

**A public pastoral response to Xenophobia in South Africa:
Ubuntu and hospitality within an African Christian ethical
framework**

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DECLARATION

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ABSTRACT/SUMMARY

Xenophobia is invariably defined as an intense or irrational dislike or fear of people from other countries. For the purposes of this study the concept has been defined with fear not being the operative word as it tends to obscure a plurality of beliefs and effects associated with the phenomenon. Furthermore, in the South African context, xenophobia manifests itself at times as a bias-motivated crime of violence and is directed towards individuals who are of the same colour as local citizens, hence the term *Afrophobia*. Xenophobia or migrants' exclusion in African discussions, particularly in South Africa, has been blamed based on 'African-hood' as represented by *Ubuntu* and human rights. However, there has been inadequate critique of the actions from the perspective of Christian theological tradition or concepts.

This study seeks to challenge xenophobia through appealing to *Ubuntu* values and principles as a Christian ethical prism for an authentic African Christian approach responsive to the challenge of xenophobia as well as to foster hospitality that embraces foreigners. The theoretical framework for the study was based on Osmer's (2008:4) core tasks of practical theological interpretation. Following Osmer's framework, the study will explore the causal factors and effects of xenophobia, and the influence of *Ubuntu* and hospitality in shaping the behaviour of South Africans towards foreigners. The study made use of theological concepts from public practical theology and the link between *Ubuntu* and hospitality to Christian ethics in shaping public moral policy.

The study revealed that churches in South Africa are lukewarm in their response to evils perpetrated against foreign nationals. Instead of speaking out clearly and unambiguously concerning the evil of xenophobic attacks, understandably, the study revealed that the factors underlying xenophobic actions are complex and church leaders are equally caught up in this dynamic along with all other South African citizens. Three theories concerning the causes of xenophobia, namely: 'scapegoating theory', isolation theory and bio-cultural theory provided an insight and an analytical framework to understand xenophobia. However, the three theories inadequately address the subjective and objective, as well as internal and contextual variables that contribute to and perpetuate xenophobia in the country.

An alternative approach utilising the test of eight theories explains and understands xenophobia in South Africa by applying a wide variety of explanatory variables that are subjective and objective as well as internal and contextual. The study discovered that xenophobic violence cannot be adequately explained by poverty and unemployment and the presence of migrants, nor can it be attributed to poor economic conditions, competition for resources or poor service delivery, as the key issue that emerges from the situation is the question of the humaneness (*Ubuntu*) or lack of it, as well as the absence of strong theological ethical guidance from the church.

The study revealed that the church as the vanguard of the poor, the vulnerable and marginalised should take the lead in persuading the government to pass appropriate legislation to protect the migrants. However, the government faces the tension between supporting national sentiment and the need to advance foreigners' needs. The national sentiment is a perceived danger posed by migrants to the socio-economic, cultural and moral fabric of society, especially among black South Africans in the face of social deprivation. The country's leaders are caught in this quagmire as first and foremost they are responsible to their citizens as their elected representatives and have to abide by their will, even if it is misguided. Therefore, the church and government are caught in this dilemma, albeit, for different reasons and motivations.

The study provided insight and understanding that African philosophy must be understood in the context of its ability to create meaning for a culturally differentiated society. The study revealed that the relationship between *Ubuntu* and the aphorism associated with it '*umuntu ngumuntu ngabantu*' is no coincidence as it was a desire to find something uniquely African in post-apartheid South Africa in an attempt to transform society by incorporating traditions from the past that were deemed to be noble or worthy. The study provided an understanding that the church and the individual Christian have a duty to be engaged according to *Ubuntu's* notion of identity and solidarity. Identity and solidarity imply a vector towards the other. The study emphasised that practical theology will be bridging the three epistemological spheres by exploring theological, historical Western approaches and African wisdom and tradition to engage with issues on an ongoing basis. From a social-moralist point of view Christian morality and *Ubuntu* principles will act as a barrier/shield to counter

current responses from the South African public towards nationalist prejudices and xenophobia in its Afrophobic form.

Public theology concerns itself with theological engagement with the public and making sense of these interactions, especially focusing on issues in the public sphere outside of the confines of the church and placing them on the church's agenda. Public practical theology can take a leaf from the notions of hospitality and justice embedded in *Ubuntu* to make a meaningful contribution in a pluralistic society. The Christian effort will also be able to address itself to the wider community beyond the Christian membership in terms recognisable to them all. This is because the Christian message will not overemphasise forgiveness to the detriment of justice. In *Ubuntu* understanding forgiveness accompanies justice. There is a need to emphasise the caring side, revisiting our *Ubuntu* heritage and the Christian value of hospitality to foster a culture of Philoxenia. The study proposes principles and guidelines for a church-driven model to shift xenophobia to Philoxenia for the church in its ministerial approaches to pastoral care in South Africa.

KEY WORDS OF THE STUDY

Ubuntu, Hospitality, Public practical theology, Public pastoral care, Christian ethics, Migration and Xenophobia

OPSOMMING / ABSTRAK

Xenofobie word gedefinieer as 'n intense of irrasionele afkeer of vrees vir mense vanuit ander lande. Vir die doeleindes van hierdie studie, is die konsep (xenofobie) egter met sorg gedefinieer om sodoende te voorkom dat 'n aantal oortuigings en gevolge wat met xenofobie verband hou, nie verbloem word nie. In Suid-Afrika manifesteer xenofobie dikwels as 'n vooroordeel-gemotiveerde geweldsmisdaad teen individue van dieselfde kleur as die plaaslike burgers, vandaar dan ook die term Afrophobia. Afrika, en veral Suid-Afrika se vermyding van of stilswye rondom xenofobie, staan lynreg in teenstelling met die siening van African-hood wat gebaseer word op Ubuntu en menseregte beginsels. Die navorser voel sterk dat die Christelike teologiese tradisie hul baie sterker hieroor kan uitspreek.

Hierdie studie poog om xenofobie uit te daag deur die beklemtoning van die waardes en beginsels van Ubuntu wat gestel word as 'n Christelike etiese prisma vir 'n geldige Afrika Christelike benadering. Hierdie benadering kan vreemdelinge haat uitdaag en gasvryheid teenoor buitelanders bevorder. Die teoretiese raamwerk van die studie is gebaseer op die vier kerntake vir praktiese teologiese interpretasie van Osmer (2008:4). Na aanleiding van die raamwerk van Osmer, word die oorsaaklike faktore en gevolge van vreemdelinge haat en die invloed van Ubuntu en gasvryheid op die gedrag van Suid-Afrikaners ondersoek. Die studie het gebruik gemaak van teologiese konsepte vanuit die publieke praktiese teologie en die verband tussen Ubuntu en gasvryheid in die Christelike etiek vir die vorming van 'n publieke morele beleid.

Die louheid van Suid-Afrikaanse kerke om vreemdelinge haat aan te spreek, het in die studie aan die lig gekom. In plaas daarvan om die onheil van xenofobiese aanvalle duidelik en ondubbelsinnig uit te spreek, blyk dit dat die faktore onderliggend aan xenofobiese optrede ingewikkeld is en dat kerkleiers – soos alle Suid-Afrikaanse burgers – vasgevang is in die dinamiek van xenofobie. Drie teorieë rakende die oorsake vir vreemdelinge haat, naamlik die 'sondebok-teorie' (scapegoating theory), isolasie-teorie en bio-kulturele teorie het insig en 'n analitiese raamwerk gegee vir 'n duideliker begrip van xenofobie. Ongelukkig is daar steeds 'n

leemte in die drie teorieë rondom die subjektiewe en objektiewe, asook die interne en kontekstuele veranderlikes van xenofobie.

In die studie het 'n alternatiewe benadering deur die inkorporering van agt teorieë die xenofobiese fenomeen in Suid-Afrika meer duideliker verklaar. Hierdie agt teorieë benadering kon die leemtes van die drie teorieë benadering ondervang. Die studie het daarop gewys dat xenofobiese geweld nie voldoende verklaar kan word deur armoede, werkloosheid, die teenwoordigheid van emigrante, swak ekonomiese toestande, mededinging om hulpbronne of swak dienslewering nie, aangesien die sleutelkwessie steeds vermy word. Die sleutelkwessie dui eerder op medemenslikheid (Ubuntu) of die gebrek daaraan, sowel as die afwesigheid van sterk teologiese etiese leiding vanaf die kerk.

Die studie dui daarop dat die kerk, as die beskermmer of stem vir armes, kwesbare en gemarginaliseerde persone moet optree en leiding neem in die onderhandelinge met die regering om wetgewing daar te stel wat emigrante kan beskerm. Tans beleef die Suid-Afrikaanse regering spanning tussen die ondersteuning van nasionale sentiment aan die eenkant, en aan die anderkant die behoefte om emigrante te akkommodeer. Swart Suid-Afrikaners beskou emigrante as 'n bedreiging vir nasionale sentiment in terme van die sosio-ekonomiese, kulturele en morele struktuur van die samelewing. Veral ook in die lig van hul vroeëre sosiale ontbreking as gevolg van apartheid. Die regering is vasgevang in hierdie moeilike situasie, weens hul verantwoordelikheid teenoor hul eie landsburgers en sal hul verkiesingsbeloftes moet na kom ongeag of dit reg is of nie. Dit blyk dus dat die kerk en die regering – weliswaar om verskillende redes – vasgevang is in die dilemma van xenofobie.

Die studie beklemtoon dat Afrika-filosofie verstaan moet word in die konteks van die ingeslote vermoë om betekenis te kan skep vir 'n multikulturele samelewing. Verder het die studie gewys dat die verhouding tussen Ubuntu en die aforisme daaraan verbonde ('umntu ngumuntu ngabantu) nie toevallig is nie, as gevolg van die begeerte om iets unieks tot Afrika te vind in die post-apartheid Suid-Afrika. Dit was 'n poging om die samelewing te transformeer deur tradisies uit die verlede op te neem wat as edel en waardig geag kon word. Die studie bied ook die begrip dat dit die plig van die kerk en die individuele Christen is, om betrokke te wees in die uitdagings van

die samelewing. Die betrokkenheid moet gebaseer wees op die Ubuntu idee van identiteit en solidariteit. Die studie beklemtoon ook dat praktiese teologie die drie epistemologiese ondersoekvelde van teologie, historiese Westerse benaderings en Afrika-wysheid moet oorbrug om sodoende deurlopend in uitdagende kwessies betrokke te wees. Daarom, vanuit 'n sosiaal-moralistiese oogpunt gesien, kan Christelike moraliteit en Ubuntu-beginsels gesamentlik as 'n buffer dien om xenofobie teë te werk.

Publieke teologie handel oor teologiese betrokkenheid by die publiek en fokus veral op kwessies in die samelewing wat buite die sfeer van die kerkgrense val om sodoende hierdie kwessies op die kerk se agenda te plaas. Publieke praktiese teologie kan baie leer by Ubuntu-beginsels rondom gasvryheid om 'n betekenisvolle bydrae te kan lewer in 'n multikulturele samelewing. Die Christelike kerk sal wyer as die normale kerkgrense sigbaar moet word in die hantering van ongeregtighede. In Ubuntu gaan vergifnis altyd gepaard met geregtigheid. In Suid-Afrika is daar 'n behoefte om klem te lê op wedersydse versorging en omgee, die herbesoek aan Ubuntu-beginsels en die Christelike siening van gasvryheid ten opsigte van vredeliewende gedrag en aanvaarding teenoor die vreemdeling. Die uiteindelijke doel van die studie is om pastorale riglyne daar te stel vir 'n kerkgedrewe model wat kan lei tot die skuif vanaf xenofobie na filoxenia.

SLEUTELWOORDE VAN DIE STUDIE

Ubuntu, gasvryheid, publieke praktiese teologie, publieke pastorale sorg, Christelike etiek, migrasie en xenofobie.

ACRONYMS

ACMS	African Centre for Migration and Society
AD	Anno Domino
ANC	African National Congress
CNCDH	Commission Nationale Consultative Des Droits De L'Homme
HSRC	Human Science Research Council
ILO	International Labour Organisation
IOM	International Organisation on Migration
MPS	Migration Policy Series
NGO	Non-Governmental Organisation
NWU	North West University
OHCHR	Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights
RDP	Reconstruction and Development Programme
SADC	Southern African Development Community
SAMP	Southern African Migration Programme
UNHRC	United Nations Human Rights Commission
UN	United Nations

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Chapter 1: Background and the premise of the study

Background

1.1 Christian ethics approaches

Christian ethics emerged from the scriptures, which have often served as the basis for absolute moral norms and laws (Curran,1998:73, Wells *et al.*, 2017:1). Curran asserts that scripture scholars and moral theologians irrespective of Protestant or Catholic churches, acknowledge today that biblical teachings are historically, culturally and socially conditioned (Curran,1998:81). According to Gruden (2018:1), Christian ethics involves answering what the whole Bible teaches us about our acts, attitudes and personal character traits that meet God's approval or disapproval. We are directed by ethics in a particular way, a way in which a person and society conduct their lives and encourages people to live in an appropriate and just way for harmonious living. Ethics is also based upon care that arises out of concrete relationships (Keenan, 2005:11).

According to Kammer III (1988:31), debates on Christian ethics are largely about method of decision-making generally based on deontological and teleological approaches. The deontological approach emphasises adherence or conformance to the rules and laws in one's actions (deontology) and less attention being paid to its consequences. The deontological approach can be secular or Christian based on whether the rules are based: on human reason and intuition or God's Word, the Bible (Gruden, 2018). The teleological approach seeks to determine what is the end or good (teleology) and as such is deeply concerned about consequences and measures morality by the ability of an action to accomplish a desired end. The Encyclopaedia of Religion also brings to the fore a model of Christian ethics which ponders on the responsibility of one's actions that involves individual/communal caring. For our purposes, the former two approaches will be subsumed by the latter for reasons to be evidenced later in the discussion.

Notably, the historical development of Christian ethics can be traced back to three schools of thought: Eastern Orthodox ethics, the Roman Catholic Tradition and the Protestant ethics (Hoose, 1998; Gale, 2005; Boulton *et al.*, 1994).

Orthodox ethics is generally based on law that has a significant but not exclusive role in ethics, but the tradition guards against legalism. The law is found in the Ten Commandments, the beatitudes and the teaching of the New Testament as well as the sayings of the Church Fathers (Gale, 2005:265). The Roman Catholic Tradition is characterised by the insistence on mediation, acceptance of natural law and the role of the church, whereas, the Protestant Christian ethics is moulded around an emphasis on freedom, the importance of the scripture and the theological nature of the discipline (Gale, 2015:265). These three Christian ethics approaches indicate an inherent complexity in Christian ethics which cannot be simply overlooked. Boulton *et al.* (1994:6) observed that there is great diversity of voices, past and present. The diversity that exists in the above three Christian ethical traditions has resulted in the emergence of a more ecumenical approach in the contemporary situation. The ecumenical approach concerns itself with issues pertaining to solidarity with migrants, social justice, economic policies and revitalising local communities (Machado, 2006:115-126). It is evident from the Christian ethical approaches that every school tends to emphasise the realities of their own cultures and ethos as well as represent their theological framework and tradition. The shortcomings of the three Traditions can be summed up as follows: The Orthodox Tradition has not been on the forefront of social ethics but has been closely aligned to the state. The Roman Catholic Tradition has always upheld the view that “error has no right” up until recently, which bred intolerance. The Protestant ethics is evidenced by a system of rewards (heaven) for good behaviour and characterised by threats (hell) for bad.

Despite these diverse approaches and their limitations, it should be noted that at theoretical and scientific levels, Christian ethics generally explains the moral life in a thematic, coherent and consistent way. This moral life at its core entails respecting and valuing other human beings. Christian ethics assists human beings among other things, to reflect and reason in a manner that respects, values and promotes all humanity.

As observed from the above, Christian ethics approaches are influenced by their traditions (Meylahn, 2017a:126-132, Galatians 3:18, 4:1 and Ephesians 5:22, 6:9), which suggests that Christian ethical frameworks are influenced by their context and cultural thought patterns. Within Africa, particularly South Africa, the notion of *Ubuntu* is an ethical framework that influences or should inform African Christian ethics (Mbiti, 1969:108; Tutu, 1999:35; Magezi, 2006: 518; Magezi, 2017:111; Shutte, 2001:12; Battle, 1998:93-105; Meylahn, 2017a:123).

1.2 The notion of *Ubuntu*

Albeit being a popular and well embraced concept, the term *Ubuntu* is somewhat of an abstract concept (Magezi, 2017:112). At the popular level, the meaning, interpretation, application and context of *Ubuntu* seem obvious. It denotes aspects such as humaneness, communality, togetherness, being there for each other and caring for one another (Tutu, 1996: 9). However, at academic and technical levels the concept is elusive and fluid. The elusiveness arises from among other things, the difficulty and challenge associated with its application whereby African nations that are supposedly *Ubuntu* nations are involved in violations of the humanity that they should preserve through corruption and human rights violations (Magezi, 2017:114)

According to Eliastam (2015), *Ubuntu* has been interpreted or translated as humanity (Shutte, 2001:2), African humanness (Broodryk, 2002:13), humanism or humaneness (Mnyaka and Mothlabi, 2009:63) or the process of becoming an ethical human being (Mkhize, 2008:23). Gade (2011:303-329), views *Ubuntu* as a notion of universal human interdependence, solidarity and communalism which can be traced to small scale communities and which underlies every indigenous African culture. Saule (1996:83) asserts that from a sociological point of view *Ubuntu* can be defined “as representing the kind of human behaviour that is inculcated in the individual by society through established traditional institutions over a period of time”. There are different schematic presentations of meaning, interpretation and contextualisation of *Ubuntu*.

First, *Ubuntu* is a theological notion as noted by Tutu (1999:24). As a theological notion, it enlightens our humanity’s worthiness which is intrinsic to what we do and who we are, because we are created in the *imago Dei*. Furthermore, Meylahn

(2017:123) states that *Ubuntu* theories are developed from oral traditions of African practices but shaped and informed by Western heritage. It is therefore unsurprising that *Ubuntu* is interpreted in Christian language and permeated by its texts and it becomes very difficult to differentiate it from certain Christian interpretations.

Second, Shutte (1993:2) has envisioned *Ubuntu* as a basis for moral theory as has Metz (2007:328). Shutte (2001:2) views *Ubuntu* as an embodiment of an understanding of what it is to be human and what is necessary for human beings to grow and find fulfilment. It is an ethical concept and expresses a vision of what is valuable and worthwhile in life.

He further asserts that it is rooted in the history of Africa and at the heart of most South African cultures while its values are not just African but universal. Metz asserts that “there are two recurrent themes in typical African discussion of the nature of community as an ideal, which he calls identity and solidarity”. By identity, Metz (2007:335) refers to “identify with each other whereby people think of themselves as members of the same group, to conceive themselves as ‘we’”. This entails people taking pride or feeling shame in the group’s activities. For people to exhibit solidarity means to engage in mutual aid and to act in ways that are reasonably beneficial to each other. Metz (2007:337) further states that while identity and solidarity are conceptually separable and logically distinct, in African thought they are viewed morally to be together. They indicate communal relationship with other human beings. Thus, solidarity and identity are, to an extent, conferred by *Ubuntu*. Thus, solidarity and identity are viewed as central definitive tenets or elements of *Ubuntu*.

Third, there is a shift to liminal *Ubuntu* as espoused by Magezi (2017:116), which entails Christ as the bond for all humanity. The Christ bond promotes inclusiveness, responsibility and moral duty, values, and accountability to public structures among others. It entails transcending the boundary of community and relationship that is often defined by blood relationship and geographical location in popular and general *Ubuntu* discussion. This view of society is reinforced by Mbiti (1969:12) in his claim that Africans, according to both *Ubuntu* philosophy and religion, “believe that anything that threatens Africans would seem to threaten their whole existence”. Bujo (2001:2) further explains that Africans tend in practice to speak about human beings rather than God.

This is because one who pays heed to the dignity of the human person pleases God as opposed to the one who acts against the human person offends precisely this God. Therefore, the ethical conduct is not only based on the individual but on a relational network that is equally anthropocentric, theocentric and cosmic (Mbiti, 1969).

Emerging from the above discussion, *Ubuntu* somehow entails different interpretations and meanings. It has shortcomings as a moral theory. Metz (2011:532) has noted such shortcomings. Metz (2011: 532) observed three shortcomings, namely: “(1) vagueness, (2) it does not acknowledge the value of individual freedom and (3) it is not geared to a modern, industrial society”. Furthermore, van Rooy (1997:93) argues that it is man-centred and strongly legalistic in character.

Notwithstanding these observations, which shall be dealt with later in this study, for many *Ubuntu* is seen as the basis for public morality (Metz, 2011; van Niekerk, 2013; Tutu, 1999; Magezi, 2017). Hence, we can fairly proceed with the notion of *Ubuntu* as a useful ethical concept.

1.3 Interplay of *Ubuntu* and migrants’ hospitality within public Christian ethics

Communality and communal relationships, as denoted by the notion of *Ubuntu*, suggest hospitality and acceptance of fellow human beings. The general picture of hospitality is authentically related to an African context according to the view of the *Ubuntu* maxim, “*motho ke motho ka batho ba bang*, meaning, a person is person because of others or through others” (Gade, 2012:486; Venter, 2004:150; Motlhabi, 1988:127). It involves a mutual interdependence or interrelatedness. This includes bringing marginalised human beings into the centre of life and community. Human beings (*batho*) are respected because of their humanity and their existence within the community. This view discourages the individual capitalistic dream (Meylahn, 2012b:19). Society must patch up the cracks that devalue human dignity of people in communities.

The encouragement to care for other human beings as promoted by *Ubuntu* can be extrapolated to the nation to encourage an ethic and morality of general public care.

When a country is viewed in terms of *Ubuntu*, its responsibilities extend beyond small communities to fellow citizens (Magezi, 2017:118). This includes intercountry relationships and the resultant obligations and expectations to welcome and accept other nationalities. Considered this way, *Ubuntu* has far reaching implications in public policies, practices and intercountry relations. A country is expected to accept other nationalities as human beings who should coexist as human beings with human dignity. This includes welcoming people with unfamiliar faces or cultures because they are human beings (*batho*).

In locating *Ubuntu* within public discourse to encourage and promote a national ethic of care, *Ubuntu* and hospitality should be considered as mutually reinforcing concepts. The interplay of *Ubuntu* and hospitality could be conceived theologically to develop a link with public duty, which Magezi (2017:117) called “liminal *Ubuntu*”. Christian practices of hospitality are theologically conceived as the welcoming of a stranger or foreigner in a Judeo-Christian Tradition into their homes/communities.

For instance, the gospel of Luke views a neighbour as the one who does the will of God and is expressed clearly in the parable of the Good Samaritan (cf. Lk 10: 25-37). And in Luke 14:12-14 hospitality was extended to the poor. Early Christians when travelling to spread the gospel, depended on welcome and hospitality which at times was planned as evidenced in Acts 18:27, or offered spontaneously as in Acts 16:15.

For Hernandez (2015:7), hospitality means, primarily the creation of a free space where the stranger can enter and become a friend instead of an enemy. Hospitality is not to change people, but to offer foreigners a space where change can take place (Hernandez, 2015:94). Furthermore, Dietrich *et al.* (2014:7) in their concept of hospitality allude that it is caring for and empowering people, regardless of their background. They view hospitality with the same understanding as *Ubuntu* as welcoming those with less status. This is the command to accept those oppressed and rendered invisible in the community, becoming a neighbour regardless of whether or not the neighbour shares the same ethical values.

Newman (2007:174) explains that worship itself is an act of hospitality by God because “in worship we are welcomed and received, through Christ and the Spirit, into God’s triune communion, God’s desire to be with us, God gathers us”. She

emphasises that “South Africans must reciprocate that desire to be concerned with other nationals”. According to Newman (2007:127), hospitality by its very nature is apolitical, tolerant and allows for a plurality of views. Hernandez (2015:48-49) explains that the more society welcomes others, the more it discovers how much the society has to give to those unwanted. This entails a deep sense of give and take attitude in a welcoming community in order to make God’s love visible (Hernandez, 2015:48-49). Williams (2016:34) illustrates that the society that welcomes others opens up and rediscovers itself in unconditional relationship with those who are not of their own.

According to Skeldon (2013:2), human migration can be defined as the movement by people from one destination to another across international borders with the intention of settling, permanently or temporarily in a new location. This movement is often over long distances, but internal migration is also possible, indeed, this is the dominant form globally (International Organisation for Migration, 2015:25).

The push or pull factors of this phenomenon may be due to environmental, economic, cultural and socio-political reasons. Migration has been known to humans extensively throughout history and pre-history. It can be seen as one of the evolutionary forces, along with natural selection, genetic drift, and mutation (Udeze, 2009:222). Migration is also evident in biblical times as recorded in Genesis, with God calling Abraham to leave his home for the promised land of Canaan (cf. Genesis 12:1-3).

Mass migration has been a feature of the 21st century with a daily dose by both local and international media publicising the plight of the migrants. The International Organization on Migration (IOM) (2015:1) has shown that migration worldwide has increased from 173 million in 2000 to 244 million in 2015, a steep rise in a period of 15 years. Countries presently hosting the most refugees according to Oxfam, are Jordan, Turkey, Palestine, Pakistan, Lebanon and South Africa, with a total of almost 12 million refugees (Oxfam, 2016:3). Oxfam stated in the same report that there were 1.2 million refugees in South Africa. However, there are differences in figures from one source to another about the actual number of migrants and refugees in South Africa. In South Africa the Department of Home Affairs put the figure of migrants at 108 711 in 2013 (Statistical Release P0351.4, 2013:39). There is no

accurate data since 2014, however, The African Check (2015) put the figure at approximately 5 million in 2015.

