opinion on the Ndebele Spirituality.

Aim of research to explore the values and principles underpinning the philosophy of Ndebele spirituality and to inquire about how its customs and rituals can be used to rebuild community life.

- The information you give us is completely confidential, and we will not associate your name.
- We would like to tape the interview so that we can make sure to capture the thoughts, opinions, and ideas. No names will be attached and the tapes will be destroyed as soon as they are transcribed.
- You may refuse to answer any question.
- We understand how important it is that this information is kept private and confidential if you have any questions now or after, you can always contact a study team member like me, or you can call the persons whose names and phone numbers are on this form.
- Please sign to show you agree to participate in this interview.

Questions

1. How would you describe the Ndebele community?
2. Can you share with me your understanding of Ndebele Spirituality?
3. What are the most common values and Principles of Ndebele Spirituality
4. What constitutes e family in Ndebele society?
5. Tell me more about the ancestors in Ndebele Spirituality?

6. Explain the role of nature in Ndebele Spirituality
7. How is peace attained in Ndebele Spirituality how are they related to Man?
8. What are the ways of maintaining and achieving peace within families through the values and principles of Ndebele Spirituality?
9. What are the ways of maintaining and achieving peace at a community level through Ndebele Spirituality?
10. What are the customs, traditions and rituals that make up Ndebele Spirituality?
11. How can they be used to rebuild families and communities?



ANNEXURE 7

Isiqondiso sembuzo (key informants)

Ukusetshenziswa kwesiko lesiNdebele ukukwakha ukuthula lokupholisa amaxeba eZimbabwe.

Umfundi/umpheni: Seth T. Moyo usuku:

Isikhathi:

Siyabonga ngokukhetha ukubayingxeny ephenyweni lwethu lwesiko lesiNdebele. Ozokutsho mayelana laloludabakuzasisiza kakhulu ephenyweni lethu.

- Injongo yaloluphenyo yidingisisa ukuthi isiko lesiNdebele lisetshenziswa kanjani ukwakha ukuthula lokupholisa amaxeba emulini lasesigabeni.
- Funa ukuthatha lesisikhathi ngokhumbuze ukukuthi njengo mcedisi ibizo lakho lizokugcinwa liyimfihlo.
- Okwesibili uvunyelwe ukwala ukuphendula umbuzo uma ungakuphathi kahle.

imbuzo

1. Ungachaza ukuthi amaNdebele njengabantu?
2. Ungangichazela ukuzwisisa kwakho isiko lesiNdebele?
3. Yiziphi izinto ezimqoka esikweni lesiNdebele?
4. Yiwaphi amalunga ayenza imuli?
5. Ungangitshela kabanzi ngabaphansi eseNdebeleni?
6. Imvelo idlala ndima bani esikweni lesiNdebele?
7. Ungachaza indlela zokwenza ukuthula njalo kuhlangu njani lomuntu?
8. Isiko lesiNdebele lisetshenziswa njani ukuthola lokugcina ukuthula emulini?

9. Isiko lesiNdebele lisetshenziswa njani ukuthola lokugcina ukuthula esigabeni?

10. Yiyiphi imikhuba etholakala esikweni lesiNdebele?

11. Lokhu ukungasetshenziswa kanjani ukuvuselela izimuli?

Inxoxo yethu iphelela lapha siyabonga imicabanga yakho. Makukhona ofuna ukwengeza ungasazisa ngefoni, singakuthabela lokhu.

ANNEXURE 8



Taken in at the Tower Block Park in Bulawayo