It can be seen that post-1994, South Africa has been grappling with policy framework for migration, from White Papers to Green Papers still to be finalised, and the resultant scourge of xenophobia. Xenophobia, according to the Oxford Dictionary (10th Edition 2001), is derived from the Greek words, *xenos* meaning stranger/foreigner and *phobos* meaning fear, thus xenophobia means fear or hatred of strangers or foreigners. “Xenophobia is not unique to South Africa” (Magezi, 2017:111-122). Sundstrom (2013:69) argues that foreigner hatred and foreigner fear is also embraced in Europe and the United States as Islamophobia. Literature on xenophobia is largely based on the causes thereof and its political implications without focusing on the ethical dimensions of the issue (Landau, 2011:1-25). However, note should be taken that in South Africa, xenophobia is directed towards non-nationals from other parts of Africa through negative attitudes that result in violence towards them. This study considers the ethical response to this problem in juxtaposing *Ubuntu* and public practical theology in an attempt to respond to the situation.

1.4 The intersection of public practical theology, public pastoral care and public Christian ethics within the context of Ubuntu and hospitality to migrants

The public practical theological response to the ills facing society should be seen against the backdrop of the stance adopted by the church. The stance is primarily determined by whether the church is silent, reactive or proactive to challenges or incidents faced by society. Practical theology by its very nature has four tasks of focus, namely: the descriptive-empirical task, interpretative task, normative task, as well as pragmatic task (Osmer, 2008:4). Browning (1991) sees practical theology as an interplay of descriptive theology, practical historical theology and systematic theology in contact with a concrete situation of action. Poling (2011) advances various definitions which are dependent on research projects as: scientific, ecclesial 1, ecclesial 2 and social transformation. In the light of our discourse, a more

appropriate reference to practical theology will largely be influenced by the position adopted by Osmer above as it informs the research objective.

Within the context of xenophobia, which is the topic under consideration, practical theology should assume a public theological role in order to engage such public issues. Dreyer (2004:919-920) argued that “the days are long gone when practices of the church and clergy were the main or the only focus of practical theology. The vision has broadened to include the context of everyday life on a local, national and global level”. Osmer and Schweitzer (2003:218) usefully explain that

the task of public practical theology is discerned in three ways: firstly, it is about ensuring that the public is one of the audiences of practical theology. Secondly, it is to ensure that practical theology includes everyday concerns and issues in its reflection. Thirdly, practical theology should facilitate a dialogue between theology and contemporary culture.

Magezi (2019a:132) in his insightful article ‘Practical Theology in Africa: Situation, Approaches, Framework and Agenda Proposition’ advised that practical theology in Africa entails holistic engagement in social issues. Thus, practical theology in Africa has an explicit public theological dimension. “Practical Theology in Africa is a (1) theological approach that seeks to (2) understand, communicate and live out life of faith within a context where the individual exists” (Magezi, 2019a:131).

In linking practical theology with public theology and pastoral care, pastoral care scholars maintain that the notion of public pastoral care involves moving pastoral theology and care into the public arena which forces Christians to look at their theological assumptions and mandates of their work and its relevance to public issues. Brown (2012:112) asserts that “public pastoral care in its enquiry and practice seeks to critically discern and respond to the transformation activity of God within the living text of human action”. According to Gerkin (1997), “pastoral care has been understood by Christians to be conscious acting out toward one another of the love of God and Jesus Christ”. The love of God and neighbour bears witness to Christ’s love when acted out within a Christian context, but loving a stranger as neighbour becomes difficult when we move pastoral care outside a Christian context, particularly when being mindful that others are not or need not be Christians (Leslie, 2008:95). Pastoral care theologians and practitioners must be mindful of this

difference and take seriously the engagement with issues affecting groups of people and society at large rather than individuals in isolation (Koppel, 2015:151).

Miller-McLemore (2018:308) contends use of the metaphor of the “living human web” as a tool in pastoral care was to address the silence in mainstream Christianity on key social issues and to respond to the challenges of political and social injustice. This was meant to focus pastoral care on the whole person and public issues and shift care from a narrow definition of counselling and accordingly, has to be understood as part of a wide cultural, social, and religious context (Miller-McLemore, 1993:367). Juma (2015:3) asserts that “public theology is about interpreting and living theological beliefs and values in the public arena”. This approach is relevant in Africa as it is the theology that engages with the holistic issues to develop and reconstruct Africa as it meets its challenges head-on (Magezi, 2019; Gathogo, 2007).

The Catholic view of the ‘works of mercy’ (the corporal works of mercy) can be associated with sacrifice and hospitality (Kholopa, 2016:70). He (Kholopa) asserts

that this is shown in the story of the Parable of the Good Samaritan (Luke 10:25-37), the Last Judgement (Matthew 25:31-46) and the story of Lazarus and the rich man (Luke 16:19-31). Seemingly, these stories call people to be imitators of the God in whose image we are made (Kholopa, 2016:70).

Kholopa further maintains that in responding to Christ’s appeal, the South African community must engage themselves in the works of mercy, by welcoming others so that they too are at home with the rest of the community, that they feel loved and accepted (Kholopa, *ibid.*). Hernandez (2015:93) opines that, “the members of the community have to create a free atmosphere in one’s innermost self in order they may certainly welcome other to enter, join and be healed”.

Christian churches in South Africa have taken a noteworthy forefront struggle in the fight against social injustice. A significant example is their part in the struggle against apartheid (Villa-Vincencio, 1987:83). They acted as a voice of moral reason and wisdom in that regard. Nevertheless, the churches were impotent in the face of rising xenophobia despite an early warning of the South African Bishops Conference (Report on Immigrants, Refugees and displaced People: May 1995). This may be attributed to the church’s approach to the “otherness in the country, as observed by De Gruchy & De Gruchy (2004: 84), in terms of race, immigration status and

sexuality as a form of stigmatisation, leading to the perception that the church is not receptive to people perceived as “other”.

No doubt the church has been to a certain degree reactive in instances of xenophobic attacks as evidenced by acts of assistance and solidarity to victims by, but not limited to, Rhema Church and the Central Methodist Church. In this regard it begs of the church to act according to the prescripts of Leviticus 19:33-4, “when an alien who resides with you in your land, do not molest him...”. For the church to be practical in responding to the current and future xenophobic attacks, it will require prophetic leadership as espoused by leaders such as Pope Francis in his homily on his visit to Lampedusa, when he offered what he called “penitential liturgy” to mourn the deaths of the migrants and put the issue at the centre of public debate instead of the predominant discourse of immigrant invasion (Campese, 2016:25-26).

In view of the above situation, ethics and public practical theology try to answer some problematic questions that occur in society, for instance the values and goals that an individual should pursue. *Ubuntu* has similar fundamental objectives (Gale, 2005: 235). This shows that a human being must do good (teleology) which correlates with one’s duty or obligation (deontology) in a responsible manner in society. They guide people to be charitable, suffer with those who are on the margins, the vulnerable, the unwanted and the disadvantaged communities.

The premise for the theological investigation of xenophobia is encapsulated in the relevance of the public practical theology under Christian ethics whereby the interplay of hospitality and *Ubuntu* are examined with a view to inform practical ministerial response. As xenophobia runs contrary to the Christian ethic and the assertion of liminal *Ubuntu* (Magezi, 2017:114), the question is: how could *Ubuntu* be understood within a Christian ethical framework? How could such a framework inform a public practical response to the challenges of xenophobia? This study, drawing from the Kairos Document’s premise that an adequate theological response must be grounded in social analysis and on various scriptural reflections directed towards the pluralistic society of South Africa, adopts a public practical theological approach (Dreyer, 2004:919-920; Schweitzer, 2003:218).

1.5 Problem statement

In 2008 and 2015, South Africa made international headlines when it was rocked by violent attacks on foreigners. The attacks in 2008 left 60 people dead, including 40 dead foreign nationals and 20 locals. Apart from the deaths, close to 100 000 people were displaced, with over 700 wounded, a number of women and girls were raped and numerous properties were destroyed (Landau, 2010:1-18). In 2015, seven years later another attack took place and seven people were reportedly killed, others displaced, and some countries began repatriating their nationals. According to the Southern African Migration Project, the sociology of xenophobia can be explained by various factors such as race, gender, class, income, tribal and national identity, employment status and political affiliations. These factors show the differences in attitudes towards xenophobia and the degree of likelihood of being xenophobic (Migration Policy Series No 50: 2008).

Existing literature on xenophobia focuses on the causes thereof and its political dimensions from various authors concerned with this phenomenon. Xenophobic attitudes seem to be reinforced by the perceptions of South Africans that foreign nationals are engaged in criminal activities (Landau and Jacobsen 2004:45). Crush (2000:109) also found a link between anti-foreigner antagonism and deep-rooted racism among white respondents due to the long history in South Africa of racial politics and social stratification.

On his appointment as the Minister of Home Affairs of South Africa, Mangosuthu Buthelezi, was cited by Human Rights Watch as saying that we can bid farewell to our Reconstruction and Development Programme due to the large influx of migrants (Human Rights Watch, 1998: 20). Mafukata (2015:30-44) asserts that xenophobic attitudes are exacerbated by the perception that foreign nationals are a criminal threat and argues that foreigners should be taught to desist from criminal actions. However, Koenane and Maphunye (2015:91) suggest that foreigners are likely to be blamed for our own problems which we have failed to resolve as South Africans. The issue is compounded by the government's tardiness in its approach to a workable policy on International Migration (failed draft green papers) and corruption in the law enforcement agencies (Migration Policy Series No 50: 2008).

The three schools of thought concerning Christian ethics pose a theological dilemma when one considers tackling xenophobia in South Africa. While cognisant of the fact that South Africa is presumed to be predominantly influenced by Judeo-Christian values, the discourse in addressing xenophobia in public platforms seems not to have influenced a Christian ethic and understanding. The discourse has also fallen short on cultivating a public *Ubuntu* ethic of care.

The Catholic Social Teaching formulated by Pope Leo XIII, who wrote the first encyclical, that was subsequently expanded and extended by recent Popes, pointed out the harm done due to inequality. Pope Leo XIII saw inequality as a fact of life at the time and he had in mind a community of hierarchical structure in which people have their different roles to perform. The South African Catholic church historically embraced this teaching. The root of the problem for the church, was expressed by Pope Leo XIII as, *qualis rex, talis grex* “that is the power of the ruler over all citizens in practically every aspect of life” (Curran & McCormick, 1986:191). This paved the way for the master-servant anthropological relationality that has been applied and the responsibility of leaders in the ethical community, is for the entire common good. In this case, South Africans see themselves as the subject and the foreigner as the object, there is no relationship of equals. It can be argued that the church has perpetuated the perception that foreigners are the objects of mercy, as shown by their responses to xenophobic outbreaks, and not as equal partners in development or as people whom the citizens also need.

Foreigners have a great desire to be members of the South African community due to their disadvantaged background. As such, Catholic Social Teaching does not give South Africans an appropriate orientation. They view themselves as subjects and foreigners as objects, emphasising the hierarchical position taken by the church. Xenophobic attitudes, however, are based on the principle of nationalism which implies that nationals do not need others, while foreigners need them. It is a challenge when people look at themselves as superior to the others who knock on their doors (Lwaminda, 2001:255).

Traditional Christian theology, as opposed to particularistic theologies, such as liberation and feminist theologies, does not promote justice sufficiently because of its overemphasis on forgiveness to the detriment of justice. African traditional religion

preaches the God who punishes wrong here and now, however, Christianity preaches forgiveness and postpones punishment to the next life. Thus, people are not afraid to do evil. This Christian approach seems unhelpful when dealing with public issues of violence, crime and corruption or politico-economic and cultural identity (Bediako, 2000:15). Hence, people can commit serious crimes and get away with it, in the name of the God who forgives.

Hospitality is advocated for in the biblical scriptures as well as being at the core of *Ubuntu*. The scriptures advocate love of your neighbour as well as yourself and *Ubuntu* refers to this also, “*motho ke motho ka batho ba bang*” (Mothlabi, 1988:127). Newman (2007) further says worship is in itself hospitality as we are all welcomed and received, hence the desire to be concerned with the well-being of other nationals. Public practical theology can take a leaf from the notions of hospitality and justice embedded in *Ubuntu* to make a meaningful contribution in a pluralistic society in that *Ubuntu* is not hierarchical or triumphalist but rather it involves subject-subject relationships. Its emphasis is on the common good (Comblin, 1990:47). Moreover, the Christian effort will also be able to address itself to the wider community beyond the Christian membership in terms recognisable to them all. This is because the Christian message will not overemphasise forgiveness to the detriment of justice. In *Ubuntu* understanding forgiveness goes along with justice.

To overcome the shortcomings of narrow theological understanding and the narrow view of *Ubuntu* it is important to explore the role that public practical theology can play in responding to the challenge of xenophobia in South Africa. In this task, a dimension of public theological self-understanding is critical (Swart & de Beer, 2014). According to Lategan, the discourse should be focused on concrete issues derived from the public arena and taking responsibility thereof (Lategan, 1995).

Thus, in assessing the challenges posed by xenophobia in South Africa and the response to it, the study examined the causal factors: the limitations, weaknesses and strengths of hospitality and *Ubuntu*; mitigating factors; and options open for meaningful change and concrete pastoral responses now and in the future. The fostering of ethical theological values has been done through a lens of African culture infused with its juxtaposed scriptural analysis outcome.

The study undertook the view embodied in the Roman Catholic theology that human nature has its own innate teleology which can be applied to the problems of xenophobia. It also examined the influence of contemporary Christian ethics in the functioning and understanding of the previous dominant schools of thought, which did not emphasise addressing aspects such as violence, poverty, economic and socio-political issues and justice (Curran, 1987& 2005). Responding to this gap does not necessarily need one to belong to a particular group or faith, but it calls all those with talents, expertise in building and embracing others with the willingness in bringing about the change (Udeze, 2009:641). Furthermore, with xenophobia being a public issue with practical and ethical dimensions, a study that adopts an intersectional approach of public pastoral care is critical. Accordingly, a study should be public practical theological in nature in order to address public ethical issues. This entails practically examining how the sources and resources of the Christian tradition can speak to spheres of public life in areas such as xenophobia. Graham (2008) and Stoddart (2014) rightly asserted that practical theology and pastoral theology must go public, which is the approach of this study. A public pastoral care response ensures that pastoral care focuses on public issues, which is the focus of this study.

1.6 Research question(s)

1.6.1 Main research question

- How can Christian ethics be integrated with the notion of *Ubuntu* from a public practical theological perspective to foster a hospitality approach that positively embraces foreigners and discourages xenophobia in South Africa?

1.6.2 Sub-questions

Although the study follows the theoretical framework as set by Osmer, the following five sub-questions that clarify the main question are posed:

A. Descriptive-empirical task entails the following questions:

- I. What is the situation, context and extent of xenophobia in the contemporary global and South African scenario? What theoretical framework could be utilised to analyse and understand xenophobia?

B. Interpretive task entails the following question:

- II. What is the interplay and interdependence of *Ubuntu* and hospitality as factors that influence reception and acceptance of other nationals in South Africa?

C. Normative task entails the following questions:

- III. How could the challenge of xenophobia be framed as a public practical theological and Christian ethical issue in South Africa within the context of *Ubuntu* and hospitality?

IV. How can the intersection between public practical theology and public pastoral theology within Christian ethics be utilised in the context of *Ubuntu* and hospitality to migrants?

D. Pragmatic task entails the following question:

V. How could an adapted and integrated understanding of *Ubuntu* be employed to reconfigure and inform public practical ministerial approaches towards a shift from xenophobia to Philoxenia within the South African context of xenophobia?

1.7 Objectives of the study

1.7.1 Main study objective

The main objective of the study is to:

- Develop an understanding of Christian ethics that is integrated with the notion of *Ubuntu* from a public practical theological perspective to foster a hospitality approach that positively embraces foreigners and discourages xenophobia in South Africa.

1.7.2 Sub-objectives

To achieve the main study objective above, the following sub-objectives must be met:

- I. Develop an understanding of the situation, context and extent of xenophobia in the contemporary global and South African scenario through analysing xenophobia from a theoretical framework.
- II. Analyse the interplay and interdependence of *Ubuntu* and hospitality as factors that influence reception and acceptance of other nationals in South Africa.
- III. Frame the challenge of xenophobia as a public practical theological and Christian public ethical issue in South Africa.
- IV. Develop an integrated understanding of the public practical theology and public pastoral care intersection within the context of *Ubuntu* and hospitality.
- V. Develop an adapted and integrated understanding of *Ubuntu* that informs the development of a public practical ministerial model paradigm towards a shift from xenophobia to Philoxenia within the South African context of migration and xenophobia.

1.8 Theoretical frameworks for the study

Borgatti opines that a theoretical framework is a foundation for doing research as it is a “collection of interrelated concepts like a theory, even though it is not thoroughly worked”, (Borgatti, 1999: Hart, 1998: Swanson, 2013). It is a lens or a framework that guides the data collection and analysis.

The study is located within practical theology under the sub-discipline of public practical theology. This sub-discipline within the public practical theology, focuses on ethical principles for practising public practical theology. The study is interdisciplinary and draws frameworks from the different areas.

- At a Christian ethics level, the study adopts an eclectic approach to Christian ethics. The (1) deontological approach, (2) teleological approach, (3) liberation theology's approach of experience, existence of emotions, as well as (4) an ethical approach focusing on individual and communal caring; will be considered in an eclectic way relating to the issue under examination. An eclectic approach incorporates various approaches in order to create an approach that best suits the prevailing needs. It is an approach that does not hold rigidly to a single paradigm but draws from multiple approaches to gain contemporary insights that applies to a particular situation.
- At a practical theological level, the study employs a public practical theological approach. A public practical theological approach entails making practical theology have an explicit focus on the public as one of its audiences (Dreyer, 2004:919-920). The public practical theological approach is usefully explained by Osmer and Schweitzer (2003:218) as: (1) ensuring that the public is one of the audiences of practical theology; (2) ensuring that practical theology includes everyday concerns and issues in its reflection; and (3) ensuring that practical theology facilitates a dialogue between theology and contemporary culture. In the public practical theological approach public theology acts as a larger social lens, which makes practical theology intentionally engage in public issues. Xenophobia, which is a public issue in South Africa, will be an explicit focus of a practical theological focus in the study.
- To analyse the phenomenon of xenophobia, the test of eight theories advanced by Claassen (2015) to explain South African xenophobia has been employed. These are: (1) resource competition; (2) poverty; (3) relative deprivation; (4) frustration with government; (5) social mobilisation; (6) political mobilisation; (7) group threat; and (8) symbolic threat.
- The notion of *Ubuntu* has been analysed as a moral theory (Metz, 2011: 535).

1.9 Methodology

The purpose of a literature study is to analyse a segment of a published body of knowledge through summary, classification, and comparison of prior research studies, reviews of literature, and theoretical articles.

Elements of the literature study include:

1.10 Study approach

This study is a literature study. The purpose of a literature study is to analyse critically a segment of a published body of knowledge through summary, classification, and comparison of prior research studies, reviews of literature, and theoretical articles (Borgatti, 1999: Hart, 1998: Swanson, 2013).

Material published on xenophobia, Christian ethics, *Ubuntu* and hospitality was analysed to adequately answer the research questions.

1.11 Practical theological approach

The practical theological framework that has been employed is informed by Osmer, (2008: 4) who used the four basic guiding questions that are the task of practical theology. First: what is going on? (which is a situation and contextual analysis). Second: why it is going on? (which is an interpretation and understanding of the situation). Third: what ought to be going on? (which entails developing a perspective and understanding from the normative texts). Fourth: what are the specific, achievable aims that should be undertaken to respond to the situation?

Guided by Osmer's (2008: 4) first and second questions, the study described and analysed the South African situation to develop an understanding of the occurrences and the challenges of xenophobia and to engage in the understanding of *Ubuntu* and hospitality. In doing so, the current church and national responses to xenophobia have been determined and analysed. To respond to the third question posed by Osmer (2008: 4), the different Christian ethical approaches and their biblical and theological underpinnings were analysed and discussed with a view to develop an

integrated Christian ethical approach that responds to xenophobia in a relevant manner.

The contextual understanding (questions 1 and 2) and integrated Christian ethical approach (question 3) have been applied to develop a pragmatic model that responds to the issue under study. The model employed a public practical theological focus that incorporated biblical, systematic, historical, politico-economic and social aspects that relate to the South African public.

1.12 Data (literature) collection

The literature that was analysed for the study was gathered through literature search in the North-West University (NWU) library where an extensive repository of publications has been accessed as well as an internet search engine such as google. A detailed review and analysis of identified published sources has been done. The research theme drawn from the research questions has been used to guide the search, include and exclude literature.

1.12.1 Data (literature) analysis

The literature chosen for the study focused on the theological analysis of ethics, current church and national responses, descriptive analysis of current xenophobic attitudes, hospitality and *Ubuntu*, and not least, current thoughts on public theology. The analysis included literature summation, theoretical analysis and critique thereof. It presented divergent views on the phenomenon based on theoretical lenses and points of view in relation to the research topic.

The analysed information has been employed to develop a Christian-*Ubuntu* ethical response framework for the ministry in dealing with migrants and the spectre of xenophobia. This has entailed embracing the biblical, systematic, historical, politico-economic and social aspect regarding pragmatic contextual theological realities resulting in the development of a socio-theological holistic public church ministry to migrants experiencing xenophobia. The model included a framework for public ethics that discourage xenophobic attitudes.

1.12.2 Delimitation of the study

This research project focused on hospitality and *Ubuntu* as well as Christian ethics in the assessment of the challenges posed by xenophobia in contemporary South Africa. The study considered the theological understandings and the church responses with the aim of developing a framework for social theological holistic church ministry to the problem of xenophobia and migrants. It was a public practical theological study.

1.12.3 Proposed contribution of the research study

The purpose of the study was to develop an understanding of Christian ethics that is integrated with the notion of *Ubuntu* from a public practical theological perspective to foster a hospitality approach that positively embraces foreigners and discourages xenophobia in South Africa. As such, the study aimed to integrate African indigenous thought (*Ubuntu*) and practice (hospitality) with Christian thought (Christian ethics). In doing so, it developed both an integrated model as well as a transformed understanding of the traditional African notion of *Ubuntu*. The study contributed to the integration of Christian thought and natural African potentials resulting in moderated understanding that effectively responds to public social challenges such as xenophobia. The study also contributed to locating and understanding public practical theology to address public issues in a contextually relevant manner.

Theoretically, the study helped to gain an understanding of how *Ubuntu* can be moderated to be responsive to public ethical issues while at a practical level, it helped in developing a responsive model that addresses the pressing public challenges of issues such as xenophobia.

1.12.4 Chapter classification

Chapter 1. Study background

As this study is principally aligned to practical theology, Osmer's approach to doing practical theology will be followed. All Osmer's tasks of practical theology have been

represented in the chapters without being pedantic in following Osmer's approach in the assumptions in the discussion.

Chapter 2. Understanding the situation, context and extent of xenophobia from the global and local scenario: a theoretical framework

According to Osmer's practical theological framework, this deals with the first task of practical theology, the descriptive-empirical task.

The concept of xenophobia has been appraised for the purpose of the study. Historical and current trends of xenophobia in South Africa have been analysed, referenced and compared with global trends.

Current literature on xenophobia, which mainly focuses on causal factors, has been reviewed with the aim of utilising a theological approach in dealing with the phenomenon in public discourse.

Chapter 3. The interplay of *Ubuntu* and hospitality as a central tenet in African and South African ethics

This involved the understanding of *Ubuntu* as a moral concept with hospitality as its central tenet. Also, the relational interplay between the two and their mutual dependence, as well as the role of *Ubuntu* and hospitality in shaping public moral policy. The chapter served as an interpretive task on the role of *Ubuntu* in practical theological terms.

Chapter 4. Interdependence of *Ubuntu* and hospitality and the link to the theological perspective

The chapter links *Ubuntu* with the theological perspective by showing both similarities and differences between Christian ethics and *Ubuntu* principles and ethos. Hospitality as the central theme between Christianity and *Ubuntu* has been highlighted and explored. The extension of the values embodied in Christianity and *Ubuntu* have been examined for their application and propagation in the pluralistic, secular public arenas. The pastoral hermeneutic cycle developed by Holland and Henriot and adapted for South African context by Cochrane, De Gruchy and Peterson (1991:13-25) has been used. Also, texts from the Old and New Testament have been used to ring-fence the *Kairos* (ie xenophobia) facing the church, notably,

the books of Exodus, Leviticus, Peter, Philippians, Hebrews and Ephesians. The chapter, therefore, generated some normative responses to the challenges and what lessons could be learned.

Chapter 5. Public practical theology and public pastoral care intersection with Christian ethics within the context of *Ubuntu* and hospitality to migrants

The chapter focused on the role of Christianity in the face of xenophobia. It also examined the challenges faced by churches in their response to xenophobia. It is envisaged that this chapter brought to the fore the normative task faced by the churches in response to xenophobia.

Chapter 6. Towards a church-driven model to shift xenophobia to Philoxenia within the South African context of xenophobia

This chapter emphasised the relevance of scripture in a pluralistic society with the church as the champion of the marginalised, thus proposing the pragmatic tools for the church to use in its ministry on issues relating to xenophobia and related social ills.

Chapter 7. Findings, recommendations and conclusion

1.13 Ethical considerations for the study

This research involves a qualitative literature study and there will be no need to generate data from other people. As such, it is a low risk study.

However, in conducting the study, standard academic ethics and integrity issues were observed. All sources employed in this project; including internet sources, church documents, academic journals, books, newspapers, archival documents, relevant interviews, magazines and so forth on xenophobia, have been correctly referenced in footnotes and bibliography. Every effort has been made to avoid plagiarism and any other unethical practices. To detect and mitigate any form of plagiarism, each written work will be submitted through Turnitin to determine similarity index.

Chapter 2: Understanding the situation, context and extent of xenophobia from a global and local scenario: a theoretical framework

2.1 Introduction

This chapter presents a brief summary of the contemporary trends in global and South African contexts of human movements across international borders. This objective will be achieved, first, by defining and conceptualising international migration as a focal point of departure and the attendant pull and push factors that lead to this phenomenon in the current global and local situations and context. Second, it outlines how xenophobia/racism is viewed globally to ascertain whether the driving factors are the same as those that manifest themselves in the local context. Third, it explores the various theories which have been advanced in explaining xenophobic violence in South Africa, with particular emphasis on the test of eight theories postulated by Claassen (2015). Fourth, it analyses the factors that give rise to the prevalence and extent of xenophobia in South Africa.

2.2 The definition and conceptualisation of migration

2.2.1 The definition of migration

Human migration can be defined as the movement of people from one place to another destination with the intention of settling either temporarily or permanently, in a new location across international borders. As such it is a major issue of present-day living (Skeldon, 2013:2). According to the IOM, the movement could be over long or short distances within the context of internal or global migration (IOM, 2015:25). There are two distinct levels of human migration, being those that happen on the micro- and macro-level. People migrate on a micro-level from one area or community within a country to another and at a macro- level this involves migration across international borders (IOM, 2015:35). Therefore, it can be noted that migration has both international and internal connotations (IOM, 2015:35).

According to the United Nations Human Rights Commission (UNHRC) international migration is “the movement of people across borders to reside permanently or temporarily in a country other than their country of birth or citizenship” (UNHRC, 2015:17). A migrant is described as “a person who migrates from his or her place of birth or abode to another place across international borders”.

The definition by the UNHRC of international migration encapsulates refugees, documented or undocumented migrants as well as victims of human trafficking. The United Nations (UN), however, states that there is no formal legal definition of a migrant which all experts agree on, however, an international migrant is a person who changes their normal country of residence, irrespective of the reason for such migration or legal status. In contrast, a refugee is someone who is forced to move from their country of origin due to reasons like fear of persecution, conflict or other circumstances that have compromised public order. An international migrant moves to a new country to attain international protection (United Nations, 2018).

From the above definitions, there are two distinct categories of migrants, namely: those that are ‘forced’ to leave involuntarily due to circumstances beyond their control and those who leave voluntarily on their own accord. In examining

xenophobia because of migration in this study, it is immaterial as to the causes of the movement of these people, whether voluntary or involuntarily, as they are both classified as migrants, particularly in the South African *lingua franca*.

2.2.2 The conceptualization of migration

The preceding description of migrants acts as a basis to the conception that “both forms of international migration, voluntary or forced, are as a result of different factors such as environmental, socio-economic, cultural, religious and socio-political reasons” (Groody, 2013:34-35; IOM, 2015:17). Some observers such as Corhen and Sirkeci (2011:10) are of the view that “voluntary and involuntary international migration are as a result of explicit and latent conflicts and maintain it is not always due to explicit conflicts such as political, religious or ethnic conflict as conflict cannot be conflated with violence”. They maintain international migration is also motivated by latent conflicts intrinsic in the individuals and these are hidden fears within individuals concerning their countries’ economies, leading them to move across borders for their well-being.

The conception of explicit and latent conflicts as perpetual causes of international migration as espoused by Corhen and Sirkeci (2011) in a way is not helpful in this study as it seems to mimic the social conflict theory (Haralambos, 1995), as international migration is a complex and multifaceted issue. In addressing the conceptual framework to be employed, it is prudent to use “push and pull factors” as rightly advised by leading scholars in the field (Thet, 2014:1-14; King, 2012:10-15).

The push factors are factors that compel an individual, for various reasons, to leave one place to live somewhere else, commonly being unemployment, poor socio-economic conditions, discrimination and natural disasters (Thet, 2014:3). The pull factors are those that attract migrants to an area, informed by better employment prospects, better working conditions and environment as well as facilities and amenities (*ibid*). It stands to reason that pull factors are more prevalent in more developed countries and cities (Thet, 2014:1).

Having observed that international migration is the movement of people across borders on account of push or pull factors, either to settle temporarily or permanently

in a foreign country, and internal migration being the movement of people within the same country, I will now proceed to gain an understanding of the phenomenon in the current global and South African contexts. In so doing, I will be setting a platform to use in studying xenophobia in comparative terms from the global context, as informed by push and pull factors, particularly focusing on South Africa.

2.3 Xenophobia as a concept

The word xenophobia is widely used, albeit it is an ambiguous term, and is derived from the Greek words *xenos*, meaning stranger or foreigner and *phobos* meaning fear. The Concise Oxford English dictionary defines xenophobia as an intense or irrational dislike or fear of people from other countries. The latter part of the definition focuses on the aspect of fear which potentially obscures plural beliefs and affects associated with the phenomenon (Kim & Sundstrom, 2014:23). By obviating the etymology and linguistic morphology inadequacies of the term in deference to its popularity, for the purpose of this study, fear will not be the operational word as it would be inclusive of other bias-motivated incidences of violence.

There are many different definitions of xenophobia found in literature, of which we will examine a few topical meanings given to the phenomenon. According to Bekker (2010:127), “xenophobia is a profound dislike of non-nationals by recipient state nationals” while Berezin (2006:273) explains xenophobia as the “fear of difference embodied in persons or groups”.

The reports of the International Labour Organisation (ILO), IOM and Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights (OHCHR) (2001), define xenophobia as the ‘attitudes, prejudices, and behaviour that reject, exclude and often vilify persons on the perception that they are outsiders or foreigners to the community, society, or national identity’. Others like Stolcke (1999:28) explain it as the manifestation of open hostility towards foreigners or that which is deemed foreign, but to Azindow (2007:195), xenophobia is discrimination towards or against foreigners or strangers. This can be directed towards individuals who are, in some instances, the same colour as local citizens. Some explanations of this prejudice extend to the marginal ethnic minorities, non-citizens, as well as the descendants of immigrants.

Deepening the confusion around xenophobia terminology is that at times xenophobia has been closely tied to racism so that it persists in newer characterisations of racism, even if they are conceptually distinct (Kim & Sundstrom, 2014:20). According to Kundnani (2001:41-60), the characterisation of xenophobia as racism has led to the coinage of descriptions such as 'new racism', 'differential racism', or 'cultural racism', whereby cultural differences are the underlying basis for exclusion rather than racial differences. The incidence of xenophobia and related biases may vary from country to country, but in the global scheme of things, no country is immune from such violence arising from this intolerance. The United States and Europe are battling with the same challenge based on their relationship with Islamic countries, as it manifests itself through the fear of Muslims, popularly known as Islamophobia (Sundstrom, 2013:69). Xenophobic attacks contribute to a range of difficulties for refugees and migrants and can deprive these individuals of basic human rights. The fear of violence may also prevent these individuals from accessing available services such as health and education, for some access to formal asylum procedures, for fear of being attacked at places where such services are available (Human Rights First, 2011:2).

2.3.1 Global incidences of xenophobia

According to the Oxfam report on migration, there are more than 22.5 million refugees worldwide living in host countries neighbouring or near their countries of origin (Oxfam, 2018).

Incidences of xenophobic violence have been reported around the globe by various non-governmental organisations (NGOs) and the media, in the absence of government monitoring and reporting. However, the reporting somehow straddles an indistinguishable line between incidents which might be ascribed to racism and not xenophobia; depending on the interpretation of the reporter.

According to Kim and Sundstrom (2014:20), racism and xenophobia are conceptually distinct as racism is often influenced by the black-white binary which conceals xenophobia and shelters it from normative critique. The issue is further complicated by the fact that few comprehensive or comparative studies have been undertaken on the topic, which may be in part because the concept itself of

xenophobia differs widely around the world. Notwithstanding the flaws briefly mentioned herein, for the purposes of this study, a random selection of countries has been chosen to profile incidences of xenophobic violence.

Dominican Republic

In the Dominican Republic several incidents against Haitian migrants, refugees and asylum seekers have been reported which are racist and xenophobic in nature. The Dominican National Committee for Migration voiced concern in December 2005 over frequent incidents of xenophobic violence directed at poor Haitian migrants and in July and August of the same year locals set fire to shacks occupied by Haitian migrants, killing six in the attack in the capital Santo Domingo (Christian Science Monitor, January 24, 2006). Amnesty International reported in 2009 that in November 2008 mob attacks against Haitians left at least two dead with others having severe injuries (Amnesty International, 2009). A Haitian man was beheaded in May 2009 by an angry mob in Santo Domingo (Latina, 2009). A three-year-old boy was killed in January 2011 during an arson attack on his house by a group of Dominicans, as reported by the media (Associated Press, 2011).

Greece

There has been an increase in violence in recent years on migrants, refugees and asylum seekers in Greece. The diversity of migrants and refugees include nationals from Somalia, Iran, Iraq, Sudan, Afghanistan and Pakistan.

A wave of violence broke out in Athens on 10 May 2011, in which more than 100 Africans and Asians were attacked, following a fatal attack on a Greek man in a predominantly migrant populated neighbourhood. The attack left scores of people injured as well as the reported death of a Bangladeshi migrant (Associated Press, May 12, 2011). The US Department of State (2011) released a report on the following violent attacks in Greece: in March 2010 a gang of Greek teenagers set fire to a dwelling in Sparta where Bangladeshi migrants slept and were subsequently charged with a racist attack and arson; a Pakistani migrant was severely beaten in June 2010 by right-wing extremists in one of the Athens neighbourhoods, and in July 2010 a group of extremists attacked migrants in their neighbourhoods injuring a Bangladeshi migrant as well as vandalising migrant houses, two cafes and a temporary mosque. In the same month they also beat four Afghan immigrants with

clubs after breaking into their house. It should be noted that the attacks are largely based on the assumption that foreigners are to blame for rising crime and unemployment in Greece.

Italy

In the past few years Italy has experienced a rise in racism and xenophobic attacks which have made international headlines. This is due to the country seeing a dramatic increase in the influx of immigrants over the past 10 years, according to Human Rights Watch (2011). The situation has not been helped by the political discourse that links migrants to acts of crime which has created and fuelled the environment of intolerance. A few depictions of such incidents of racist and xenophobic violence by various advocacy groups show that: The Guardian (2010) reported that armed masked men destroyed a Bangladeshi-owned café; in February 2009, a man of Indian origin was severely beaten, petrol was poured over him and he was set alight. The perpetrators were convicted but not sentenced on the basis of their crime (Human Rights Watch, 2011). In the same report three people were arrested for the killing of a Moroccan whose body was thrown into Lake Garda, and in September 2008 an Italian of Burkinabe origin was bludgeoned to death for a petty crime, but the attackers were not charged for the hate crime they committed. The situation in Italy was not helped by the utterances of Prime Minister Berlusconi who famously said in 2009 that the country should not be a multi-ethnic one.

France

The French Consultative Commission on Human Rights (CNCDH) reports periodically show fluctuations between a rise and stabilisation of intolerance trends in French sentiments towards immigrants, irrespective of their country of origin and the colour of their skin. The report released in 2013, showed that there was a 23% increase in racism related incidents, a 37% increase in anti-Semitic acts and a 30% rise in Islamophobic attacks over a period of two years (CNCDH, 2013). It should be noted that discrimination against particular groups combines both racism and xenophobia with hatred and prejudice based on religious intolerance; making reports on these acts unclear and impossible to discern.

The xenophobic attacks are mainly targeted against North Africans as they are at the centre of all the hatred and exclusion in France (Ubbiali, 1995:128). Between 1986

and 1992 there were about 20 unexplained killings of immigrants of which 19 were of North African descent with racist motives not the driving force but an inclination according to Ford (1992, 630) just to kill a foreigner. The French Ministry of Interior has through the Consultative Commission on Human Rights statistics shown that the political discourse in France has an influence on xenophobic and other bias-motivated incidences of violence. The 2017 report released by the CNCDH shows that it peaked in 2009 with 1 026 incidents reported and 1 008 in 2012, due to significant events that took place in France in those particular years (CNCDH, 2017).

In January 2015, four Jewish men were killed in a terrorist attack in Paris, but hostages were rescued after the terrorist Amedy Coulibaly was killed by the police (*Le Figaro*, January 7, 2015). In the same month 12 people were also killed in an attack on the antifascist satirical newspaper Charlie Hebdo's office in Paris, by the Kouachi brothers who were subsequently killed by police (*Le Parisien*, January 7, 2015). Also, in November of the same year over 130 people were killed in terror related acts for which ISIS claimed responsibility (Washington Post, November 15, 2015). The listed incidents show the indiscriminate acts of violence based on racism and xenophobia which are not easy to decipher as sometimes they are intertwined.

India

India is home to a diverse number of asylum seekers, migrants and refugees from neighbouring countries such as Myanmar, Bangladesh, Bengal, China, Bhutan and Sri Lanka. India is a particularly colour conscious society and racism towards people of African descent is common. Violent attacks have been reported against specific migrant groups such as Burmese, Chinese and Somali refugees (HRF 2011:18). A Chinese asylum seeker was beaten in February 2008 by local youths in West Delhi before his money was stolen (US Committee for Refugees and Immigrants, 2009). In April 2010 in two unrelated incidents, a Chinese refugee was attacked with bricks and stones when trying to collect water from a communal tap and sustained injuries, while another Chinese refugee was beaten and left for dead on his way from work (Chinland Guardian, April 24, 2010). In 2017 'The Heads of African Mission Accredited to India' released a critical media statement to the government of India for inaction in taking measures to deter or properly condemn the 'xenophobic and racial attacks' against Africans in the country.

This was in reference to the savage attack on four students from Nigeria the previous week (The Times of India, April 3, 2017). The newspaper also reported that similar incidents had happened in the past two years involving people of African descent as India is home to citizens from Rwanda, Uganda, Nigeria and Congo, among other African countries. Furthermore, a Congolese national was brutally killed in the previous year, sparking outrage among the African community with the Indian authorities assuring African envoys that their citizens are safe.

In Europe evidence from the results of the European Social Survey (2002-2003) showed a marked affinity towards ethnic exclusionism, a stance that effectively opposes both diversity and immigration (Coenders *et al.*, 2004). The perception of 58% of the Europeans surveyed showed that they saw immigrants as a threat to their economic well-being and cultural identity as they preferred a population with a shared culture. The Eurobarometer Survey (2000) showed that over half of the participants felt that migrants led to lowering of their quality of education and were also linked to a rise in crime levels. Greece was found to have the highest levels of discrimination towards migrants from different parts of the world but with those of African descent faring the worst (EUMC/FRA, 2006).

It is, however, to be noted that the global south, like India, has no reliable and accurate mechanisms of tracking down incidences of xenophobia as mostly it is covered by the media and limitedly by NGOs, and such migration information is informal and irregular in character.

2.3.2 South African incidences of xenophobia

In the South African context, it can be aptly said that xenophobia is not an academic exercise in terms of definition as recurrent events in the country have shown attitudes of dislike, fear and hatred, but it is encapsulated in practice by among other things, inverted tensions and violence, hostility and abuse, often leading to death and destruction of property, specifically directed at African migrants by black South Africans (Dassah 2015:128). In this instance, it involves physical violence with the attendant consequences of beatings, burning, ejection, looting, rape, dispossession and dehumanisation and other forms of violence that constitute the daily lives of black African migrants. This happens despite the declaration of UN Article 26 of

1998, of which South Africa is a signatory, that racism, racial discrimination and xenophobia are human rights violations (Bustamante 2002:337). However, Misago *et al.* (2008:8) have noted that in South Africa post-1994, violence against Africans by black South Africans has been an ongoing phenomenon, and that hundreds of people have been maimed or killed because of their status in the country as outsiders or non-citizens. There is unanimity in literature that foreign black nationals have borne the brunt of the attacks over the years but with differing explanations from both researchers and politicians alike in naming the attacks xenophobia and providing adequate reasons for cause and effect.

In assessing the phenomenon in South Africa, the topology of the incidences of xenophobia has to be examined, the contextual explanation afforded by the test of eight theories as expounded by Claassen (2015) to be explored and the extent of such incidences to be examined for a meaningful theoretical understanding of the phenomenon. According to Misago (2016:444) xenophobic violence is generally referred to as any acts of collective violence committed and targeted against foreign nationals or migrants because of them being deemed to be strangers or foreigners.

Xenophobic attacks are part of the everyday lives of African immigrants although they suffer different levels of violence. The underlying causes lie in a complexity of material, cultural, political and social factors, both contemporary and historical (Dodson, 2010).

A litany of xenophobic incidents has been reported over the years since the dawn of democracy with one of the earliest incidents being a 1996 attack on Somali refugees by local traders in Germiston ending with a fatal shooting of a migrant; and a 1997 attack on migrant traders in central Johannesburg by local hawkers with the goods of the traders being looted. In 1998 three Mozambican migrants were badly mauled by attack dogs set upon them by six white police officers and subsequently verbally and physically abused by them (Migration Policy Series, No 66, 2014). The incident led to the conviction of the officers with the government dismissing it as the persistence of racism in post-apartheid South Africa but not ascribing it as being xenophobia as the perpetrators were white. The same year, 1998, it was reported that three foreign migrants were thrown off a moving train in Pretoria; in 1999 the national broadcaster (SABC) reported that 30 foreigners were murdered and one of them had acid poured

on his body; during the course of 2000 the residents of Zandspruit in Gauteng, burnt down the shacks of Zimbabwean nationals living there.

In 2004, a Somali shop-owner was shot and killed in his shop with nothing being stolen and the following year another three Somali migrants were stabbed to death outside their shop (Migration Policy Series, No 66, 2014). Somali and Zimbabwean nationals living in Bothaville in the Free State were physically assaulted and migrant-owned shops were looted during a community protest against the local municipality in 2005; in 2006, after a South African youth was killed during an altercation with a Somali shop-owner in Knysna, about 30 shops owned by foreigners were damaged and Somali traders were driven out of the town; in 2007 Somali traders had to flee Motherwell in Port Elizabeth after anti-Somali riots broke out and over 100 Somali-owned shops were looted with over 400 migrants leaving the area in fear, without their belongings.

The xenophobic violence of May 2008 erupted in Alexandra township in Johannesburg and in 16 days engulfed the whole country leaving more than 60 people dead, with about 700 injured and leaving more than 100 000 persons internally displaced with a number of women and girls raped, and the destruction of numerous properties (Landau, 2010: 1-18). The resultant violence from these xenophobic attacks has been described by some as the worst since the end of apartheid; with the army, for the first time since 1994, being called out to curb the violence on the streets (McKnight, 2008:8,18). The burning of a Mozambican national in Alexandra, casts a long and indelible shadow on the much lauded and honoured concept of *Ubuntu* said to be prevalent among the 'rainbow nation'.

In February 2009, a ward councillor in eThekweni was charged with four others for the incitement of xenophobic violence which resulted in the death of two people; in November 2009 police arrested 23 people in De Doorns, Western Cape after forcible eviction of thousands of Zimbabwean migrants. In July 2010 migrants were threatened and told to leave South Africa in Du Noon, Cape Town or they would be killed, as happened in 2008 during a dispute involving preferential treatment over government cleaning jobs. Also in July 2010 in Kya Sands an informal settlement outside Johannesburg, 16 immigrants were attacked in 11 incidents involving physical assault, vandalism and theft which the Provincial Minister for Community

Safety Mosunkutu, described as 'criminal activities' and 'not xenophobic attacks'. In 2011 a Zimbabwean was stabbed to death in Diepsloot, Johannesburg and at about the same time a Somali shop-owner was burnt to death after his shop was set alight in Samora Machel Township in the Western Cape. In January 2012 two Bangladeshis were killed, and eight Zimbabwean and Malawian migrants were killed in separate incidents around the East Rand and Johannesburg with the UNHRC releasing a damning report in February stating that "there are three serious xenophobic incidents per week, 99 deaths per year, and about 1,000 persons displaced permanently or temporarily per annum" (UNHRC,2012) by xenophobic violence. The ex-ward councillor arrested in 2009 with four co-accused was finally given a five-year suspended sentence and the co-accused jailed for 10 years for their participation in the pre-planned xenophobic attacks.

The ruling party, the African National Congress (ANC), instead of diffusing an already volatile situation, circulated a "peace and stability" policy discussion document that recommended that foreigners with spaza shops be subjected to stricter by-laws than their South African counterparts. Unsurprisingly, the ANC conference adopted a resolution that says irregular migrants are both "an economic and security threat" to the country.

Other xenophobic attacks were recorded in 2013 with the most striking incident being the death of a Mozambican taxi driver after being handcuffed and dragged behind a police van in Daveyton, Gauteng; and in neighbouring Mamelodi the looting of more than 25 Somali shops forcing them to flee the area. In 2014, some 100 foreign-owned shops were under siege in Mamelodi East and West for several days by armed youth, with three migrants killed and more than a dozen injured, with the remainder fleeing to Pretoria police station for help, which help was not forthcoming as police merely checked their immigration papers instead of affording help.

The ongoing xenophobic attacks have been reported in South Africa since the mayhem of 2008 and 2015. In March 2017 the residents of Olievenhoutbosch, Centurion in Gauteng marched down the R55 singing and chanting in protest against foreign nationals, claiming foreigners obtained RDP houses illegally (Xenowatch, 2017). This resulted in multiple homes belonging to foreign nationals being damaged with windows broken and multiple foreign-owned shops looted. A Somali shopkeeper

was shot dead in Khayelitsha's Site C in February 2017 in the Western Cape bringing the number of murders reported to 15 (*ibid.*). The eThekweni municipality experienced violence by South Africans against foreign nationals from March to April 2019 with the looting and destruction of foreign-owned homes and businesses, during which some foreign nationals were killed and several others seriously injured. This prompted the South African government in March, to launch a National Action Plan to combat xenophobia, racism and discrimination in an attempt to address the widespread human rights abuses arising from xenophobia and gender-based violence and discrimination that continue to plague South Africa (Human Rights Watch, 2020).

Claassen (2015:2) argues "that the widespread xenophobic attacks which occurred in May 2008 and April 2015 may have been the tip of an iceberg". Rather than being a case of rare and sporadic attacks that may be construed as otherwise disturbing peaceful and harmonious relationships between locals and black African migrants; instead they characterised a daily and embedded tension and hostility that is the result of symptomatic mass antipathy and intolerance. The perceptions and attitudes of South Africans towards migrants has been monitored by the South African Migration Programme since the latter part of the 1990s and their reports have shown unequivocal evidence of deep-rooted and pervasive hostility and intolerance towards migrants and refugees. For instance, a survey (SAMP, 2006) found strong indications of xenophobia with half the respondents favouring the deportation of migrants irrespective of their legal status, and with three-quarters favouring their containment in camps at the borders. Similarly, seven years later the same survey in 2013 found that 50% of South Africans were of the view that migrants should carry their identity documents with them all the time, 30% wanted a complete ban on migrants coming to South Africa and 14% were of the view that migrants enter South Africa to commit crime (SAMP, 2013).

The rise of xenophobia post-1994 has been ascribed to the redefinition of 'insiders' and 'outsiders' that has accompanied the post-apartheid nation-building project in South Africa (Peberdy, 2001:15-32). The nation-building project has informed idealised notions of a geographical space dominion by certain ethnicities or races, hence, the evident strong tendencies to eliminate or prohibit. Neocosmos (2008) attributes such behaviour as part of the 'dominant arrogant political discourse'

shaping South African nationalism in its apparent exceptionalism of the country on the continent and that hordes of illegal immigrants are invading the country. The perception that migrants are invading the country is reinforced by the superficial and uncritical reporting of statistics-happy articles by the media and internalising xenophobic language in reproducing anti-immigrant stories, according to the South African Migration Programme (SAMP).

2.4 Hypotheses explaining xenophobia

Xenophobia in the South African context is not limited to the dislike or fear of foreigners but to discrimination, exploitation and intense violent attacks towards immigrants (Harris, 2002:169-184). Black South African citizens intermittently blame foreign African nationals who are in the country (either legally or illegally) for an array of things, from accusation that they are taking their jobs or women to housing and crime, resulting in practices that eventually lead to violence and aggression towards immigrants. Several hypotheses have been advanced in an effort to explain the reasons for xenophobia in South Africa of which for the purpose of this study four will be explored namely: scapegoating theory, isolation theory, bio-cultural theory and the test of eight theories.

2.4.1 The ‘scapegoating’ theory of xenophobia

The concept of ‘scapegoating’ was coined by Allport (1954) in which he stated that people displace their frustration onto convenient targets, thereby hiding the actual causes of their anxiety. It places xenophobia within the context of social transition and change, and in South Africa hostility towards foreigners is explained in relation to limited resources, such as housing, education, health care and employment, coupled with high expectations during transition (Tshitekere, 1999:4-5; Morris, 1998:1116-1136). Migrants as non-citizens because of their status may already be marginalised and they make easy targets as scapegoats and victims.

The process operates on various levels, starting on an individual level through the social level, the media, political parties and the state all contributing to it, at the same time influencing each other and the society at large (Glick, 2005:244-61).

Generally, scapegoating theory explains xenophobia in broad social and economic terms and as such it conceptualises xenophobia in terms of frustration and relative deprivation. The relative deprivation theory asserts that a driving psychological factor in generating social unrest is a sense of relative deprivation arising from a subjective feeling of discontent based on the belief that one is getting less than one is entitled to. Therefore, if the gap between aspirations and reality widens, the result is more likely to be social discontent; as such, locals use foreigners as scapegoats to vent their frustrations (Soyombo, 2008:99-100). The more common social issue for which migrants are made scapegoats is crime as there is an enduring belief in many host countries that migrants are responsible for an increase in crime levels (Dodson, 2010:4). Another damaging tendency in the South African context is to nationalise crime attributed to migrants: Nigerians are deemed to control the drug trade; Congolese are associated with diamond smuggling and passport racketeering; car theft is ascribed to Mozambicans; and Zimbabwean women are identified with prostitution (Nyamnjoh, 2006).

The scapegoating theory is important for its applicability in explaining the outcomes of the frustrations of the locals over failed promises, unemployment and housing. In this way, focus is on the frustrations of the locals with the foreigner being the target for hostility and violence as someone to blame for social ills (scapegoating). This places limitations on the theory; therefore, it needs to be supplemented by the isolation theory that follows. Furthermore, the theory does not clarify why the migrant and not any social grouping/individual, signified deprivation or nationality as the determinant feature is the cause of scapegoating.

The following story is an example of scapegoating. It comes from the book “The Cross and the Prodigal” by Kenneth E. Bailey, Concordia Publishing House, St Louis, 1973. The story is thus:

In the Ethiopian highlands the villagers tell a vivid story. In the forest the elephant inadvertently stepped on the leopard's son and killed him. The leopard wanted revenge. He gathered his leopard friends together to see what they might do.

“Who has killed the leopard's son?” one leopard asked. There was no reply. They were afraid to say, “The elephant.” Finally, a young leopard stood up.

“The goats, the goats!” he cried. “The goats have killed the leopard’s son! It is the evil vengeful goats! They must pay the penalty.” At once the leopards took up the cry, swarmed out of the forest, and slaughtered a hundred goats in revenge for the death of the leopard’s son.

2.4.2 The isolation theory of xenophobia

The isolation theory of xenophobia situates foreignness at the heart of hostility towards foreigners. According to Morris, the isolation hypothesis understands xenophobia as consequence of apartheid which involved South Africa’s seclusion from the international community. The hypothesis also explains contemporary xenophobia by recourse to internal isolation because of apartheid among South Africans themselves with its brutal maintenance and creation of boundaries that impacted people’s ability to be tolerant of difference. Thus, according to the isolation theory, South Africans find difference threatening and dangerous, hence, xenophobia exists as foreignness of foreigners since they are different and unknown. The interface between the previously isolated South Africans and unknown foreigners creates a space for resentment to develop according to the isolation hypothesis and as Morris (1998:1125) observes: “When a group has no history of incorporating strangers it may find it difficult to be welcoming”.

Neocosmos observed that

strangely, the limitation of the isolation thesis is that it does not explain the realities of the socio-economic circumstances of the majority of South Africans which predispose them to intolerance to foreigners, which in turn is addressed by the scapegoating hypothesis (Neocosmos, 2008).

In both these theories there is no scope for differentiation between various types of foreigners as they are treated as a homogeneous category, but in South Africa xenophobia is not applied equally to all foreigners with African foreigners being particularly vulnerable to violence and hostility (Human Rights Watch, 1998: Human Rights Commission, 1999), thus the exploration of the bio-cultural hypothesis of xenophobia is a feasible alternative.

2.4.3 The bio-cultural hypothesis of xenophobia

The bio-cultural hypothesis argues that distinguishing biological and cultural differences between the locals and foreigners are the triggers for xenophobia. However, Nyamnjoh (2010:67) has a point that the creation of the notion of ‘them and us’ may be due to seemingly innocuous features like physical stature, birth marks, dress code, language and other characteristics that make it easy for South Africans to recognise foreigners. Harris (2002:169-184) explains that the significance of physical features of foreigners offers a valuable synopsis for understanding why these signifiers are used as a basis for xenophobic actions because they point out for South Africans who to target and dislike and take violent action against. This manifests itself in black South Africans sticking together and foreigners also sticking together with neither party willing to accommodate the other, with the latter’s seeming unwillingness to assimilate the former’s culture, perhaps informed by the past xenophobic treatment. For instance, Morris (1998:1125) indicates that foreigners from the Congo and Nigeria, independent of their numerical status, are identified and scapegoated by the locals as they are easily identifiable by their physical stature, dress code and inability to understand or speak any of local languages. Steenkamp (2009:439-447) adds “that the darker skin, language and dress style further makes them identifiable”. This biological cultural difference claim is supported by Crush and Ramachandra (2014:9) that “migrants from other African countries are discriminated in their treatment by the locals”. Seemingly, nationals from Lesotho, Botswana and Swaziland receive preferential treatment compared with those from Zimbabwe, Malawi and Mozambique. They further posit that even harsher treatment is directed to migrants who come from outside the SADC (Southern African Development Community) region, such as Somalis, Ethiopians, Congolese and Nigerians (*ibid*).

Therefore, the contribution of the three hypotheses is necessary for a holistic understanding of the xenophobia phenomenon in South Africa. The scapegoating and isolation hypotheses provide a general explanation of the xenophobia phenomenon with the scapegoating hypothesis apportioning the blame for all social ills to migrants and the isolation hypothesis attributing the difference for the accounts of hostility and violence. However, in both instances, the foreigners are lumped

together as a homogeneous group with no scope for differentiation between various types of foreigners.

Interestingly, xenophobia is not applied equally in the country with some migrants more at risk than some others not suffering as much, while others such as African migrants are especially vulnerable to hostility and violence. As a result, the bio-cultural hypothesis explains it on the plane of visible differences as seen in terms of cultural differences and physical biological attributes exhibited by African migrants in South Africa. However, Harris (2002:174) is of the opinion that the bio-cultural factors do not on their own spell out what they signify and how they came to signify it as an explanation for the reason for xenophobia and its asymmetrical application to African migrants vis-à-vis white or Asian migrants who seem to be at lower risk of harm due to violent actions.

2.4.4 The test of eight theories

The test of eight theories proposed by Claassen in explaining and understanding xenophobia in South Africa, is important because of its applicability to the study. It is vital because it explains a wide variety of explanatory variables: as 'subjective and objective, as well as internal and contextual' (Claassen, 2015:5). The eight theories that have been or could have been addressed in contemporary literature are: (1) resource competition; (2) poverty; (3) relative deprivation; (4) frustration with government; (5) social mobilisation; (6) political mobilisation; (7) group threat; and (8) symbol threat. I shall now analyse each theory briefly.

Resource competition

South Africans perceive foreigners to be 'stealing' their jobs as they argue that employers prefer to hire them as they can settle for low wages, which is by its very nature, a dangerous perception (Misago et al., 2009). This view is informed by the theory of intergroup conflict, where tensions and violence are a function of intergroup competition over scarce resources in the face of a declining economy. According to Claassen, this is best explained by the 'ethnic competition' in sociology. Landau and Monama (2016:2) comment that poor black South Africans see themselves competing with foreigners for housing and other services and resources to which they feel entitled adding to the already simmering resentment. Thus, it seems that

the two particular resources of jobs and housing resonate more deeply as the flashpoints for xenophobic attacks; the hypothesis is: competition, for either jobs or housing, with African immigrants' increases xenophobia.

Poverty

The argument is based on the longstanding hypothesis in the social sciences that hostility and violence towards outgroups is triggered by poverty or economic deprivation (Claassen, 2015:10). However, it is meaningful to note that the violent outbreaks did not occur in the areas with a high percentage of poverty, unemployment, low levels of education and/or the highest number of foreign nationals (Polzer, 2010). It then follows that poverty is usually linked to outgroup aggression based on scapegoating manifestation. Hence, the scapegoating hypothesis holds that poverty produces frustration and ultimately aggression which is displaced onto an innocent but weak third party. The observation of Polzer, sites that those affected by xenophobia were not in fact the poorest; however, this needs to be investigated on both the contextual and personal measures.

Relative deprivation

Scholars have argued that in the light of the adage that poverty causes conflict, that frustration with its resultant aggression are the ancillaries of expected welfare as much as actual deprivation. This is a direct consequence of the serious socio-economic hardships and ills including high rates of unemployment, poverty, poor service delivery, overcrowding, substance abuse, and general lack of livelihood opportunities particularly among black families and youth (Misago, 2017:11). These socio-economic hardships have led to relentless competition for scarce public services and livelihood resources with the foreigners which often leads to tensions and conflicts among individuals and groups. Thus, this relative deprivation theory has led to advancement of both 'personal' and 'intergroup' interpretations with the frustration-aggression mechanism as a basis to link perceptions of conditions and conflict (Claassen, 2015:11). The 'J curve' of unrealised rising expectations, a 'V-curve' balancing relative deprivation and relative gratification, together with the beliefs that groups have different entitlements have been used in South Africa to advance different relative deprivation arguments. However, with the advancement of

all these arguments as the determinants of hostility towards foreigners we can hypothesise that: relative deprivation increases xenophobia.

Frustration with government performance

The recurrent theme in most literature on the study of xenophobia points to a general lack of community trust in local authorities and community leadership structures informed by a perceived lack of capacity or willingness to address service delivery challenges and inability to control crime and also resolve chronic conflicts in communities (Misago, 2017:16). On the other hand, the Human Sciences Research Council (HSRC) found the insecurity and annoyance over the static rate of service delivery and lack of constructive consultation in general, particularly over housing administration, lead to various forms of violence; among which are the xenophobic hostilities against foreigners, especially black African migrants. The fact that black immigrants are often the target, highlights the fact that they are above all, classified as aliens or illegal immigrants, hence the term 'Makwerekwere' (Nyamnjoh, 2006:38-39). In this instance also, scapegoating is implicated.

Social mobilisation

The proximate cause for easy mobilisation of the community for anti-outsider violence is the linkage between mob justice in dealing with crime and the constant association of immigrants with crime. The often violent service delivery protests act as triggers for attacks and looting of foreign-owned shops with an added criminal incentive for material gain for local gangs. Conversely, these social mobilisations in specific locations are a localised competition for political and economic power whereby violence is organised by business owners by sealing temporary loyalties around a violent enterprise to eliminate competition (Monama & Landau, 2016:2). The May 2008 attacks stemmed from a community policing meeting where community links attracted participants (Misago, 2009). Thus, the increase in xenophobia has been linked with social ties to the community.

Political mobilisation

Crush et al. and Steinberg view that in the South African context, political leadership is a factor in exacerbating the creation and propagation of xenophobic attitudes

(Crush et al., 2008; Steinberg, 2008a, 2008b). The attitudes towards foreign Africans by senior politicians has been at best ambivalent and occasionally downright negative as espoused by the words of President Mandela in 1994 when he said that illegal immigrants are involved in criminal activity which may lead to the temptation for locals to exhibit a dangerous attitude of hostility towards migrants (Dodson, 2010:7).

Similarly, in 1997 the Minister of Home Affairs, Buthelezi, in his budget speech, said that the illegal immigrants are putting a further burden on already strained socio-economic resources of the country and they are the most important threat facing the nation which should be solved by adoption of “draconian” solutions to the problem.

Group threat

It has been argued that group threat manifests itself when the in-group feels threatened by the size of the out-group, even if the in-group has had its fair share of extended history of group-based conflicts and violence. The common types of conflicts are violent service delivery protests, ethnic tensions, political violence and tensions, taxi violence, mob justice and gangsterism which are often accompanied by xenophobic violence (Misago, 2017:18). Thus, out-groups are seen as threatening with everything remaining equal with xenophobia as a response to the scale of immigration.

Symbolic threat

Harris (2002:174) and Morris (1998:1125) agree that the exaggeration of perceived cultural differences and mutual stereotyping of foreigners by South Africans and of South Africans by foreigners, gives rise to prejudice and antagonism. It is suggested that immigrants may adhere to different religions and cultural traditions which contrast to those held by the majority of the natives and are thus seen to pose symbolic threats to the cultural traditions and national identity (Huddy & Sears, 1995:133-43). However, it is not surprising that foreigners according to this theory are seen as threatening based on their cultural differences to the natives who also hold strong national identities. Dodson (2010:6-14) observes that even if cultural and religious differences between Mozambicans and Zimbabweans in relation to most South Africans are minimal, the attitudinal treatment of culturally and geographically distant foreigners from countries such as Eritrea and Nigeria are

more severe. Therefore, a conclusion can be drawn that symbolic threats play a role in xenophobia in South Africa.

It can be argued that the complexity of xenophobic attacks is a latent consequence of unrelated but correlated instances of socio-economic deprivation, lack of proper land allocation and settlement, failed migration policies and the failure of municipal systems.

The argument that employers prefer to hire foreigners as they settle for low wages attests to the socio-economic deprivation paradigm that alludes to the widely held dangerous perception that foreigners are 'stealing' jobs meant for South Africans (IOM, 2009:20). This is reinforced at a community level where the deprivation of this entitlement produced what has been aptly termed as an "ethnicised political economy" in which "microeconomic friction is displayed into hate-filled nationalism" (Pambazuka News, May 27,2008). Affluent black and white South Africans, like their poor black compatriots, view African foreigners as beneficiaries of the shelter and services provided by their taxes due to incompetence and mismanagement of their national economies in their home countries (Sharp, 2008a:2).

2.5 The latent causes and extent of xenophobia in South Africa

2.5.1 The latent causes of xenophobia in South Africa

In post-1994 South Africa, the issue of lack of proper land allocation and settlement, particularly as it relates to housing, has been a thorny issue in the South African landscape. One could concur with Wistrich (1999:2) when he states that apart from other problems, there is a sense of hatred of the other (*hererophobia*) where one would say that the aim is to exclude the "other" as alien, more precisely those different and largely regarded as primitive. Hence, foreigners are frequently accused of illegally occupying and owning government-provided houses (so-called RDP houses), without any concern about how they acquired them or whether they did so legally (IOM, 2009: 19). This is so even though low-cost housing is not accessible to refugees, although the Constitution of South Africa – Chapter 2 and the Act on Refugees (Act 30 of 1998), affords them the right to housing. Contrary to popular belief, a study conducted by Hinks and Gruen (2006) found native individuals living

in formal dwellings had significantly higher levels of well-being compared with 30.2% of refugees in similar dwellings. This mitigates the perception that foreigners are well-off in the country in comparison to the natives.

The endless policy uncertainty on the part of government to pass a coherent set of guidelines and legislation has exacerbated the anxiety faced by migrants on a daily basis in South Africa. The situation is made even worse by utterances of successive Ministers of Home Affairs in post-apartheid South Africa as well as ambivalent messages from their Presidents on the refugee problem and the associated xenophobic violence.

The post-1994 immigration policy which was cast initially in terms of “aliens control” has yet to deal effectively with immigration and its management (Crush, 1999 & 2002; Crush & Dodson, 2007; Crush & McDonald, 2001), with the consequence that migration to South Africa is currently governed by the Immigration Amendment Act 2007 and 2011, and the New Immigration Regulations 2014, while the proposed Green Paper on Migration is in limbo. Senior government officials and ministers have on occasion blamed “illegal immigrants” for engaging in criminal activity or putting a strain on national resources without any empirical evidence, as Minister Buthelezi famously said in his budget speech in 1997 (MPS No.50, 2008: 17). Shindondola (2003:27) is of the opinion that members of the institutions that are supposed to help and provide relief to the refugees, such as police and immigration officials, are spearheading xenophobia. Despite the requirements of the law, the officials at the Department of Home Affairs are slow to renew the permits of refugees, thus rendering them vulnerable to extortion of bribes and possible deportation by police as a sign of xenophobia by exercising ‘control’ over them (Steinberg, 2005:3).

The finding by the HSRC (2008:6) was that the insecurity and annoyance over the slow-paced service delivery on basic services by municipalities and the lack of consultation by ward councillors has led to various forms of violence, which inevitably leads to xenophobic attacks against foreigners, especially black African migrants. This is reinforced by the studies conducted on behalf of the African Centre for Migration and Society (ACMS), among others by Monama and Landau (2016:6-7) that there are basically two triggers for the attacks based on competition for formal and informal local leadership positions and business opportunities. Polzer (2010)

asserts that leaders and aspirant leaders mobilise communities to evict or attack foreigners in their neighbourhoods as a way of entrenching and legitimising their own positions due to the fact that the formal structures of the local governance are weak or are seen as illegitimate by the local community. In the latter case, business owners act as area perpetrators of violence by mobilising communities to evict foreign-owned businesses in their area with resultant threats that they will face drastic measures (Misago & Wilhem-Solomon, 2011). It can therefore be observed that interventions are needed to strengthen oversight and improve accountability of local governance as well as local structures of governance as a measure to obviate and possibly prevent violence (Polzer, 2010).

2.5.2 The extent of xenophobia in South Africa

There were at least 250 recorded incidents of group-based violence against migrants and foreign-owned businesses in various areas around the country between 1994 and August 2014, excluding the rampage of May 2008 (MPS No.67, 2014). Approximately 20 major incidents of xenophobic violence were recorded around the country between 1994 and the mayhem of May 2008. Gauteng accounted for nine, followed by the Western Cape, however, Mpumalanga and North West reported the least number of incidents (IOM, 2009). Statistics revealed that during the rampage of May 2008, 1 384 people were arrested, 342 shops looted and 213 shops burned down, 64 people were reported dead with 21 of them being naïve citizens. The province with the greatest incidents of violence was Gauteng, followed by the Western Cape and it led to the condemnation of the attacks by President Mbeki (Misago *et al.*, 2009:28). Incidentally, it is interesting to note that of the many research studies and reports, there is little or no evidence of the prevalent xenophobic attacks in the Northern Cape province.

Many of the attacks on the sites reported post-1994 have shared similar characteristics and features which can be attributed to, but are not limited to, the following factors:

elevated crime levels either perceived or real, ethnic divides and tensions, history of organised violence, absence of institutional leadership, forced removals as a tool for

consolidating power, lack of conflict resolution mechanisms, instigators of attacks, and lack of proper political leadership (IOM, 2009).

The strongly held perception by South Africans that migrants come to the country to commit crime and hence the increase in crime level; is borne out by the studies carried out by SAMP over the years with the 1999 figures showing that 48% of South Africans view migrants as “criminal threats”, in 2006 the figures grew to 64% but declined slightly in 2010 to 50% (MPS No.64, 2013). Thus, as described earlier in the scapegoating theory, much of the crime is ascribed to outsiders, both foreign and citizens, by residents (Misago *et al.*, 2009:36).

In some explanations of xenophobia, this prejudice extends to non-citizens and other marginal groups where cultural rather than racial differences become the basis for exclusion. This can be termed ethnocentrism (Fekete, 2001:23-40). The use of ethnic divides and existing tensions within the environment in the area where xenophobic violence has erupted as well as other factors mentioned previously, are conducive to the violation and abuse of the rights of the marginalised and disempowered, a category in which migrants feature prominently. These, however, build up over a period of time and thus create a fertile ground for xenophobic sentiments that translate into violent attacks, albeit they do not on their own provide sufficient explanation why violent actions manifest on certain days and times in different areas (Misago *et al.*, 2009:36-37). This observation strengthens the theory that symbolic threats to the in-group identity increases xenophobia (Classen, 2015:17). There seems to be a correlation between the history of the affected areas with previous incidents of violent service delivery protests, organised violence such as taxi, gang and political violence. The case in point includes areas such as Alexandra Township and Orange Farm in the Gauteng province which have had their fair share of taxi violence incidents, in-fighting between rival gangs in the townships and violent service delivery protests accompanied by xenophobic attacks (IOM, 2009).

The absence of institutional leadership is evidenced by the failure of legitimately elected municipal ward councillors in providing guidance and inclusivity that takes into account the diversity of the community. In various affected areas informal leadership structures usurp the powers of elected leadership which is seen as

toothless in the wake of problems faced by the community; as they make no effort in trying to establish their bona fides, the nature of their mandates, or the character of their operational and disciplinary procedures (Misago *et al.*, 2009). The lack of political leadership has been seen as a factor in exacerbating the production and reproduction of xenophobic incidents (Crush *et al.*, 2008; Steinberg, 2008a,2008b).

As previously outlined, forced removals as a tool for consolidating power in the affected areas are driven by informal leadership structures and local business owners who feel threatened by competition from foreign-owned businesses as well as legitimate leadership to assert their authority. The ease of mobilisation of the community for anti-foreigner violence is an approximate linkage between mob justice and constant association of migrants and criminality, with the added incentive for material gains for local gangs when foreign-owned shops are looted (Misago, 2017).

In some areas, competition for local economic power leads to violence that is organised by local business owners in forging temporary loyalties around violent enterprises to eliminate competition (Monama & Landau, 2016). The attacks in Masiphumelele in 2006 were instigated by the local business association and some of the members were arrested but subsequently released without being charged as a result of the intervention by the local and provincial governments; thus corroborating the view that legitimate leadership uses these incidents to assert its authority (IOM, 2009:41).

The use of violence as a means of resolving problems appears to be embedded in the psyche of South African townships where once the relevant institutions and existing conflict resolution mechanisms seem to have failed to address issues of concern, communities tend to resort to mob justice, violence and vigilantism.

In the affected areas people have reported that the vigilantism and mob justice are the norm in their communities as the is frustration over the inability or perceived unwillingness of local authorities (police, councillors, etc.) to deal or least 'do something' with their concerns/complaints whether they are baseless or not (IOM, 2009).

Furthermore, they say that police dismiss their claims quickly without even bothering to carry out any form of investigation as they ask for tangible evidence. Similarly, local authorities hold numerous meetings with community leaders where they voice

their concerns but fail to even bother to engage them with the intention to providing feedback on concerns which might have alleviated or changed dangerous misconceptions (Misago *et al.*, 2009).

2.5.3 Xenophobia hotspots

The occurrence of communal or collective violence against migrants is a pervasive feature of post-1994 South Africa as a result of a lack of social cohesion in any of the areas that have previously experienced xenophobic violence on numerous occasions (Misago, 2017). A study carried out by SAMP post-May 2008 on mayhem in 138 wards that were affected by the violence found that “the common characteristics shared by the affected communities were high levels of economic deprivation, disproportionate percentage of males, high level of informal settlements and a diverse mix of foreign languages” (MSP No.64, 2013).

Despite sharing these common characteristics, the study found that not all the areas that had exceptionally high levels of unemployment, a high number of residents living in absolute poverty, lower educational levels than the national norm, high youth levels, or substantially larger number of foreigners; experienced the same levels of violence. The study concluded that violence cannot be adequately explained by poverty, unemployment and the presence of migrants, nor can it be attributed to poor economic conditions, competition for resources or poor service delivery, as these factors were also present in communities where violence was not perpetrated or was prevented.

These “hotspots” (areas affected by the violence) show a variation over time, particularly in 2008 and before, when the violence was directed towards all migrants regardless of nationality, the length of stay in the country or means of earning a living, but have subsequently evolved into primarily targeting foreign-owned businesses (Misago, 2017). For the purpose of our discussion, sites were randomly selected to amplify the findings of the SAMP and other studies. The hotspots are in the following provinces: five in Gauteng, four in the Western Cape, two in the Eastern Cape and KwaZulu-Natal, and one each from Limpopo, Northwest, Mpumalanga and KwaZulu-Natal. The hotspots in Gauteng are mainly in the urban areas which may be informed by the population spread of South Africa within the

province having the largest population (11 952 392) according to the figures of the 2011 census, and since it is the economic hub of the country it provides a natural attraction to migrants (MPS No.64, 2013; MPS No.66, 2014).

The hotspots chosen are Alexandra, Diepsloot, Makause, Mamelodi and Orange Farm in Gauteng; De Doorns, DuNoon, Khayelitsha and Masiphumelele in the Western Cape; Motherwell and Grahamstown in the Eastern Cape; Musina in Limpopo; Britz/Marikana in the North West; Elim in Mpumalanga and Isipingo and KwaMashu in KwaZulu-Natal (Misago, 2017). It is not easy to unravel the complexity and multiplicity of the drivers of xenophobic violence as it is difficult to identify intentions, motivations and underlying causes in troubled times especially when relying on monitoring and reportage (Misago, 2017, MPS No.67, 2014). The underlying causes in most of the communities can generally be grouped in varying degrees into the following areas: socio-economic deprivation, the low levels of social integration between locals and migrants, embedded negative attitudes and perceptions towards foreigners, non-existent trust relationship towards authority, improper methods of conflict resolution mechanisms, and intra-group conflicts and violence (MPS No.67, 2013; MPS No.64, 2014; MPS No.50, 2008; Misago, 2017; Choane *et al.*, 2011:129-142). The comprehensive study of the 138 wards conducted by the SAMP and subsequent investigations by other researchers have been almost unanimous in their observation that there is no marked difference in approaches between rural and urban areas towards xenophobic violence as the underlying causes are relatively the same (IOM, 2009; MPS No.64, 2013; Misago, 2017).

Conclusion

Xenophobia is a worldwide phenomenon which continues to trouble the world irrespective of the prosperity of the receiving nation. In Africa it has manifested itself as an enduring plague in countries with developing economies and South Africa is not immune, with violent xenophobic attacks on migrants (Saidman & Ayress, 2008:155-160; Soyombo, 2008:94-95; Fetzer, 2000:30). The foremost reasons behind the prevalence of these violent xenophobic attacks in South Africa are socio-economic and the tendency to criminalise foreigners, both at the level of the citizen and the level of authority, which reinforce scapegoating behaviour. The government, media and general populace find it all too easy to place blame on migrants for

unemployment, crime and lack of housing while ignoring the systemic problems inherent in South African society and the inherited problems from the legacy of apartheid (Solomon & Kosaka, 2013). Misago and Monson (2009:25-34) state that the reluctance by the state to offer protection and assistance to foreigners leads to constant repetition of xenophobic violence against them, thus perpetuating social instability, violence and injustice.

The issue of xenophobia presented in this chapter is indeed complex and cannot be simplistically explained. However, the key issue that emerges from the situation is the question of humaneness or lack of it expressed in xenophobia. The question of humaneness is amplified when one considers the generally perceived notion of *Ubuntu* cherished by South Africans.

Chapter 3: The interplay of *Ubuntu* and hospitality as defining tenets in African and South African ethics

3.1 Introduction

This chapter will explore the notion of *Ubuntu* with hospitality as its central tenet, as deeply imbedded in African ethics' perspectives of contemporary moral theorists that is largely shaped by the world views of the indigenous black peoples of sub-Saharan Africa, excluding those of Arab, Indian and European descent and culture. The world views of the indigenous people of sub-Saharan Africa have recently, especially in the past five years or so, been compared and contrasted with Western philosophy, with the maxim often associated with *Ubuntu* being: 'A person is a person through other persons' (Tutu, 1999,35; Khoza, 1994,3), notwithstanding that, there has been no rigorous engagements between the two. This has led to what Wiredu (1996:80) has observed, that when he reads Western philosophy, he reads it to see what he can learn from it, but he is of the opinion that we have not reached a stage where somebody will look at African philosophy and readily say: what can I learn from it?

Therefore, this chapter will present, first, an analysis of the historical documents on the subject, their significance to the body of knowledge, their summation and classification, and finally their relevance to the current discourse on the subject. Second, diverse literary works by different scholars will be analysed, classified and summarised, and finally a brief comparison will be undertaken to conceptualise and understand the notion of *Ubuntu* as a moral theory for the purposes of the study. It is in this context that the more analytical and critical approaches to the attractive norms of an African world view will be articulated and applied to contemporary Christian ethics, to develop and defend *Ubuntu* as a deeply moral principle (Tutu, 1999; Ramose, 1999; Shutte, 1993, 2001; Metz, 2007, 2011; Magezi, 2017; Meylahn, 2017).

3.2 The nature and history of the notion *Ubuntu*

The scholarship on *Ubuntu*, the Nguni word often used as an ethic or philosophy-based concept on communal relationships that grew out of traditional sub-Saharan lifestyles, has attracted diverse academic approaches in the 21st century (Metz, 2014:447). *Ubuntu* in its literal translation from the African Nguni linguistic group (i.e. Zulu, Xhosa, Ndebele and Swati), means humaneness, hence, it is common for traditional black people on the continent to believe one's aim in life is to exhibit *Ubuntu* (different linguistic groups have their own corresponding meaning for the term) by prizing communal relationships with other people. The substantial anthology devoted to the work in African ethics began with the classic but somewhat dated texts by Placide Tempels (1959) and John Mbiti (1969) (Metz, 2017:62). However, these classic texts from Tempels and Mbiti were mainly used by sub-Saharan ethicists as a matter of moral anthropology in an attempt to shape indigenous morality to address their own interpretations of the world.

Tempels (1959: 18,30) acknowledges that all behaviour depends on a system of principles and for Africans (Bantu) according to Tempels, that system of principles, has a different conception of relationships between people, of causality and responsibility contrary to the one held in European thought. He postulated that the fundamental concept of African ontology is centred in a single value, which he termed 'vital force', that denotes the integrity of the whole being and which is not used exclusively in the bodily sense (*ibid.*, 44-45). Therefore, he posits that 'muntu' signifies the vital force that is endowed with intelligence and will in African ontology as espoused in the interpretation of the African saying '*Vidyé i muntu mukatampe*': meaning "God is the great Person", alluding that He is the great, powerful and reasonable living force.

Therefore, for Tempels, the philosophy of forces in the theory of life is the guiding principle in the motivation for all African customs that decrees the norms in which personality in the individual shall be kept unaltered or allowed to develop (*ibid.*, 74). Africans believe that their wisdom is engendered in them by their parents as the living force and upon the internal evidence of nature and living phenomena as observed from their point of view, acting in tandem with the external evidence of instruction and authority of the dominating life force of ancestors (*ibid.*, 76-77). Thus, according to Tempels, African philosophy is constituted by the transcendental and universal notions of being and its force, of action and of the relationships and

reciprocal influences of beings. It is according to this premise that there are notable differences in the practical applicability of African philosophy in the daily needs of life as accentuated by differing practices from tribe to tribe, and district to district but with the underlying philosophical principles remaining the same.

The African ontology includes the corollary that every person can be influenced by a wiser one, and for the Africans a person never appears as an isolated individual, an independent entity. Therefore, individuals form a link in the chain of vital forces which is living, active and passive, and is joined from above to the ascending line of their ancestors and is sustained below in the line of their descendants. It may then be said that the individual is the individual within the clan among Africans and this relationship is not simply taken as juridical dependence but must be understood as real ontological dependence (*ibid.*, 106-108).

Tempels posits that 'objective morality to the African is ontological, immanent and intrinsic morality' as their moral standards are essentially dependent on things ontologically understood (*ibid.*, 120-121). The knowledge to discern the natural order of forces is informed by their natural intelligence and by their philosophical notions of the relationships and interactions between things. Thus, Tempels concluded that an act or usage will be described as '*ontologically good*' by the African and will be similarly accounted as '*ethically good*'; therefore, by deductive extension, be evaluated as '*juridically just*' (*ibid.*, 121). The knowledge of an individual's moral duty and legal obligations is bound to the pain of losing their vital force, as they know that by carrying out their duties, they will enhance the quality of their being. It is therefore important for the '*muntu*' to live life in accordance with their vital rank in the community, to make a meaningful contribution to its well-being and maintenance by the normal exercise of their favourable vital influence. This not only exists for members of their community but has to be extended to outsiders as they are equally God's people; and their vital force has to be respected, as the destruction or diminution of an outsider's life is tantamount to the disturbance of the ontological order and the subsequent repercussions thereof (*ibid.*, 136).

According to Tempels (*ibid.* 142-143), evil is conceived by Africans as an injustice towards God and directed towards the natural order which is the expression of His will; and it is also seen as directed to the ancestors in an attempt to act against their

vital rank. Accordingly, every injustice is an attempt on the life of a person, whether belonging to the community or a foreigner, of which the attendant malice in it proceeds from the great respect due to human life, the supreme gift from God. Thus, for Africans, real injustice is the harm done to the vital force which accords restitution based in terms of the worth of life, which will serve as the basis of assessment of the damages or compensation. Unsurprisingly, people who may be called upon to afford explanations, called to order and advised, are given the status of living elders or patriarchs by their peers and seniors with the same or equal vital rank each time they err in their behaviour as they can jeopardise the vital force of the community (*ibid.*, 152-153).

Tempels concluded that the inherent principle in African philosophy is the vital force, with the preservation of the vital force the all-consuming and motivating aim that guides and motivates all their practices (*ibid.*, 179). Therefore, the vital force is the ideal which animates the life of the '*muntu*', "the only thing for which he is ready to suffer and to sacrifice" and that stipulates that evil and what causes it must be removed from the community for its purification, with whatever means of restitution that is needed (*ibid.*, 164.179).

The seminal work of Mbiti (1969), 'African religions and philosophy', set a new intellectual climate for understanding African social and cultural studies from their own norms, internal rules, and within the logic of their own systems. Mbiti premised that Africans have their own ontology, which is a deeply religious ontology, and as such should be understood from the perspective of that religiosity (Mbiti, 1969:15). He then proposed to divide it into five categories that are extremely anthropocentric, as it is in a sense, an ontology in which everything revolves around its relation to man:

with God as the Originator and Sustainer of man; the spirits as explainers of man's destiny; man as the centre of this ontology; the plants, animals, natural phenomena and objects constituting the environment in which man lives, and provides the means of sustenance for man and, if need arises, man can establish a mystical relationship with them (*ibid.*, 16).

Therefore, in this anthropocentric ontology exists a complete unity or solidarity which nothing can break up or destroy, as it will entail destroying its entire existence that is

intertwined with the Creator, which is an impossibility. Seemingly, apart from the five categories, “there is a force, power or energy permeating the whole universe that is controlled by God”, the creator of the self-same force to which the spirits have partial access. This force can also be accessed by some “human beings who have the knowledge and ability to tap, manipulate and use it for the good or ill of their communities; such as witches, medicine-men, priests and rainmakers” (*ibid.*, 16). This ontology can be understood by understanding the concept of time in the African way of life as embodied in their explanation of the beliefs, attitudes, practices and general way of living.

According to Mbiti (1969:1), Africans are notoriously religious with each person having their own set of beliefs and practices, as religion permeates each facet of their everyday life. Through his comprehensive anthropological study of the African traditional concept of God, he concluded that the ontological expression of God for all these people was that He is the origin and Sustainer of all things, the Supreme Being (*ibid.*, 29). For Africans, God is simultaneously transcendent and immanent, therefore a balanced understanding of these two extremes is necessary for the discussions concerning African conceptions of God. The knowledge of God by Africans emanates from expressions about Him in proverbs, songs, prayers, names, myths, stories, short statements and religious ceremonies (*ibid.*, 29).

Mbiti contends that (*ibid.*, 29-38) for Africans, their concepts of God are shaped by the historical, geographical, social and cultural background or environment of each person. This explains the similarities and differences when considering their beliefs about God throughout the continent. Their attributes of God for an African are difficult to grasp and express, since they pertain more to the realm of the abstract than concrete thought forms, albeit, African thought forms are broadly speaking more concrete than abstract. Therefore, many African societies consider God to be omniscient, omnipresent and omnipotent in that He knows all things, He is simultaneously everywhere, and almighty. Thus, in a similar vein, God is considered to be merciful, shows kindness and takes pity on mankind by averting calamities, supplying rain and providing fertility to people, animals and plants.

“It is essential to understand the concepts of the spiritual world of African peoples in addition to their concepts of God, in order to grasp their religious and philosophical

perceptions" (*ibid.*,75). In general, the spirits belong to the ontological mode of existence between man and God. They can be divided into two categories of spiritual beings; those who were created as such, and those that were once human beings (*ibid.*, 75-78). Those spirits that have been created by God are in the main thought of as 'divinities' in the ontological category of spirits as they are associated with Him, and often stand for His activities or manifestations either as personifications or the spiritual beings in charge of these major objects or phenomena of nature.

The others are either within the state of collective immortality relative to man's position or are the living-dead who bring the spirit world nearer and personal to men (*ibid.*,78-91). The latter spirits are seen to be ontologically 'nearer' to God as they can communicate with Him without requiring the intercession of human intermediaries and are deemed to be the servants or agents of God that He deploys to carry out His intentions in the universe. The former spirits, the living-dead, are of particular concern for Africans as they readily relate to them as the recently departed family members, of whom they still have vivid memories. They are the guardians of the family activities, affairs, ethics, and traditions as they operate mostly by appearing to the oldest members of the household/community in their roles as invisible police.

Therefore, failure to adhere to their special instructions is an offence to the forefathers because the living-dead are the immediate intermediaries between man and God as they have access to channels to directly communicate with God the needs of the people because they have 'recently' been there with them. Thus, the living-dead are at the same time wanted and unwanted, as they are given food and libation as a measure of social friendliness and hospitality; and yet, of informing the living-dead with the paradoxical acts of hospitality and welcome to move away. This is done out of the fear that if they were improperly buried or were offended before they died, they would bestow bad luck on the household/community or cause some form of retribution.

African ontology is basically anthropocentric as man is at the very centre of existence, but Africans generally acknowledge that God is the originator of man, notwithstanding their differences in the exact methods of man's creation according to the myths of different peoples (*ibid.*, 92-109). The indigenous societies of Africa have

lived together for hundreds of years, in units or clusters commonly called tribes that are bound by common culture that is expressed in the form of common customs, morals, ethics, social behaviour, language and material objects. Therefore, people in a particular tribe form a deep sense of kinship which is reckoned through blood and betrothal; kinship is the strongest bond in traditional life as it governs the social relationships in a given community, determines the behaviour of one individual towards another and regulates customs and traditions. Thus, the system of kinship informs the understanding and interpretation of all the concepts concerned with human relationships and the role of the individual member in the society.

Mbiti (*ibid.*, 108. 204-215) observed that:

in traditional life the individual does not and cannot exist alone except corporately. He owes his existence to other people, including those of past generations and his contemporaries. He is simply part of the whole. This community must therefore make, create or produce the individual; for the individual depends on the corporate group.

The sense of corporate relationship is so deep and perverse that the solidarity of the community must be maintained, otherwise there is disintegration and destruction, and this must be avoided at all cost as this order is primarily conceived of in terms of a kinship relationship. According to Mbiti, most African peoples accept or acknowledge that God is the final arbiter of all moral and ethical codes as well as the final guardian of law and order, therefore, the breaking of such an order either by the individual or by a group, is tantamount to condemnation by the corporate body of society (*ibid.*, 206).

Mbiti concludes that in African societies one can interpret what constitutes a good character as it pertains to the traditional concepts of 'good' and 'bad' or evil, as it relates to the morals and ethics of any given society. Good character in African ethics shows itself in the following ways: hospitality, generosity, kindness, protecting the poor and weak (especially women and orphans), giving honour and respect to the elderly, with justice, truth and rectitude as essential virtues (*ibid.*, 212). Thus, good character is the propensity to accept and adopt the customs, laws, regulations and taboos that govern conduct in society that obviate, what Mbiti aptly called, a distinction between 'moral evil' and 'natural evil'. 'Moral evil' pertains to what a man

does against his fellow man and 'natural evil' is suffering, calamities and accidents wrought upon others through 'natural' causes that are caused by some agent (either human or spiritual) which in African ontology are intricately associated with certain individuals (*ibid.*, 214-215). Finally, Mbiti warns that the dilemma facing African societies rooted in traditional solidarity and yet increasingly being faced with a rapidly changing world, is to search for new values, identities and self-consciousness based on the time-honoured ideas of their forefathers as being 'valuable', 'good' and 'honourable' (*ibid.*, 271).

The texts written by Tempels and Mbiti, while viewed from different perspectives and motivations, take cognisance of traditional African morality that is founded on traditional African ontological reflection (a reflection on being). The texts are written, albeit on different planes of understanding, as a sympathetic and systematic account of the worldviews of a wide array of traditional African peoples, in particular, Mbiti's interpretations on African personhood. However, both authors tend to speak of the beliefs of a particular group of African people; they at least provide an overview of some notable strands of moral thought and practices of sub-Saharan peoples (Metz, 2017:63). Thus, they both shed some light on the discovery of human being of meaning in himself/herself from the reflection on his/her being and his/her relation to other beings and how he ought to be. This provided the basis of traditional African morality (Musoke, 2018:6). Of particular interest to this study about the texts of Tempels and Mbiti, is that the common ground in African thought of the observed societies is traceable to language which is the vehicle for thought, and thought being the originator of culture (Cononici, 1999:2-3). Therefore, we can advance our discourse by generalising that African thought and culture have common elements on which to base assumptions on African morality, despite the diversity of cultures.

3.3 The historical development of *Ubuntu*

The development of traditional sub-Saharan approaches to ethics has occurred in the past 50 years or so and has been interpreted in writing by those who are informed and sympathetic (Metz, 2012:99). Gade (2011:303) asserts that *Ubuntu* emerged in written sources during the second half of the 1900s and became an object of particular interest and consideration during the political periods of transition from white minority rule in Zimbabwe and South Africa. However, this was preceded

by the search for African dignity by post-independence African leaders such as Kwame Nkrumah, Leopold Senghor, Julius Nyerere, Obafemi Awolowo, Kenneth Kaunda and Ahmed Sekou Toure in their political thinking. They attempted to formulate a foundation for politics embedded in traditional African humanist or socialist values (Gade, 2011:304).

The development of *Ubuntu* was largely influenced and inspired by the context of social transformation of post-colonial Africa whereby leaders in most spheres of life attempted to identify past values that they believed should inspire politics and life in general in the future society (Gade, 2011:304). The advent of Africans gaining sufficient political power post-independence propelled them to attempt to restore their dignity and culture by returning to their traditional, humanist, or socialist values, which have been best represented in recent years by President Thabo Mbeki's propagation of an African Renaissance ideal (Gade, 2011:305). Therefore, the promotion of African ethics as a field that is systematically studied started properly only in the 1960s with the advent of literacy and the decline of colonialism, as more often than not, African traditions were largely oral, lacking written documentation of ethical practices (Metz, 2017:62).

Prior to 1980, the term *Ubuntu* appeared in various texts and publications commonly describing some attribute of human behaviour such as: 'goodness of nature', 'good moral disposition', and as 'greatness of soul', while other authors simply described *Ubuntu* as a 'human quality' (Gade, 2011:308). The rise of African intelligentsia led to Africans in academia starting to write about their own cultures and demystifying African concepts that had previously been viewed through the lens of the colonialist, thus giving meaning to their thoughts and their interpretation of African ethics. Unsurprisingly, the level of disagreement about the nature of *Ubuntu* became highlighted, as opposed to the period prior to 1980 that was characterised by the cryptic description of the term. According to Gade (2011:308) this was because: first, the descriptions of *Ubuntu* were short and difficult to judge whether the authors identified *Ubuntu* as a human quality, or something else; second, regardless of the authors' inclination to view *Ubuntu* as a human quality or not, exactly how they understood the relationship between being human and possessing the quality of *Ubuntu* remains unclear; and third, from the authors' identification and understanding of *Ubuntu* as a human quality it remains unclear whether it was simple or complex.

There is some consensus that the first written discourse/book on *Ubuntu* is the Samkanges' 'Hunhuims or Ubutuism: A Zimbabwe Indigenous Political Philosophy (1980)' (Van Binsbergen, 2001:82; Gade, 2011:309).

Gade (2011:315) opines that the historical development and definition of *Ubuntu* in "written sources happened during different historical periods" which he (Gade) divided into the

period in which *Ubuntu* was defined as a human quality; the period in which *Ubuntu* was defined as something either connected to, or identical to, a philosophy or an ethic; the period in which *Ubuntu* was defined as African humanism; the period in which *Ubuntu* was defined as a worldview; and the period in which *Ubuntu* was defined as something connected to the proverb '*umuntu ngumuntu ngabantu*'.

These historical periods indicate that much of the initial material mainly recounted the mores of a given sub-Saharan people, with a hint of a typical Western approach, as a desperate need for Africans to overcome the yoke of colonialism and become familiar with African interpretations of the world, particularly those of their own people. This prompted Wiredu (1992) to assert that 'African philosophy must be understood within the context of its emergence with its associative socio-cultural and political milieu'. Therefore, it is reductionist to conceive of African philosophy as merely 'ethnophilosophy' as "the authority of African philosophy is the ability to create meaning for a culturally differentiated society, meanings that are not anachronistic but relevant to the socio-political and economic condition of people" (Eze & Metz, 2016:75).

Hountondji (1995) in his *African Philosophy: Myth and Reality*, asserts that Africans may learn philosophy in Western institutions of higher learning abroad or at home and become extremely skilful in philosophical disputation and may even make original contributions in the discipline, however, the fact remains that they are not engaged in African philosophy but rather in Western philosophy. Part of the concerns of contemporary African philosophy has been the controversy of Hountondji's critique of ethnophilosophy that has precipitated and constituted a large discourse, nevertheless, there is still a pervasive belief among African philosophers that there were unpublished or unrecorded philosophical texts in traditional African philosophy (Mahaye, 2018). Wiredu (2016) opines that there are basic human questions

concerning people that can only be answered by utilising embedded knowledge in their indigenous thought systems of which the study of such philosophical texts by Africans has not been conceptually illuminating nor has it been eminently critical and reconstructive.

These days, one often finds African ethicists wanting to know not only what merits preserving from their tradition, but also what should be taken seriously by those outside it, with more robust arguments and critical approaches (Metz, 2017:63). Metz (2017:63) contends that scholarship in African philosophy has evolved with the publication of texts that appeal to deep moral principles from African cultures in order to judge certain common cultural practices to be either matters of mere etiquette or to be downright immoral as evidenced by Wiredu (1996:61-77) and Gyekye (1997:242-258). He (Metz) further asserts that there are texts that seek to develop and defend comprehensive African moral philosophies in contrast to utilitarian, Kantian and Aristotelian grand ethical traditions in the West (Metz, 2017:63)

The relationship between *Ubuntu* and the aphorism associated with it '*umuntu ngumuntu ngabantu*' is no coincidence as it was a desire to find something uniquely African in post-apartheid South Africa in an attempt to transform society by incorporating traditions from the past that were deemed to be noble or worthy. This is reinforced by the observation of Louw (2001:15) that

The maxim '*umuntu ngumuntu ngabantu*' articulates a basic respect and compassion for others...As such, it is both a factual description and a rule of conduct or social ethic. It not only describes human being as 'being-with-others', but also prescribes how we should relate to others, i.e. what 'being-with-others' should be all about.

The principles of *Ubuntu* resonate with values of human worth and dignity that are universally acknowledged.

Unsurprisingly, Shutte (1993, 2001) was persuaded by the appeal of *Ubuntu* as a guiding principle to harness its usefulness as the foundation for moral theory. Metz (2007:321-341, 2011:532-559), when responding to critics of *Ubuntu* as too vague, collectivist and anachronistic, constructed a moral theory of Southern African worldviews based on the conception of human dignity that is based on the premise that "human beings have a dignity by virtue of their capacity for community,

understood as the combination of identifying with others and exhibiting solidarity with them, where human rights violations are egregious degradations of this capacity". The proponents of *Ubuntu* such as Shutte (2001) and Broodryk (2002) have advocated that *Ubuntu* should be exported to the rest of the world as Africa's unique gift to humanity (Eliastam, 2015:2).

3.4 *Ubuntu* and African communitarianism

Today, more than ever before many scholars have written treatises on *Ubuntu* incorporating a variety of philosophical, political, and economic interpretations. However, others, in addition have included the context for a *locus theologicus* of African Communitarianism. Some contemporary thinkers consider *Ubuntu* applicable only to Africans (Kholopa, 2016:5).

'We broaden the spectrum of *Ubuntu* and argue that it is not only linked to Africans, but its relevance is also applicable to other non-Africans', as advocated by Shutte (2001) and Broodryk (2002).

3.4.1 The definition of *Ubuntu* as a moral concept

Designating the meaning of the term *Ubuntu* is a problematic and yet tantalising activity as the term resists vigorous exercises to describe it, particularly when interpreted, given the hegemonic, foreign development and civilisation discourse prevailing in the sub-Saharan region (Mawere & van Stam, 2016). What *Ubuntu* entails is context dependent as the different shades of meaning and presence depend on the geographical, historical, linguistic and other components that weave together the texture and matrix of societies.

"We begin with an overview of the understanding and different notions of the word *Ubuntu* in several different African countries. The notion is defined using different words; however, they have the same basic meaning" (Kholopa, 2016:5). *Ubuntu* is well grounded and understood in African communities and is also embedded in their cultures (Gade, 2012:486).

However, the term *Ubuntu* is now widely used by different peoples of the world with different meanings but is based on the same principles everywhere. Hence, we shall limit ourselves to *Ubuntu* in South Africa in particular, and Africa in general. The term *Ubuntu* is Nguni terminology that has a common meaning to most African languages over virtually the whole Sub-Saharan region (Kholopa, 2016:6).

Gade illustrates that the term has the same meaning, but it is written or formulated differently in the Sub-Saharan region. Gade (2012:486) gives the example of '*Umundu, Umuntu*' in Kikuyu and Kimeru in Kenya, '*Bumuntu*' in Kisukuma, Tanzania, '*Vumuntu*' in shi-Tsonga Mozambique, '*Bomoto*' and '*Gimuntu*' in Bobangi and Kikongo in Congo languages. Hence, this shows that there is an acknowledgement, in different languages of the same understanding of *Ubuntu*. Thus, we acknowledge that *Ubuntu* has the same notion and profound values, although it is known by different names and is understood by many Africans(*ibid.*)

According to Mnyaka and Motlhabi (2005:216), the origins, usage and contextual development of the word *Ubuntu* has often been vague, ill-defined and amorphous, however, most of the sub-Saharan African populace know the word or its equivalent but are not usually able to define it. During the various stages of written sources of the term from the early 1800s through to the present day, different authors have defined *Ubuntu* broadly as: a human quality, African humanism, a philosophy, an ethic, and as a world view (Gade, 2011:21). The word *Ubuntu* is derived from Nguni and represents notions of universal human interdependence, solidarity and communalism that can be traced back to small-scale communities in pre-colonial Africa, and mostly underlie every sub-Saharan African culture (Roederer & Moellendorf, 2004:441).

The absence of direct equivalents in a substantial number of sub-Saharan African languages of the word 'ethics' or 'morality' brings sharply into focus the stance taken by Mnyaka and Motlhabi when they refer to *Ubuntu* as being vague, ill-defined and amorphous. Thus, it strengthens the view taken by the observations of some philosophers that Aristotle's opinions on moral questions were always considered conventional in his time (Russell, 1945:174). This was further developed by Hardie (1968:120) who asserts that his moral ideas and moral ideals, were to a certain extent the product of his time. It is, therefore, not surprising that good character is

the true essence of the African moral system, the linchpin of the moral wheel. In the Akan and other African moral systems, the lack of good character is often blamed for the failure in morality (Gyekye, 2010:5), and thus wrongdoing is put down to a person's bad character. It is in the light of this, that because character is acquired through our actions, habits, and expected responses to moral instructions, it can be changed or reformed according to African moral systems.

The centrality of character implies that a person should possess the ability to act in accord with the moral principles and rules of society, hence, the quality of a person's character is of fundamental importance. The formation of such character in general is fulfilled satisfactorily by society in its duty of imparting moral knowledge to its members through moral education of various forms, including, as in African societies, the telling of morally-freighted proverbs and folktales to its younger members (Gyekye, 2010:4). Waghid *et al.* (2005:108) are of the view that the adage "your child is mine and my child is yours" is particularly African in essence, as it epitomises the sense of community so prevalent in African society. It is therefore incumbent on the community to raise the child as a property of the community in order that the child becomes a significant member of that community, an asset to all.

According to Tutu (1999:34-35), *Ubuntu* can be explained to mean that, 'a person is a person through other people', which stands in juxtaposition to the above adage about the child. He further elaborates that 'I am human because I belong and I participate, I share'. Thus, the concept highlights the interconnectedness of the human community, and as such it implies that people should treat others as part of the extended human family (Eliastam, 2015:2). These understandings of *Ubuntu* coincide with some of the modern perspectives of Western philosophy as espoused by Sartre (1958:370) that being-in-the-world presupposes the existence of the other in that 'others are for me as I am for them, and I enter into relations with them much as they enter into relation with me'. Khoza (1994) views *Ubuntu* as a world in which people share and treat each other as humans based on the underlying 'universal brotherhood' of Africans. The practising of the concept of *Ubuntu* thus unlocks the capacity of an African culture that encapsulates and expresses compassion, caring, reciprocity, dignity, humanity and mutuality in the interests of building and maintaining communities based on justice and solidarity (Poovan *et al.*, 2006:23-25).

African life is shaped in every facet to embrace *Ubuntu* as a process and philosophy that reflects the African heritage, culture, beliefs, value system and the extended family structures (Makhudu, 1993:40). The African view of personhood rejects the idea that a person can be identified in terms of physical and psychological features, which are implicated in the prevalence of problematic social ills such as xenophobia, as *Ubuntu* is the basis of African communal cultural life. A man's existence is perceived from a group collective or cooperative perspective in which there is an individual willingness for subordination to the common good (Koopman, 1991:41). Therefore, it highlights the interconnectedness, common humanity and the responsibility of individuals to each other (Koster, 1996:99-118; Nussbaum, 2003:21-26). The individual is accepted only because he exists as a member of a community and because of his interaction with others. The concept of *Ubuntu* believes in group solidarity, which is a central tenet for the survival of African communities, whereby an individual is not just an observer but a willing participant living within a community (Dia, 1992; Mbigi & Maree, 2005:75).

The adage '*umuntu ngumuntu ngabantu*' (I am a person through other persons) articulates a basic respect and caring for others. It is both a factual description and a social ethic that not only describes an individual as being-with-others, but also prescribes how one should relate to others, that is, it is all about being-with-others (Louw, 2001:15). This places the concept of *Ubuntu* within the realm of the contemporary Western philosopher Sartre who asserts that being-for-others is the way that places the individual in the state of possessing equal ontological status with the rest of society (Sartre, 1958:222). It is succinctly expressed as '*no man is an island*'. It is therefore unsurprising that Cornell and van Marle (2005:207) posit that *Ubuntu* is 'an ontic orientation within an interactive ethic'.

Venter (2004:150), argues that "*Ubuntu* is applied in an unconscious way in order to solve conflicts". Unfortunately, not many Africans realise the significance of *Ubuntu* and its origin that it is rooted in small groups like a family, that developed into a tribe(s) or clan and slowly expanded to chiefdom(s) and later extended to a country/state. Venter (2004:150) explains that

the idea of *Ubuntu* is also sometimes being misused at the service of ideologies, such as corporate South African capitalism. The global village consists of fierce com-

petition and the idea of *Ubuntu* is a stumbling block instead of a help, however, community members are an integral part of society.

Those who use *Ubuntu* as a goal in itself or as the means to benefit the community, find *Ubuntu* a rewarding value in society. Having said this, *Botho/Ubuntu* involves communal ethics hence, it is a unifying principle not only among the Africans but is also universally recognized.

The word *Ubuntu* is not easy to define other than by providing a simple description. However, African usage reveals *Botho/Ubuntu* as a significant quality of *motho/muntu* and is a person who respects other people (Motlhabi, 1988:127). Mnyaka and Motlhabi (2005:217) explain that it is difficult to define *Ubuntu* precisely. They note that:

Defining an idea like “*Ubuntu*” is akin to trying to give a definition of “time.” Everybody seems to know what “time” is until they are asked to define it or detail its essential characteristic without which “time” could not be “time.” This is based on the notion that *Ubuntu* is something abstract, [a] non-perceptible...quality or attribute of human acts the presence or absence of which can only be intuited by the human mind.

This quality is meant to be acquired by human beings. So “*Ubuntu* is not only about human acts, it is also about being, it is a disposition, and it concerns values that contribute to the well-being of others and the community” (Mnyaka & Motlhabi, 2005:217). Mnyaka and Motlhabi are of the opinion that “*Ubuntu* is not only just accepted human qualities but also the very human essence itself, which points to become *Batho/Abantu* or humanized beings who have amicable relationships in the community and the society” (*ibid*). Hence, Chaplin (2006:1), the economic manager of First National Bank of the Western Cape, views *Ubuntu* as a driving force “to help people in the spirit of service, to show respect to others and to be honest and trustworthy”. Thus, *Ubuntu* practises fairness, compassion and values human dignity that governs communal accountability for life’s preservation (Chaplin, 2006:1).

3.4.2 The characteristics of *Ubuntu* as a moral concept

Msengana (2006:89) views *Ubuntu* as a social value from the African context which is characterised by relatedness, collectivism, communalism, spiritualism and holism. The relatedness is invoked by the African cultural practices embodied in the principles of *Ubuntu* that are dependent on interpersonal relations which are the basis of tightly woven societal fabric. Hence, collectivism is at the heart of African culture, which by its nature places the importance of the group above the individual as group success is more valued than that of the individual (Msengana, 2006:91). Consequently, within the *Ubuntu* framework the autonomy of an individual is submerged into the community as it is understood and practised in that community (Mnyaka & Motlhabi, 2005:215-37). Mbiti argues that spiritualism is manifested since, “only in terms of other people does the individual become conscious of his own being, his own duties, his privileges and responsibilities towards himself and towards other people” (Mbiti, 1969:108).

Thus, holism is founded on African humanism entrenched in *Ubuntu* as the universal brotherhood of Africans which can be described as all-encompassing.

3.4.2.1 Relatedness

Khomba illustrates that practising *Ubuntu* represents an African conception of human beings and their interactions within the community that encapsulates their social behaviours that define their African ethics (Khomba, 2011:130). However, according to Ng’weshemi (2002:15), “for Africans, one is not human simply by birth. Rather one becomes human through a progressive process of integration into society”. This means that human beings are communal beings who cannot be conceived apart from their relationship with others.

Thus, *Ubuntu* is an ethic that has been developed in a context of essential interdependence and acute need (Du Toit, 2004:33). In this relationship of interdependence, the community takes precedence over the individual who is cared for and protected in turn by the community. Tutu alludes that *Ubuntu* emphasises the aspects of human relations such as gentleness, hospitality and inconveniencing oneself on behalf of others (Tutu, 1999:9).

3.4.2.2 Collectivism

African societies have traditionally tended to be cohesive and productive with group activities being done together as one family. The group tradition or collectivism is all-pervading in African culture where success or failure is viewed as being caused by the traditional spirits that are controlled by the society. The emphasis is more on the group rather than the individual with the success of the group being of paramount importance compared with that of the individual. This is more evident in traditional activities such as hunting and harvesting as well as celebrations that are a collective performance by the group. Traditional African societies have been distinguished by consensus in decision-making as it is built through long discussions and negotiations.

According to Sebidi (1998), the collective values of *Ubuntu* cannot be compromised as *Ubuntu* is not just an attribute of individual acts that build the community, but a basic human orientation towards one's fellow human beings. The notion of *Ubuntu* is based on the spirit of hospitality in which people display an unconditional collective hospitality (Msengana, 2006:92). This was aptly put by Nelson Mandela when he stated that "A traveller through our country would stop at a village, and he didn't have to ask for food or water. Once he stops, the people give him food, entertain him. That is one aspect of *Ubuntu*, but *Ubuntu* has various aspects....". Thus, in a sense, Mandela actively moves *Ubuntu* from a nostalgic village scene and posits it as a continuous custom or tradition that has remained more or less the same over time (Stuit, 2013:32). *Ubuntu* suggests hospitality and acceptance of fellow human beings in that it guarantees unconditional dignity through fostering the spirit of unconditional collective dignity and respect (Mbigi, 1997:6).

3.4.2.3 Communalism

Both Mbigi and Dia argue that the African conception of human beings and their relationship with the community is embodied in the ethics that defines Africans and their social behaviours encapsulated in *Ubuntu* (Mbigi, 1997; Dia, 1992). The teachings of *Ubuntu* are thus pervasive for people of all ages, in families, organisations and communities living mostly in sub-Saharan Africa. The ideal person

is the one who possesses the virtues of sharing and compassion and who in the African view is defined by the community as a person, and not by some isolated quality of rationality, will or memory (Mentiki, 1979:158). For Lenkabula (2008:381), the collective consciousness of African people is found through theoretical and practical commitments in community life which is often referred to as communalism. This communalism is understood as the expression of justice, wisdom, intergenerational concern and commitment, characterised by compassion in daily interactions and relations.

The traditional African person is a social and community orientated person of whom the community is an embodiment of solidarity with most of the duties being performed by the community. *Ubuntu* transcends the narrow confines of the nuclear family to include kinship network and in so doing, optimises human dignity and respect, which are fundamental in breaking down ethnic divisions that hamper working together and respecting each other (Tutu, 1999:34-35; Poovan *et al.*, 2006:22-25). A person's behaviour is governed by his ability to reason and think within the community context as that behaviour will be identified in *Ubuntu* as that individual's state of being (Maphisa, 1994; Swarts and Davis, 1997:290-296). Therefore, the ideal person will be judged by his relationship with others, which can be attributed to his kindness and good character as well as respect and living in harmony with others.

A person's behaviour is shown in *Ubuntu* by exhibiting some of the values like visiting sick people who are not related to oneself, providing for the needy in the community, sending condolences to a bereaved family regardless of familial relations, adopting orphaned children as one's own, companionship and caring for the elderly and being polite in your greetings to others (Broodryk, 2002:175). Life in accordance with *Ubuntu* is dependent on a "normative engagement with the community, a substantive appreciation of the common good and a constitutive engagement with one another in a rational and ethical community" (Khomba, 2011:133). In *Ubuntu*, the community is encouraged to participate, share and support all team members and as such the spirit of *Ubuntu* leads to collaborative and cooperative work environments (Van den Heuvel *et al.*, 2006:48; Regine, 2009:17-22).

3.4.2.4 Spiritualism

The spirits according to Mbiti (1969:75) “in general belong to the ontological mode of existence between God and man”. In African religions, the spirit is one’s total being or soul. In *Ubuntu*, spirituality is expressed and realised in the manifestation of deeds of compassion, caring, kindness, solidarity and sharing. Hence, these acts produce positive results for the community and the individual (Mnyaka & Motlhabi, 2005:227). It is difficult to discuss the social and religious systems in isolation to each other in the African way of life as they are strongly interrelated. According to Mbigi (1997:32-33), in both thought and practice, the organisation of African lives is based and influenced by their religious belief either consciously or unconsciously.

The spirit of *Ubuntu* is of no consequence if it is articulated and perceived in the absence of a collective survival agenda as the solidarity embodied in the collective is born out of kinship culture that is the heart and soul of their existence. It is in this solidarity that when he suffers or rejoices, he does not suffer or rejoice alone but with his kinsmen, his neighbours and relatives whether dead or alive (Mbiti, 1969:108). It is in this primal view of the person that is the corporate spirit of the tribe, and that after death the element of self will live on and that the ancestral spirit will constantly come back to look after the living relatives as an invisible energy centre. Therefore, the spirits are seen to actually define and identify the community, as people need to know who they are before they know what they are to become (Msengana, 2006:95).

3.5 African communitarianism

Communitarianism is derived from the word ‘community’. However, there have been several different understandings of communitarianism with African philosophers being divided into two schools of thought; namely, moderate and radical schools of thought. The radical school of thought can be traced to Tempels and Mbiti with Menkiti as its foremost advocate. Menkiti asserts the ontological primacy of the community over the reality of the individual’s life and rights (Mwimnobi, 2003:41). Gyeke (1997:42) as the leading proponent of moderate communitarianism, argues that the individual is an inherently communal being, steeped in a context of social relationships and interdependence. However, it is not the intention and scope of this study to

attempt to try to articulate the nuances between the two schools of thought on African communitarianism. According to Wiredu (1996:320) communitarianism:

immediately sees the human person as an inherently (intrinsically) communal being, embedded in a context of social relationships and interdependence, and never as an isolated, atomic individual. Consequently, it sees the community not as a mere association of individual persons whose interests and ends are contingently congruent, but as a group of persons linked by interpersonal bonds, biologically and/or non-biological, who consider themselves primarily as members of the group and who have common interests, goals, and values.

Mabovula (2011:38), defines communitarianism according to Daly (1994) as “a person in the context of social bonds and cultural tradition rather than through individual traits”. She (Mabovula) argues that “a community of Africans is changing constantly, progressing their idea of common life and members are committed to each other” (Mabovula, 2011:38). Mabovula borrowing from Gyekye (1997:42-45) defines African communalism as a “kinship-oriented social order, which is informed by an ethic of reciprocity. In a communal social order, one is brought up with a sense of solidarity with large groups of people” (*ibid*). For Gyekye (1997:42) this kind of communalism points to “the human being as a natural communal person firmly bound in a social interaction and interdependence that rarely separates him/herself from others”. Having examined the understandings of African communitarianism, she (Mabovula) “states that communitarian attributes of African socio-ethical thought are reflected in the communitarian features of the social structures of African society” (Mabovula, 2011:38-39).

Mabovula argues that “*Ubuntu* does not only see the individual member as part of the community but also embodied in the community whose conduct is dependent, realized and affirmed or apprehended by the community” (Mabovula, 2011:39). For instance, people will discuss problems and ideas that concern the community’s problems. However, based on the African understanding of *Ubuntu*, the incidences of xenophobia that are examples of anti-traditional African behaviour ought to be part and parcel of discussions in the community.

In African countries these problems have repeatedly exposed challenges to *Ubuntu* and social ethics (*ibid*). Besides the incidents of xenophobia, Mabovula evaluates the levels of violence in the country (South Africa) that undermines people's freedom of movement due to the increase of shootings, robberies, rapes, etc. (*ibid*). As a result, "community members have now developed an individualistic philosophy which tends to run counter to many traditional values" (*ibid*). *Ubuntu* seeks to restore communal cultural behaviours like African humaneness, hospitality, respect and love. "As a result, challenges such as xenophobia and violence in its many forms has lowered the esteem of the community" (Kholopa, 2016:8).

3.6 *Ubuntu* Anthropology

In line with the meaning of *Ubuntu*, we would like to reflect on *Ubuntu* anthropology. This enables us to undertake a detailed analysis of *Ubuntu* anthropology regarding aspects of the culture and personality, political organization and social life of Africans as seen from the perspective of its roots and religion (Kholopa, 2016:8).

As a result, "this will give us an idea of how and why *Ubuntu* is often misinterpreted in today's world and how *Ubuntu* anthropology is in line with culture" (*ibid.*). Haviland (1990:30) defines *Ubuntu* anthropological culture as "a set of rules or standards shared by members of a society, which when acted upon by the members, produce behaviours that fall within a range of variation the members consider proper and acceptable", he continues, "whereas, society is a group of people who occupy a specific locality and who share the same cultural traditions". Hoppers (2010:147) argues that "in the culture, there are values, norms and beliefs that play a fundamental role in the life of community or society". However, these values are invested in the members, in whom they are taught. Hoppers (2010:147) observes that norms are conventionally accepted values, "so value, norms and beliefs develop over time and are not static" (cited in Kholopa, 2016:8). The significant feature of *Ubuntu* is that people learn from families through integration in the family and community. In order to maintain *Ubuntu's* anthropological culture, Haviland (1990:28) states that *Ubuntu* must "satisfy the basic needs of those who live by its rules, (and) provide an orderly existence for the members of a society". Indeed, *Ubuntu* culture is "the common denominator that brings the actions of the individual intelligible to the community" (Haviland,1990).

Haviland (*ibid.*) argues that “there cannot be *Ubuntu* culture without community or society, the two of them are interlinked”. Conversely, there cannot be community/society without reflecting on individuals. Accordingly, every community has its own culture that portrays *Ubuntu* (*ibid.*).

3.7 Ubuntu in a pluralistic community

Haviland (1990:28) defines the pluralistic society of South Africa as a “society in which there exists a diversity of sub-cultural patterns”. He explains that by virtue of the identity of their subcultural dissimilarity different groups are importantly working with different interpretations of regulations. Admittedly, in a diverse plural society such as South Africa, it is not easy to understand the different benchmarks by which different communities’ function. For instance, South Africa has people from Asia, the Middle East, Northern and Southern Europe and Africans from within the continent. Hence, on the one hand, they may enrich *Ubuntu* if it is explained and practiced well by the indigenous people, but on the other hand may distort it if *Ubuntu* is imposed on other communities and may cause distrust among people, and lose the essence and the meaning of *Ubuntu* and its values in South Africa. However, we must consider the experiences of previous regimes. Matolino and Kwindigwi (2013:199) are of the opinion that *Ubuntu* was realised by opposing apartheid and devaluing the statutes of colonialism. However, colonialists were of the view that *Ubuntu* had to be abandoned because of its promotion of human dignity. This resulted in *Ubuntu* slowly deteriorating in people’s minds. Hence, Matolino and Kwindigwi (2013:199) argue that it was following independence in 1994 that the revival of the values that had been undermined during the period of colonialism and apartheid, were revived and were renewed, which resulted in the welcoming of different cultures, idealities and values (cited in Kholopa, 2016:8-9).

We argue that this revival of values did not last very long, and it has taken a different form resulting in the devaluing of the values. Hence, with the dawn of independence there was a brief period of understanding and practicing of *Ubuntu* by both black Africans and non-Africans (Kholopa, 2016:9).

Therefore, building on *Ubuntu*'s anthropological culture, *Ubuntu* is learned, it is not inherited. It is worth mentioning that for *Ubuntu* culture to take root, there should be an amicable integration among all cultures in South Africa. However, for South Africans to integrate, they need to reflect not only on behaviours, values and beliefs, but also on the economic, political, and social aspects of cultures and structures that are put in front of them, that is different forms of media, literature or even oral conversation. Therefore, for *Ubuntu* to provide a valuable contribution to South Africa with the diverse cultures, races and creeds, the people have to reflect on *Ubuntu* so that it can profoundly unite South Africans and continue to preserve the traditional values as past experiences are linked with the present and future realities (*ibid.*).

3.8 *Ubuntu* and religion

Africans' understanding and beliefs spring from the world which surrounds them. However, they interpret life given to them by *Molimo* in Sesotho, and *Unkulunkulu* in Zulu languages; that is the Highest One, the Supreme Being. Before the Christian missionaries arrived, this Supreme Being, *Molimo*, had no gender; it was neutral, neither male nor female. Likewise, the *Badimo* ancestors had no gender; it could mean male or female. Hence people's understanding of life was both natural and supernatural and provided the guidance of how to behave and act (Kholopa, 2016:42).

Sofola (1979:126) argues there is unity in the cosmic African movement which is in process through the infinite. He (Sofola, 1979:127) expresses it thus:

The African world is an integrated cosmos with a unique fluidity that makes unbroken continuity possible. It is a state of perpetual transmutation [as a way through]. The cosmos is seen as possessing a nerve centre that holds all aspects of existence in place, but which at the same time, gives each being free access to self-determination and volitional involvement in life without jeopardizing the existence of others (cited in Kholopa, 2016:43).

"Hence, it is according to this kind of reflection that Africans view the Supreme Being as the guider of every created being functioning in a rhythmic way through and

around what he has made" (*ibid.*). Kalu (1979:15) contemplates that "the cyclical mould is perhaps derived from the flow of agricultural and festival seasons". Accordingly, Africans see themselves as being at the core of the universe, and there is a rhythm from birth (the celebration of life), the role of adulthood, and the completion of life, death. This whole process, however, for an African, is determined by the Supreme Being. This life cycle is celebrated by different rituals: rituals of birth, adulthood/labour and death. Because of this, for Africans, there is no indication of the end of the world. Death is one of the passages of one life to another life. Thus, there is a strong belief that the Supreme Being would continue showering His blessings upon them.

Tylor (1990:358) argues that religion is viewed as the belief and model of behaviour by which members manipulate a situation that is beyond their understanding using various prayers, singing and dancing, offering sacrifices etc. Gathogo (2016) sees indigenous religion as a "system of beliefs and practices that are integrated into the culture and worldviews of the African peoples". In the same vein Gathogo (2016) believes that, "every person is born into a specific culture that influences a person's religious pattern". Hence, religion is a necessary tool for the members' ethos and culture. Furthermore, he (Gathogo, 2016) illustrates that

African religion prepares the human person by embodying an explanation of the world, for instance an understanding of the universe, and gives a response to the questions about the meaning of life which humans are unable to grasp or answer; for example, suffering, poverty, violence, injustice, inequality etc.

Religion offers people ethical values and guides them to hope and provides solutions for people to lead harmonious lives; that is to say, it regulates between right and wrong and nourishes one's spiritual hunger through rituals like meditation, ceremonies and devotions.

Ubuntu's foundation can be traced to both culture and religion. Seemingly both culture and religion influence each other, just as *Ubuntu* has elements of cultural-religious aspects, so Christianity has its Judeo-Roman influences. However, religion also influences politics since human beings are social beings and the organisation of communities is understood as part of the foundation of life. Berger and Buttmer (1976:29) argue that "it has been seen throughout human history that the

maintenance of the community has been the role of religion”. Mbiti (1969) would say “that Africans are ‘notoriously religious’”. I argue that the Africans knew God/the Supreme Being before Christianity arrived in both South Africa and the whole African continent. Indeed, Christianity is a recent religion in South Africa. Mofokeng (1988:38) argues that, “when the white man came to our country, he had the Bible and we [Blacks] had the land. The white man said to us ‘let us pray’. After the prayer, the white man had the land and we had the Bible”.

This then is how the Christian religion was received and embraced. The above anecdote may, however, have different interpretations. Thus, West (2016:143) interprets it using three arguments: Firstly, the Bible is an integral part of a continual process of colonization, regional oppression and exploitation; secondly, Africans acknowledged the unclear contradiction of being colonized by a Christian people and accepting their ideological philosophy; and thirdly, blacks themselves convey commitment in accepting it and passing it on to the next generation. Hence, black South Africans had no problem with the Good News, however, they did have problems with the ideological interpretation of the Bible of the colonisers and missionaries (cited in Kholopa, 2016).

Buthelezi (1995:166-173) argues that the Christian Protestant missionaries, along with the collaboration of the colonial regime, saw it as their duty to ‘civilise’ the African, whom they thought of as lacking in culture, so that it became an issue of “the conquest of the heathens”. Buthelezi (*ibid.*) views this as a devaluation of the cross, which is not a sign of power but of justice and love. Sadly, traditional values became immersed in the Western way of life without offering, suggesting or allowing ways for African people to participate fully in the different way of life that was introduced. Buthelezi (*ibid.*) asserts that “the traditional society, in which the concept of sharing community had been of paramount importance, was destroyed by the rapid advance of a modern cash economy that exalted the role of the individual” (cited in Kholopa, 2016).

However, Buthelezi (*ibid.*), supports the theological path of “anthropological” study that the indigenous themselves are an object of investigation which doesn’t really focus on the past but rather the present situation, which he calls man perceived as a “data”. South Africans have been liberated by Christ from the dungeon of dehumanisation. Hence, they must rediscover what it signifies to be human in the situation they find themselves in with the different challenges of today. We concur with Buthelezi’s assertion that the Good News should address itself to the problems

of the culture and society in which it is immersed. But then, cultural alienation, social and political oppression, seem to be overlapping and interconnected. It is important to reflect on the past, however over-emphasis on the past will be unproductive. We must not dwell on it, but we need to consider the effects of the contemporary socio-political problems, since it is only then that the Word of God will have an impact in people's lives. Thus, we need to interpret the Bible according to the current situation and in the light of our experiences as Africans (Kholopa, 2016).

Msafiri (2002: 86-87) opines that within the New Testament, there are many family metaphors that reflect the relationship between the human community and the Church. Similarly, Paul upholds the Church community as a "household of God" (1 Timothy 3:15). He goes further to say believers are "part of God's household" (Ephesians 2:19-22). Thus, there are many references in the New Testament that refer to families that signify the beginning of communities, such as the household metaphor in Acts 11:14; 16:15, Colossians 3:18-21, Romans 16:3-5 and 1 Corinthians 16:19. However, these communities were not perfect, just like African communities, but they held together clinging onto their similarities rather than their differences. John Paul II (1987, no.49) preaches that "we must examine the many profound bonds linking the Church and Christian family and establishing the family as 'Church in miniature' in such a way, the family is a living image and historical representation of the mystery of the Church" (cited in Kholopa, 2016).

Do we find some similarities with biblical communitarianism? There are certainly many instances that indicate identical communal aspects in both *Ubuntu* and the Bible. The first correlation is in the gospels. These are narratives describing Jesus with his disciples forming a community. For instance, in the Sermon on the Mount, Jesus says, blessed are the poor in spirit...peacemakers..., (Matthew 5:1-12). On the one hand, there are many places in the gospel where Jesus is with different communities, such as at Cana, and at Caesarea Philippi. Ela (1988:10) posits that there is evidence of communal dialogues, by and through African oral tradition, conversing and listening and passing on values to the future generation through rituals, ceremonies and purifications. Hence, the communication between Jesus and his early followers could be a form of socio-cultural structure and Jesus opened a mutual path leading to the formation of a community (*ibid.*).

Secondly, the early Christian community was formed when Jesus gathered disciples together in different places; on the hillside, on a boat, on the seashore. Hence, there is a resemblance between how the early *Ubuntu* community gathered in the past and

still gathers today, in some places, under a tree. The people are still connected to nature when they go to the mountains, or the seashore to reflect on God speaking to them. One could say it is one of the best ways to be in tune with God and the present world (Èla, 1988:11). Thirdly, we observe Jesus' concern, not only for the particular needs of his region, but also the entire universe. He does not want to deprive anyone, since there is an invitation to every individual to belong to and to participate in the community he founded. Hence, he postulates the great mission by sending his disciples to go out and make many more communities of believers, to heal and baptize them (Matthew 28:19-20). Similarly, *Ubuntu* commenced with family clans and slowly expanded and planted its values in people's hearts. "A person becomes a person through or because of another person" (Gade, 2012:486). The words of Èla (1988:12) ring a bell: "throughout the world, small communities work however, each person with his/her remarkableness and in one's specification, given by God" contributes to the good of the whole community. Hence each person takes "in their heart and on their shoulders the misery of the people; not like a stranger, but as equals" (Èla, *ibid.*). Indeed, we cannot ignore the profundity of *Ubuntu* and Christian communitarianism in our present situation. However, *Ubuntu* and the Bible direct us to live ethically and harmoniously, not only for the good of humanity, but also to be responsible human beings regarding the environment/creation (*ibid.*)

3.9 *Ubuntu* as a moral theory in South Africa

Ideas associated with *Ubuntu* are often deemed inappropriate for public morality in today's South Africa as they are perceived to be too vague, anachronistic and collectivist (Metz, 2011:532). We will proceed with the notion of *Ubuntu* as a moral theory, since it is not the purpose nor the scope of this study to engage in the nuances or ramifications of the claims that *Ubuntu* is too vague, anachronistic and collectivist. According to Metz (2011:536) "a moral theory is roughly a principle purporting to indicate, by appeal to as few properties as possible, what all right actions have in common as distinct from wrong ones". Therefore, in contrast to the Western moral theories (i.e. utilitarianism and Kantianism) we appeal to the ubiquitous aphorism 'A person is a person through other persons', '*Umuntu ngumuntu ngabantu*' in Nguni and '*Motho ke motho ka batho babang*' in Sotho-Setswana. This aphorism to the Nguni or Sotho person is not merely an empirical

claim that our survival or well-being are causally dependent on others but is in essence capturing a normative account of what we ought to most value in life (Metz, 2011:537). This is viewed by Shutte (2001:2) as an embodiment of an understanding of what it is to be human, what is necessary for human beings to grow and find fulfilment, and an expression of a vision of what is valuable and worthwhile in life.

Shutte (2001:2) opines that *Ubuntu* morality is rooted in the history of Africa and is at the heart of most South African cultures while its values are not just African but universal. Shutte (2001:30) further sums it up, thus:

Our deepest moral obligation is to become fully human. And this means entering more and more deeply into community with others. So, although the goal is personal fulfilment, selfishness is excluded.

“African moral ideas are both more attractively and more accurately interpreted as conceiving of communal relationships as an objectively-desirable kind of interaction that should guide what majorities want and which norms become dominant” (Metz, 2011:538). Metz (*ibid.*) asserts that there are two recurrent themes in typical African discussion of the nature of community as an ideal, which he calls identity and solidarity. By identity, Metz (2007:335) refers to identify with each other whereby people think of themselves as members of the same group, and to conceive of themselves as ‘we’. This entails people taking pride or feeling shame in the group’s activities. For people to exhibit solidarity means to engage in mutual aid and to act in ways that are reasonably beneficial to each other. Metz (2007:337) further states that while identity and solidarity are conceptually separable and logically distinct, in African thought they are viewed morally to be together. They indicate communal relationship with other human beings. Thus, solidarity and identity are to an extent conferred by *Ubuntu*. Thus, solidarity and identity are viewed as central definitive tenets or elements of *Ubuntu*.

There is a shift to liminal *Ubuntu* as espoused by Magezi (2017:116), which entails Christ as the bond for all humanity. The Christ bond promotes inclusiveness, responsibility and moral duty, values, and accountability to public structures among others. It entails transcending the boundary of community and relationship that is often defined by blood relationship and geographical location in popular and general

Ubuntu discussion. This view of society is reinforced by Mbiti (1969:12) that Africans are found both in *Ubuntu* philosophy and in religion, and “that anything that threatens Africans would seem to threaten their whole existence”. Bujo (2001:2) further explains that Africans tend in practice to speak about human beings rather than God. This is because one who pays heed to the dignity of the human person also pleases God and that one who acts against the human person offends precisely this God. It therefore follows that the ethical conduct is not only based on the individual but on a relational network that is equally anthropocentric, cosmic and theocentric.

Tutu (2009:24) notes that *Ubuntu* is a theological notion. As a theological notion, it enlightens our humanity’s worthiness which is intrinsic to what we do and who we are, because we are created in the *imago Dei*. Furthermore, Meylahn (2017:123) states that *Ubuntu* theories are developed from oral traditions of African practices but shaped and informed by Western heritage. It is therefore unsurprising that *Ubuntu* is interpreted in Christian language and permeated by its texts thus becoming very difficult to differentiate from certain Christian interpretations. The conception of community in terms of sharing a way of life and exhibiting solidarity towards others is naturally understood in terms of caring about their quality of life. This is the broad sense of ‘friendship’ (or even ‘love’) that is at the heart of the morality of Southern African culture as it pertains to interpersonal relationships (Metz, 2011:539). This is summed-up by Tutu (1999:35):

Harmony, friendliness, community are great goods. Social harmony is the *summum bonum* – the greatest good. Anything that subverts or undermines this sought-after good is to be avoided like the plague.

A person is socialised to think of himself as inextricably bound to others as *Ubuntu* promotes the spirit of selflessness as espoused in the scriptures.

3.10 Concerns about Ubuntu as a moral concept

Ubuntu, as with all moral values, has its own gradation system and ethical standards that allow its practitioners to make value judgements, even when it refers to moral obligations towards other people. Enslin and Horsthemke (2004) argue that *Ubuntu*

does not offer practical guidance for ills plaguing Africa. It does not offer solutions to Africa's problems such as the prevalence of autocratic rule, corruption, sexism, homophobia and xenophobia. We argue that our personhood, by virtue of *Ubuntu*, accompanies moral responsibility and ethical demands. We therefore ought to understand our responsibility to those who are marginalised/deprived in society and lacking material goods. It becomes a shared identity of a total personhood of *Ubuntu* philosophy (Ogude, 2018:5).

Cornell and Van Merle (2005:196) acknowledge that *Ubuntu* once had social value, but it bears no relevance to the current situation, especially for the youth of South Africa. Some have argued that it is patriarchal and conservative, and its usefulness has been eroded by its vagueness and its ability to accommodate a range of meanings. Matolino and Kwindwingi (2013:197- 2005) assert that it is an outdated notion that does not have the capacity to shape the ethics in the current South African context as it is not suited to the social and ethical challenges of the present-day situation, notwithstanding that there is no fault with the ideal of *Ubuntu* itself. Furthermore, they argue that *Ubuntu* does not treat all people equally since it is a cultural system that relegates women to a lower status, especially when it refers to the regulation of customary marriages, access to land and inheritance rights.

Louw (2001:15-36) points out that *Ubuntu* is characterised by tribal conformity to group loyalty, which when interpreted in a narrow or ethnic fashion becomes corrupted. Thus, in a post-apartheid context it has been reduced to a form of nepotism, and a system of patronage that is used to pursue power and money (Naude, 2013:246). This is especially evident from the dilemma of *Ubuntu*'s philosophy which is expressed in the provision of assistance to 'our people' who may well be a range of people close to us, and the obvious danger of choosing the criteria determining who are 'our people' and 'who is not one of us' (Gathogo, 2008a:47). It therefore leads one to legitimately question the existence or social value of *Ubuntu* in the face of the incidence of rape, murder, child rape and violent acts of xenophobia, corruption and nepotism in South Africa.

3.11 Hospitality

3.11.1 The understanding of hospitality

For Hernandez (2015:93) hospitality means, “primarily the creation of a free space where the stranger can enter and become a friend instead of an enemy. Hospitality is not to change people, but to offer them space where change can take place”. Indeed, it clearly elaborates that it is an offer and it renders unconditional respect and awarding an honour that empowers others as they certainly deserve the respect due to their dignity having been made in the likeness of God. Hernandez (2015:94) asserts that “members of the community must create a free atmosphere in one’s innermost self in order that they may certainly welcome others to enter, join and be healed”. It is certainly true that “no guest will ever feel welcome when his/her host is not at home in his/her own house”. Likewise, no healthy relationship can develop when the community members reach out to others from their forlorn situation, because it can have a destructive result in the long run.

Take for example the German community who welcomed immigrants, some of whom were eventually found to have committed the crime of raping German women, however, this should not deter the German community from paying attention to the needs of others, when they have already discovered the centre of caring in their hearts to do so (Kholopa, 2016,67).

The community becomes a wounded healer, and we argue that it is not only hospitality that is changed in the community, but in addition, the community can become a healing community where pain and broken hearts become avenues for a new vision of sacrifice and love (Kholopa, 2016,68).

Certainly, “the South African community must learn to let things go so that the spirit of love and forgiveness can fill people’s hearts for them to learn to accept others” (*ibid.*). Gooden and Wooldridge (2011:248) assert that “to accept others requires a commitment that might cause one to tolerate and take affirmative action to make the difference in the country”.

How can members overcome the problem that easily arises and leads members to view others as strangers and threats? How can South Africans build a hospitable community so that this hospitality is not just a facade but a communal representation

of life together in Christ? Hospitality should be practiced by doing or reflecting on things which might look insignificant, for instance supporting the vulnerable, the poor, the marginalized, and the immigrants that flock to the country from the neighbouring countries and from abroad (Kholopa, 2016:68).

The familiar verse, “God so loved the world that he gave his only son....” (John 3:16), shows that God’s infinite love, though encompassing all people, nonetheless became entirely revealed in one single situation in time, and in one specific person, Jesus who welcomed everyone, fed many, visited all kinds of people and brought happiness to their lives (*ibid.*).

However, such simple gestures, although they may appear insignificant, can make the difference in the new South Africa. This is because one’s individual example of such hospitality can expand to cover the whole community. It is true that love breeds generosity and mercy which lead in turn to hospitality. We argue that “in order to be hospitable the members must acquire a sense of generosity by doing good to others and welcoming foreigners, since our fathers too were foreigners who were exiled during the Apartheid era” (*ibid.*). Countries opened their doors and welcomed people with generous hearts, and some have still not returned to their country of origin. This shows that if members show generosity, they will have the strength to accept others. This requires of people, according to Newman (2007:180), “talents, will power and wealth; they do good things for others but do not receive from them [those who are] weak fragile and poor.” There is a special need to look at Newman’s (2007:181) view because South Africa has not been a leader in this area. “It is economically and technologically advanced, it has the talent and willpower to welcome others rather than abandon or even kill them. Developing the attitude of sharing and of being with others, not necessarily of the same tribe or culture, but also those different from them, can make the difference (*ibid.*).

Newman (2007:183) explains that ““being with” fits with our understanding of worship itself as hospitality, in worship we are welcomed and received, through Christ and the Spirit, into God’s triune communion, God’s desire to be with us, God gathers us”. She emphasizes the point that South Africans must reciprocate that desire to be concerned with other nationals. Bennett (2016) argues that practicing hospitality means “radical openness to the others, attending to him/her in sharing and receiving

insights and perspectives about self and world". It would thus be of interest to learn that hospitality can promote tolerance in a pluralistic South Africa that accommodates and welcomes other people's views, their way of life and their cultures. This compels people to live together and avoid conflicts and violence as is the current case. A hospitable community denies, as Newman comments, the "rules of people that pave the way to the regulations of the sport planned to accept people, divided amongst themselves, to follow each their own direction and interest".

3.11.2 Christian perspective

God's created world is provided for all people without exception. It is therefore obvious that it is meant for the benefit of all human beings and therefore appreciation belongs to God who has done so through his creatures. However, the important role of economics is to share resources and maintain the conditions of others that should serve other individuals as authentic human beings. A Christian response in appreciation to God is to create service (work) for those who have nothing. Hence, there is a need to cooperate with God in order to serve the needs of others, to rebuild the country in a more hospitable manner which is conducive to the contract made by God and the human community. God does not accept people manipulating other human beings who do not possess the economic means for their own survival. He enjoys the human kindness whose actions are an expression of His stewardship (Kholopa, 2016:69).

We however need to consider the work needed for each human person to achieve their social objectives. When such necessities are not met, life loses its meaning and vitality. God worked and rested and gave provisions to humans for them to do likewise and serve others. When they have achieved their fulfilment, the individual person rejoices and the community is also happy, because there is a symbiosis between work as a social aspect and the individual who welcomes others in community. However, the happiness includes even the company or the one who has provided the work, who attempts to make individual's worthy, in the expression of love of one's neighbor" (*ibid.*).

Surprisingly enough, Wogaman (1970:239) argues that

Protestant ethics portrays a half-truth; the true half is the importance of work in human fulfillment. The false half is the subordination of man to work and, worse yet, the attempt to establish whether or not people are deserving of what God has already given them.

Certainly, humans were not only created to fulfill their dreams of success, but also help others to achieve their purpose and happiness in life.

Humans are social and spiritual beings by nature. The social means include; interacting with others, supporting those who are in need, welcoming the hungry, the naked and those cut off from society. When a person's ethics considers only enriching the self without reflecting on others in mercy, it becomes a problem for the community. By drawing on Protestant ethics in South Africa and African countries in general, a major problem has emerged, since only elite blacks remain rich and the majority poor are suppressed. Unfortunately, ignorance has led these unfair and unwelcome situations to develop and has prevented many from enjoying the fruits of the earth God has given to humankind (Kholopa, 2016: 70).

3.11.3 The works of mercy

The Catholic view of the 'works of mercy' (the corporal works of mercy) can be associated with sacrifice and hospitality. We argue that in a domestic situation in South Africa works of mercy can indeed play a significant part in community development. According to this view, both sacrifice and hospitality are interlinked.

This is shown in the story of the Parable of the Good Samaritan (Luke 10:25-37), the Last Judgement (Matthew 25:31-46), and the story of Lazarus and the rich man (Luke 16: 19-31). Seemingly, these stories call people to be imitators of the God in whose image we are made. In responding to Christ's appeal, the South African community has to engage themselves in the works of mercy, by welcoming others (as mentioned previously) that they too may be at home with the rest of people of the community, and that they feel loved and accepted.

Hospitality includes making the sacrifice to visit prisoners to show them that they are still loved. Christianity and *Ubuntu* invite members to be involved in

sheltering the homeless people and being responsible for others. For instance, recognizing the refugees of our time, children who run away from their homes and live on the streets begging for food, the poor and marginalized women, and feeding the hungry. However, the country needs people who can sacrifice their resources in order to clothe those who are naked and help others bury their dead ones with dignity (*ibid.*).

The book of Tobit reminds us that for prayers to be heard by God, works of mercy ought to accompany them (Tobit 12: 8-9). James Keenan (2005:1) asserts that “by practicing mercy we become more like the God who entered into our own chaos.” Hence this could be a very big challenge, not only to the young South Africans but also to the many members who disregard others when they focus on themselves (self-interest), and we rarely find people reaching out to others (*ibid.*).

However, the country has many prisoners who need to be visited, supported and listened to. They would feel loved when visited and would still see themselves as members of the community. Certainly, people may not condone crimes committed but it is ethically right to still value their dignity as human beings. Keenan (2005:1-2) gives us example of Pope John XXIII visiting the prisoners of *Regina Caeli* prison, stretching his hands through prison bars, grasping the prisoners’ hand while calling them his brothers and explaining, “you could not come to see me so I have come to see you.” This is really thrilling and as a witness and example to be practiced by our leaders and individual people in our communities (*ibid.*).

One of the very good examples of works of mercy was when Pope Francis, who was escorted by Ecumenical Patriarch Bartholomew 1 and Archbishop Ieronymos, surprised the world including ordinary and Government leaders when on 16th April 2016 they visited the Greek Island of Lesbos where the refugees were detained. The Holy Father returned to Rome with twelve refugees and appealed for us to show more humanity for all refugees. More than 3000 migrants and refugees are being held in Moria village. Furthermore, Pope Francis “appealed not only to the Greek people who have opened their doors but also to other countries regardless of their difficulties, to open their

hearts and their resources and share with those who are marginalized, and have lost everything". This is a valuable contribution to the make for the works of mercy (*ibid.*).

Pope Francis asserts that "Europe is the homeland of human rights, and whoever sets foot on European soil ought to sense this, and thus become more aware of the duty to respect and defend those rights." Francis has clearly linked this call for hospitality with respect for human dignity and rights. Likewise, in Africa, the challenges we now experience should not lead to crimes against humanity, but rather to the development of the civilization of love, sacrifice, justice and hospitality. "In this way South Africa and African countries in general should become the homeland of communal-minded people and whoever comes to any African country ought to experience a welcome-communal life and thus become aware of the duty to respect and defend communitarian values such as love, sacrifice and hospitality. Hence, Africans can pave the way to building peace in the war-torn regions of Africa and the world. This may be shown by returning to performing the works of mercy because service makes us go beyond ourselves and care for others. Without doubt with a heartfelt positive attitude, Africans can instill and become custodians of humanity, in taking care of others (*ibid.*).

3.12 Chapter summary and conclusion

Ubuntu scholarship has gained momentum in the past two to three decades as African scholars have started taking a keen interest in their own interpretations of their cultures and world views. The seminal works of Tempels (1959) and Mbiti (1969) laid the foundations of moral anthropology for sub-Saharan ethicists in an attempt to shape the indigenous morality to address their own interpretations of the world. Tempels (1959:106-108) opined that African ontology carries the corollary that every man can be influenced by a wiser man, as for Africans a human being never appears as an isolated individual, an independent entity. Thus, this relationship is not simply taken as juridical dependence but must be understood as a real ontological dependence, which Tempels (1959) attributed to a link in the chain of vital forces.

This assumption can be juxtaposed with the description of *Ubuntu* by Khoza (1994) that it is an African view of life and the world in which people share and treat each other as humans, based on an underlying 'universal brotherhood' of Africans.

Mbiti (1969:1, 29) asserts that Africans are notoriously religious with every person having their own set of beliefs and practices, since religion permeates each facet of their daily lives. This observation is reinforced by Gathogo (2016) that "indigenous religion is a system of beliefs and practices that are integrated into the culture and worldviews of the African peoples". The cultural-religious elements of African indigenous religion 'prepare the human person by embodying an explanation of the world which surrounds them, and they provide the interpretation of life given to them by the Supreme Being'. As such, the people's understanding of life was both natural and supernatural providing guidance of how to behave and act.

African communitarianism is informed by an ethic of reciprocity as community is seen not as a mere association of individuals whose interests are contingently congruent, but a communal social order whereby there is a sense of solidarity and members of the group have common interests, goals, and values (Gyekye, 1997:42-45; Wiredu, 1998:320). These, according to Mabovula (2011:38-39), are African socio-ethical thoughts reflected in the communitarian features of social structures of African society. The individual member is part of the community embedded in communal living and the community's conduct is dependent, realised and affirmed or internalised by the community. In a pluralistic society such as South Africa, behaviours that are anti-traditional African, like xenophobia, rape, murder, etc, have posed challenges to *Ubuntu* and social ethics by lowering the esteem of the community, and as a consequence community members have developed an individualistic philosophy that runs counter to the many traditional African values (Mabovula, 2011:39).

Chapter 4: Interdependence of *Ubuntu* and hospitality and the link to the theological perspective

4.1 Introduction

The interdependence of *Ubuntu* and hospitality is drawn primarily from the investigation of theology and African cultural practices to address current Christian ethical practices of hospitality in the context of migration and the problems it poses to the practice of hospitality, and how it can be reconceived in the light of this context. Sanders (2002:124-126) articulates that “*Ubuntu* suggests hospitality and acceptance of fellow human beings in that *Ubuntu* in its fundamental sense is hospitality as one’s human being is folded together with the other, that other human being, being the stranger”. The interconnectedness in African society is highly valued and recognises the role of the other in the intensity of its expression in daily life (Mnyaka & Motlhabi, 2005:220).

Thus, *Ubuntu* according to Tutu (Battle, 1998:6-7), concerns our relationship with God and neighbour and is what life is all about as our identity is formed by God, hence, the encounter with the reality of the Triune God reveals our personhood within the framework of interconnectedness that relates with God and with other human beings. However, this posture of *Ubuntu* as argued by scholars as a Christian notion is problematic. I argue that Christians have an identity defined by a new union in Christ, which has resultant ethics that flow from this relationship. At the same time Christians as people belonging to humanity are bound by the bond with other human beings as people are created in the image of God (*imago Dei*).

However, ethical expectations and conduct for people bound by Christ’s fellowship have explicit ethical obligations to one another and a duty to fellow human beings. These ethical obligations are explicitly drawn from special revelation (Bible). The challenge, however, is to answer the question: from where does the challenge for non-Christians to act and respond ethically arise? Does this arise from human rights or natural revelation – herein lies the challenge of public pastoral care. Pastoral care in the public space needs to account for these dynamics.

4.2 Overview of Christian public ethical issues: biblical analysis

Texts from the Old and New Testaments, notably, the books of Exodus, Leviticus, Peter, Philippians, Hebrews and Ephesians, have been used to ring-fence the *kairos* (i.e. xenophobia) facing the church. This chapter has, therefore, advocated some normative responses to the challenges and what lessons could be learned. The Old Testament perspective on the stranger/foreigner is largely found in the legislative codes in a category that usually comprises the Covenant Code (Exodus 21:1-23:33), the Law of Holiness (Leviticus 17:1-26,46) and Deuteronomic Code (Deuteronomy 4:44-26,19) (Pontifical Biblical Commission, 2009:43). These were legislated after the constitution of Israel as a nation following the establishment of the covenant on Sinai. The stranger/foreigner was given special protection under the law (Exodus 22:20) and was even loved as a native Israelite (Leviticus 19:34). The Hebrew Bible in its usage of different terminology for the stranger, as *ger* for the stranger residing permanently among Israelites, *nokir* for the foreigner in transit, and *toshar* and *sakir* for paid immigrant workers, takes cognisance of the place of the stranger in the Israelite community. It is thus unsurprising that in the Torah the solicitude of the *ger* appears constantly out of natural generosity as in Exodus 22:20; 23:9 or by informed generosity in recalling days of slavery in Egypt granted by God in Deuteronomy 16:11-12 (Pontifical Biblical Commission, 2009:44).

In Deuteronomy 14: 28-29, provision is made for the sustenance and protection of vulnerable people in society, widows, orphans and strangers, as a reminder of the days of slavery in Egypt. This is strongly linked to the foundations of social morality and justice, and it is also interesting to observe that the same applies in most African societal laws and customs. Deuteronomy 16:11 validates the need for those 'outside' the community of Israel to be included in worship because ethics and worship are closely associated in that "the adoration of God and solicitude for one's neighbour are two inseparable expressions of the same confession of faith" (Pontifical Biblical Commission, 2009:44).

The New Testament as the proclamation of the coming of the kingdom of God, has its fundamental foundation in the prophecy of Isaiah 40:3, "A voice cries out in the

desert prepare the way of the Lord, make straight in the wasteland a highway for our God". The usage of this expression, however, was not a common or prevalent theme in the Old Testament but was rather an ardent wish of the post-exilic Israel as a desire for the coming of God to remove the injustices experienced by the people. However, it was used as a central metaphor of Jesus's teachings for his earthly ministry in his teachings and mission to be understood as the presence of God himself who comes to conquer evil and transform the world (Pontifical Biblical Commission, 2009:51-52). This kingdom of God, interpreted by biblical scholars as preached by Jesus, contains the aspects of both the future and the present, and it has important implications for Christian morality as evil will be vanquished with justice reinstated and humanity restored to the values and virtues that conform us with the will of God (Matthew 12:28; Luke 11:20.17:21).

The proclamation of the nearness of the coming of the kingdom of God by Jesus in his teachings (Matthew 4:17) and in the prayer he taught us (Matthew 6:10), is for humanity to be moulded by God's will as a departure point for the theological foundation of Christian ethics as echoed throughout the biblical tradition and summed up in Leviticus 19:2, "Speak to the whole Israelite community and tell them: Be holy, for I, the Lord, your God, am holy".

The beginning of the ministry of the Messiah is characterised by the presence of foreigners, the vulnerable and the sick, and He constantly interacted with them, showing that God's love is ever present in the world (Matthew 2:1-12; Luke 17:18; John 4). His death on the cross for the sins of humanity broke down the dividing walls of enmity, thus establishing peace and reconciling all to God through his death (Ephesians 2:14-18). It is this breaking down of barriers by his death and embracing all that even a Roman soldier pronounced in a eulogy at his death (Luke 23:47), the inclusion of all people through faith irrespective of their linguistic, racial or ethnic difference and gender (Galatians 3:26-28) and bringing the realisation that while church members had their citizenship in heaven they are still resident aliens on earth (1 Peter 1:17). Therefore, it is incumbent upon the church to actively help the vulnerable and strangers by always reflecting on its identity and unequivocal love of God for the hapless (Matthew 25:25-44) and hospitality to characterise the life of a Christian (Hebrew 13:2; 1 Corinthians 12:28-29; cf Acts 13:1-2).

4.3 The perspective of the stranger/foreigner in the Old Testament

4.3.1 The exegetical view of the stranger/ foreigner from Exodus 22:20-23 and 23:9

The locus of Exodus 22:20-23 in the Pentateuch or Law of Moses is the continuation of the narrative that began in Genesis with the English translation having its roots in the Greek Old Testament word *exodos* meaning “departure” or “going out” (cf. Exodus 19:1). The main theme of the book of Exodus is the liberation of Israel from oppression in Egypt by God, in which the same God binds himself to an oppressed people and gets actively involved in their liberation (Barnes, 2005:24). This same God of Exodus is the God whom Christians have known as the Father of Jesus Christ.

The message of Exodus can be summarised into three basic components, being the punishment and judgement of the oppressor nation, Egypt; the deliverance of the Israelites by the mighty arm of God; and the establishment of the Israelite nation through the covenant at Mount Sinai as his chosen people; as those who obey Him alone. The submission to his authority in its canonical formulation in the apodictic laws details the morality of duties (deontology) for a balanced moral reflection suitable for our times (Pontifical Biblical Commission, 2009:38). These moral duties pertain to our relationship with God to whom we offer absolute homage, and our values regarding the relationships between persons such as dignity of the human person, solidarity, preferential treatment of the poor and the common good.

4.3.2 The analysis of the key verses in Exodus 22:20-23 and 23:9

These key verses state: Exodus 22:20, “You shall not molest or oppress an alien, for you were once aliens yourselves in the land of Egypt” and Exodus 23:9 “You shall not oppress an alien; you well know how it feels to be an alien, since you were once aliens yourselves in the land of Egypt”. This is part of the apodictic laws as they specify the conduct of persons in relation to others, especially the vulnerable of society, namely the compositional triad of orphans, widows and aliens. The verses

are an earlier expression of humanitarian concern for the unfortunate and the needy as they are most often in society prone to injury and abuse (cf. Deuteronomy 14:28-29; 24:17-22). The Israelites themselves, after Sinai and the wilderness, were given the gift of the Promised Land. They would lose God's permanent presence if they sinned and would become temporary residents of the holy land (Jeremiah 14:8). Unsurprisingly, the entire existence of Israel has been bound up with offering a blessing to foreigners (Genesis 12:1-3).

Exodus 21-23 are a warning to Israel that advantage should not be taken of the widow and the orphan as the wrath of God will descend on those who oppress them with the ultimate punishment of death, leaving their wives as widows and children as orphans. The protection of orphans and widows in their times of crying out to God, alludes to the cries of Israel to God during their time of slavery and the eventual exodus from Egypt. Thus, it is incumbent on those who believe in God to care for the vulnerable in society as He cares for them, and to afford them the same dignity and status as all other persons in society as the anger and curse of God will befall those who ignore caring for them.

4.3.3 The exegetical view of the stranger/foreigner from Leviticus 19:33-34 and 23:22

Leviticus takes its name from the fact that it was the Levitical priest who administered the directives in this rule book, which was intended for the post-exilic community, and was essentially related to temple liturgy. It is narrative in nature as it essentially relates the events that transpired on Sinai, even though most of the material in the book is of *legislative* orientation. The title of the book might be appropriate to relate to the Levites in carrying out the requirements of the Mosaic Covenant, but it is equally relevant to the laity as it specifies the duties they have to undertake in fulfilling the said regulations, such as how to perform a sacrifice and the observance of the days to rest for the Sabbath (Wenham, 1979:3).

The content of Leviticus is primarily aimed at supplementing and completing what has been stated in the Decalogue in Exodus for inclusion in the religious and social spheres. It mainly concerns itself with the religious and ritual aspects of the broken and renewed covenant at Sinai as reflected in the curses and blessings of Leviticus 26 (Kitchen, 1971:3) and "to give meaning and function of the priesthood, the

definition of holiness and the clarification of the principle of pilgrimage and homage to the dwelling place of the great King” (Merrill, 1991:56). According to Longman and Dillard (2006:83) Leviticus by its very nature, like the rest of the Torah, is a theological instructional history. Thus, it was written for Israel to live a holy life in fellowship with God, create awareness for people to know and value their privileges and responsibilities before God and how to maintain a continuous relationship with God by expressing it through worship.

4.3.4 The analysis of the key verses in Leviticus 19:33-34 and 23:22

Leviticus 19:33 warns thus: “When an alien resides with you in your land, do not molest him”. This is a strong message in Leviticus from the Lord directing that we must learn that a wrong done to another human being is also a wrong done to God. It is a reminder that they are *imago Dei*, people belong to God who has given them their lives in trust and whoever violates their basic rights, it is not only a wrong to that person but to God as well (cf. Genesis 39:9; Psalms 51:4). The challenge facing Christians today in South Africa is the sinful silence in the face of xenophobic attacks on foreigners with the hopeful wish that “Jesus paid all our sins”, albeit forgetting that we could never compensate God adequately for the wrong we do to Him by sinning.

Leviticus 19:34 emphasises the love for the strangers as it states “You shall treat the alien who resides with you no differently than the natives born among you; have the same love for him as for yourself; for you too were once aliens in the land of Egypt. I, the Lord, am your God” (cf. Exodus 12:43). This reflects the application of the commandments to life situations and the expression of charity to your fellow human beings as neighbourly love is extended to everyone, irrespective of their social origins. The embodiment of the stranger/foreigner as befitting acts of love and charity, is the forerunner to the teachings of Christ (Matthew 22:37-39; Mark 12:30-31) wherein “the neighbour” is applied in its broadest meaning with this lofty precept taken together with Deuteronomy 6:5 that sums up the whole of the Law and the Prophets.

Leviticus 23:22 shows a moral obligation towards the poor and the stranger thus: “When you reap the harvest of your hand, you shall not be so thorough that you reap

the field to its very edge, nor shall you glean the stray ears of your grain. These things you shall leave for the poor and the alien. I, the Lord, am your God.” The verse illustrates the moral conditions and some aspects of rituals that have to be performed during harvest time or time of plenty so that the poor and migrants have to be supported, fed and clothed. It also calls upon humanity to sacrifice and share their resources. This is what the Lord requires from his human beings and demonstrates that justice has to be done to those who have little or nothing.

4.4 The perspective of the stranger/foreigner in the New Testament

4.4.1 The exegetical perspective of the stranger/foreigner from Hebrews 13:1-3

Hebrews is placed last in the Pauline collection of Epistles in which the author exhorts Christians to persevere in the light of persecution. For all intents and purposes, the author is unknown, even when he mentions Paul’s collaborator Timothy in 13:23, nor does he claim any personal apostolic authority. The early church grappled with the authorship of the document with Augustine of Hippo and Jerome in the 4th century vouching for Paul as the author, but this eventually crumbled during the times of the Reformation, with the author being largely left unknown. The Greek speaking church fathers explicitly said that its character is neither in the Pauline letter writing style nor doctrine (The African Bible, 1999). Therefore, despite numerous publications on the epistle by different scholars, consensus has never been reached on many issues, including authorship.

The central theme of the epistle is the doctrine of Christ the Priest and His role as mediator between God and humanity (Koester, 1982:63). The opening verses of the epistle reveal Jesus as “Son of God”, “Creator Word”, “Image of the Father” and “Redeemer”, with two of the main Christological titles suggesting that Jesus is the Son of God seated at His right hand and the High Priest who has cleansed all sins (Hebrews 1:1-4). Therefore, as Christ transcends all things, the Jewish Christians had to endure severe persecutions (Hebrews 10:32-36) and being publicly abused and denigrated. The epistle was specifically written to them to give them solace as verse 36 announces “You need endurance to do the will of God and receive what he has promised”.

The epistle is very unconventional in that it is written in epistolary conventions that are evident in some parts, as well as being cast in the form of a sermon. The epistolary conventions are pointedly in the last eight verses of the book, with the sermonic attributes taking up most of the book. The appearance of the sermonic attributes can be largely ascribed to the circumstances the Jewish Christians found themselves in. They had gone through tough times imposed on them by a hostile society (Hebrews 6:9-12; 10:32-34), they were growing weak and dispirited (Hebrews 12:12) and their faith was wavering (Hebrews 10:23). They had also gone mute on hearing and were slow to learn and had lost enthusiasm in their public places of worship where they could hear the Word of God and build each other's faith (Hebrew 10:25). It was with this in mind that the author chose a sermonic tone to "exhort" the congregation towards Christian fellowship and love, as expounded in Hebrews 13:1-3, with exhortation being akin to a synagogue homily (Acts 13:15).

4.4.2 The analysis of the key verses in Hebrew 13:1-3

The key verse in the chosen biblical text is verse 2: "Do not neglect hospitality, for through it some have unknowingly entertained angels". Hospitality was considered an important virtue in early Christianity as apostles and others were often on the move from community to community, relying on the support of generous believers, and this was extended to the poor in Luke 14:12-14. Worship in itself is an act of hospitality by God, as Newman (2007:174) explains "in worship we are welcomed and received, through Christ and the Spirit, into God's triune communion, God's desire to be with us, God gathers us". The exhortations to be hospitable are not only intended for some, but for all (Romans 16:2; Philippians 2:29; 1Peter 4:9), with particular emphasis on local churches (1Timothy 3:2; Titus 1:8).

Hospitality is recorded in the Bible, including the Old Testament, where people received unexpected blessings because of entertaining strangers in their midst, as in the case of the Patriarch Abraham (Genesis 18:2-8) who gained God's blessings because he entertained three men he thought were strangers but who were in fact angels. Lot (Genesis 19:1-15) avoided certain disaster with his family because he entertained two angels; Rahab the harlot (Joshua 2:8-15) and her family avoided death in the invasion of Jericho; the widow of Zarephath by serving the stranger, the prophet Elijah, and her jar of flour never got used up nor did her oil run dry.

Therefore, those who have entertained and been merciful to strangers since time immemorial have gained God's grace and blessings, with His son reinforcing God's attitude towards strangers and making it a requirement for us.

4.4.3 The exegetical perspective of the stranger/foreigner from Ephesians 2:11-22

Most commentators agree that the writing of the letter was either AD 60-64 or AD 70-79, however, for the sake of our exegesis the date around AD 61 or thereabouts will be acceptable as Paul's missionary trip that included Ephesus was around AD 50 (Carson, *et al.*, 1992:307-310). The letter to the Ephesians is more of a sermon than an outright epistle with the author specifically intending for it to be circulated to various churches around the Ephesus area, i.e. in Asia Minor. The basic theme of the epistle is to exhort the Christians to celebrate the life of the church in Christ and to live their lives in a manner worthy of Christ.

The epistle places the position of the Gentiles prior to their conversion as a condition whereby they did not have the Messiah, nor did they have an outward relationship with God according to the Mosaic tradition. The people of the covenant of God placed them in a derogatory position as "uncircumcised", having no legal claim to the covenant promises to the nation of Israel and being strangers to all covenants' promises by God (Gunn, 2010:20-21). Unsurprisingly, the epistle has many baptismal themes so that it may originally have been intended to be composed as a baptismal homily as a forerunner to unity with Christ and among members of His church in the self-sacrificing love of Jesus himself.

4.4.4 The analysis of key verses in Ephesians 2:11-22

The key verses in the epistle can be grouped together as they seemingly emphasise the same subject matter, albeit, in a complementary manner. Ephesians 11-13: The opening verse acts as a reminder that Gentiles were ridiculed by the Jews calling them derogatory names and referred to as uncircumcised. The reference in the

verse of them being 'Gentiles in flesh' is a metaphor for them having no outward sign of a relationship with God in accordance to the Covenant Code, but by the blood of Christ they have 'become near', signifying their access to the awesomeness of God, as the people of the covenant.

Ephesians 14-17: The peace in verse 14, envisions the peace provided to the world by Christ as his purpose by God, which must be promulgated by the church throughout the world (3:1-21).

The church as a community of people of God should take leadership in the promotion of peace and take the prophetic and pedagogical role in the formation of conscience by welcoming all people regardless of their status, especially the poor, marginalised and the suffering (1Corinthians 12:12-13; Galatians 3:26-29). The church is called upon to 'break down the dividing wall of enmity', in that there should no longer be ethnic and racial hostility as Christ himself has abrogated the law as there should be a "new humanity" (the church) before God, as in Jesus' death God and the world are no longer strangers (cf. Isaiah 65:17,66:22; 2Corinthians 5:17; Revelation 21:1-2).

Ephesians 19-22: In Christ, all are the children of the common household of God where everybody is equal in dignity and privileges and no longer a stranger or sojourner, since access to God has been achieved through Jesus whose death has broken all barriers. The imagery of the building is used by the author to place the church with its foundations as the 'apostles and prophets' with Christ ('capstone') being the structure that holds the building together. In this structure, Christ, the church, will grow like the body with the Christian community becoming the temple of God.

4.4.5 The exegetical perspective of the stranger/foreigner from Philippians 3:20

It is generally accepted that the epistle to the Philippians was written in AD 62 while Paul was in prison in Rome. The city of Philippi was a Roman colony named after Phillip of Macedon the father of Alexander the Great, which Paul visited on his second missionary journey. The city itself was populated by a mixture of Macedonians and retired Roman soldiers with a Roman style of government and had

a very small Jewish population. The account of his missionary journey there is given in Acts 16:9-40, where he founded the Christian community around AD 50 assisted by Timothy and Silas. Paul's visit to Philippi on his second missionary journey was inspired by a vision from God (Acts 16:9-12) and the first meeting he attended there was convened by women (Acts 16:12-15) one of whom, Lydia, became the first convert in Europe.

The book of Philippians is characteristically Gentile in its nature as it is an informal letter with no doctrinal arguments nor a coherent plan in its spontaneous outpouring of love and gratitude, neither was there any error to refute or any wrongdoing to correct. The motive for writing this letter, it seems, was Paul's decision to send a thank you note to the Philippians from a missionary to a supporting church (Richison, 1996) and the admonition of the warring women in the church, Euodia and Syntyche in verse 4:1-2. The important themes in this letter throughout is personal joy, fellowship, the gospel and the purpose of Christian life as Christ-centred.

4.4.6 The analysis of the key verse in Philippians 3:20

The key verse 3:20a "But our citizenship is in heaven", is a promise of dual citizenship for the Christian both here on earth and, later in heaven. It is a word of hope and an encouragement to Christians to look forward to a brighter future despite the tribulations they may face in life. The analogy chosen by Paul to his audience in Philippi, being of Greek ancestry but of Roman citizenry by virtue of their colonial status, was immediately understood by them. They might have citizenship on earth, but they had another in heaven. This was an encouragement for the Christians to conduct themselves in a manner befitting their citizenship in heaven as wherever they were they should be mindful of where they belong, that is, heaven. This also acts as a reminder that we are to live as citizens of heaven in our time on earth because the moment we received Jesus Christ as our personal Saviour we also took heavenly citizenship.

Philippians 3:20b "and from it we also await a saviour, the Lord Jesus Christ" meaning we eagerly await the arrival of our Monarch on his second coming to earth from heaven where we have our citizenship (Richison, 1996). This enjoins Christians

to always have the excitement and expectation of the coming of Christ, and what awaits you in heaven. Heaven is the abode of all good things, where there is no pain, no mourning, no crying, no death or sin, only the fullness of joy and an unending succession of happiness beyond our imagination, and the glory and character of God is fully manifested forever. It is then incumbent on every Christian to have a cardinal guiding principle of living a Christ-centred life.

4.4.7 The exegetical perspective of the stranger/foreigner from 1 Peter 4:8-11

The epistle itself claims to have been written by “Peter the apostle” (1:1), and the church has historically accepted from the time of Eusebius for this to be the case, a fact strongly supported by the author’s claim to be a “witness to the sufferings of Christ” (1Peter 5:1). However, despite the strongly attested claim for authorship by the writer, some recent scholars have maintained that the epistle is pseudonymous (falsely ascribed) to Peter (Brown, 1997). “This argument is based on the premise that the cultivated Greek of the letter cannot be attributed to a Galilean fisherman like Peter” (Brown, 1997).

The theology is very Pauline, and the degree of church organisation it assumes would seem to discount Peter being the author. The genuine Peter would have referred to the period of the historical Jesus, however, the period of the letter reflects the reign of the Roman Emperors who reigned after the martyrdom of Peter.

The arguments against the authorship by Peter are counterbalanced by persuasive reasons including: Peter was a middle-class fisherman who very likely knew Greek as there is significant evidence that it was widely spoken in Galilee, or he might have used a secretary, Silvanus (cf. 1 Peter 5:12), to assist in writing the epistle. Over-emphasis should not be placed on the commonality of the theologies of Peter and Paul, albeit the themes in Peter emphasised suffering; there is compelling evidence that Peter does allude to some of the sayings of the historical Jesus (e.g. Matthew 5:10 in 1 Peter 3:14; Luke 12:35 in 1 Peter 1:13) and there is a strong probability that the letter was written during the reign of Nero (AD 54-68) before the persecution in Rome as reference is made to the letter being written in “Babylon” (1 Peter 5:13) as Christians used to refer to Rome.

The epistle was generally written to the Gentile Christians, in which he encourages them to endure suffering and persecution (1 Peter 1:6-7; 2:18-20; 4:1-4,12-19) by giving themselves entirely to God (1 Peter 4:19). It was a message of hope to those who persevere in faith while suffering persecution as they will certainly enjoy ultimate salvation since they are already enjoying God's saving promises here and now through the death and resurrection of Jesus Christ. The death of Christ was the substitute for sinners, and his death is the basis for their new life (1 Peter 3:13-22) and therefore Christians should live righteously in their homes and in society (1 Peter 2:11; 3:7). Just as Christ suffered and then entered into the glory of God, so too will his followers suffer before being exalted.

4.4.8 The analysis of the key verses in 1 Peter 4: 8-11

1 Peter 4:8-9: These verses act as an exhortation to respond to suffering in a godly way, as "love covers a multitude of sins" in the sense that seems to be, that love will overwhelm and offset the wrongs that are being done to us and the call for love be in connection to Parousia, as in Romans 13:8-10; 14:9. It also encourages Christians to be hospitable to strangers in a way that is worthy to God so as to continue on their way as co-workers in the truth because they have testified their love for all people before the church (Romans 12:13-21; Hebrews 13:2; 3 John 5-8).

1 Peter 4:10-11: The stewardship of the church is entrusted to every Christian as they all share in the responsibility of its mission through baptism and confirmation. This responsibility is borne by the gifts given to every Christian by the Holy Spirit so that they are invited to share them with others to build the Christian community. All Christians have the obligation, including the poorest, to use their God-given talents for sharing the spiritual and temporal resources with members of the community and the universal church (Matthew 25:1-13; 1 Corinthians 12: 4-30; Ephesians 4:3-7). It is therefore imperative as the good steward in God's spiritual household to dispense to others what has been entrusted to your care.

Conclusion

Hospitality towards strangers/foreigners is deeply embedded in the realms of biblical ethics as a virtue to be practised as characterised in the Old Testament by Abraham (Genesis 18:2-8) and in the New Testament by the church elders (1 Timothy 3:2). The preaching of Amos (5:21) and Isaiah (1:10-20) espoused the linkage of divine worship with respect for rights and justice, and thus the moral preaching of the prophets places its accent on the concept of social justice. The biblical admonition exhorting the Israelites was encapsulated in the following verse since they also had a history as foreigners themselves: "You shall not molest or oppress an alien, for you were once aliens yourselves in the land of Egypt". Israel should then have sympathy towards strangers in distress, be compassionate, be providers of their comfort to the best of their ability and be welcoming; as was shown by the kind and careful providence of God towards them in their time of distress in Egypt (Whybray, 1995:76).

Innumerable texts deal with interpersonal relationships with the Decalogue listing fundamental duties to others and the various Israelite legal codes paying attention to the physical and economic welfare of the vulnerable in society. Leviticus 19: 9-10 and Deuteronomy 24: 19-22, specifically spell out the Mosaic law that requires that during a harvest a portion should be put aside for the poor and the stranger for their well-being. Similarly, Deuteronomy 16: 11-12; 26: 11-12, makes it a social moral obligation for the hospitable treatment of the weaker members of society, the classic trio 'the widow, the orphan and the strangers', to be shown utmost compassion and respect. This is in many ways manifested in the mission of Jesus himself by his compassion and the utter commitment to heal the sick and feed the hungry, following the same long-held fundamental biblical ethic. This tradition of love of God and neighbour as fundamental tenets of the law enshrined in the Old Testament, has been repeatedly confirmed by Jesus when he declares in Matthew's gospel that he does not abolish the law and prophets but fulfils them (Matthew 5:17) and directs his disciples to continue the same mission in the life of the church (Matthew 10:7-8).

The role of Jesus as a host to strangers is captured in Mark 6: 30-44, where he fed the multitude. This is akin to God who fed the Israelites in the wilderness (Exodus 16), thus revealing himself of his relationship with the Father. The ministry of Jesus reveals Him accepting the hospitality of others as a guest, as evidenced in the welcome he received from Martha in Luke 10:38. In Hebrews 13: 1-3, the

exhortations to love reinforce the hallmarks of a true Christian that they should be in unity with the rest of the believers, regardless of their status in life as they may be unknowingly entertaining angels; as happened to the Patriarch Abraham and the subsequent blessings he received from that encounter. This in effect, encourages Christians to love one another with familial love as an ongoing process through their expression of welcoming strangers and remembering those who suffer. This is the basis for pastoral reflection in addressing the manifestation of xenophobia by remembering those who are going through persecution, suffering and rejection by doing good to those who are stigmatised and undesirable in the eyes of society. This is an expression of love and justice in accordance with God's covenant of love and reflecting on the consequences of our deeds in the coming judgement in the Kingdom of God.

4.5 Christian public ethics and the injunction to care for the over-all public

Christian public ethics is about operating in the public space, i.e. a non-church environment, where xenophobic practices are carried out. Christians exist in that public space as an institution (church) and as private human beings (individuals in the community and in their homes). It is in this space according to Muller (2004:300) where specific contexts and experiences are interpreted; in-context experiences are listened to and described; interpretations of experiences are made, described and developed; a description of experiences as it is continually informed by traditions of interpretation; a reflection on God's presence, as it is understood and experienced in a specific situation; a description of experience, understood through interdisciplinary investigation and the development of alternative interpretations that point beyond the local community. This suggests that our human actions as Christians should have an intentional goal of co-existence with other human beings as we are bound in contextual realities with other people. In this regard, *Ubuntu* means interdependence, communality, commonality and mutuality. However, the excesses of *Ubuntu* that manifest themselves in nepotism, corruption and benevolent acts of good and bad determined by family and community should be moderated by

Christian values, as observed by Magezi (2017b:118). Christian values are indeed needed to moderate human life.

Magezi (2020:4) asserts that true *Ubuntu* values are Christian values with a sense of humanity where human beings are universally bonded with Christ. He (Magezi) further elaborates that, “thus, when the humanistic notion of human dignity, based on human rights (*dignitas*), and the theological notion of the image of God (*imago Dei*) are considered together, pastoral care will be for the community by community individuals” (Magezi, 2020:4). This is reinforced by Louw’s (2014:178) assumption of transpection which relates to putting oneself into the head as opposed to the feet of another person; and introspection which he (Louw) explains as the awareness of the interconnectedness and interrelatedness of meaning within the network of relationships, akin to what is meant by *Ubuntu*: “I am a human being through another human being” (Magezi, 2020:7). Therefore, to achieve the objective of being universally bonded by Christ, we must be guided by the biblical text John 15:5: “..., because without me you can do nothing”. In Augustine’s view, we are totally dependent upon God’s generosity and unmerited attention to humanity, by which the process of healing may begin through the grace (*gratia*) of God that is freely (*gratis*) given (McGrath, 2001:446). Magezi (2017b:117-120) suggests a shift from traditional to liminal *Ubuntu* where Christ is the bond of all humanity (*imago Dei*), *Ubuntu* is inclusive, benevolence is judged by principles of common good for all humanity, service is to all humanity accompanied by responsibility and duty-bound norms and values, and theological life be considered as a pilgrimage of pressing on to higher ideals in Christ (Philippians 3:13).

4.6 *Ubuntu* and hospitality and the link to the Christian theological perspective

According to Sparks (1990), *Ubuntu* was created as a social security system based on reciprocal obligations that supported and protected the individual, and which obliged the individual to adhere to certain commitments in return. The assumption was not based on reciprocity to the giver but firmly based on the possibility of non-reciprocity. This then implies that *Ubuntu* implicates a form of survival that depends on the relationality that generosity is vital, but reciprocity is optional.

Furthermore, *Ubuntu* is cherished in a life grounded on appreciating the placing of a high value on harmony and community. According to Metz (2007:321-341), harmony manifests itself in solidarity and identity. Solidarity is having a relationship with every other human being and an obligation to pursue their well-being, especially in situations where they are not able to take actions on their own. This pertains to the fact that an individual is morally required to be concerned for the good of others. Therefore, “solidarity is the recognition of interdependence and the duty to act for the common good, that common good ultimately stretching to all who inhabit this planet” (Webb, 2017:252). Identity relates to a sense of shared belonging that is founded on a common vision of the nature of human life and relations in coordinating their behaviour to realise shared ends based on norms governing these. Christian ethics is guided by the principle “Do to others whatever you would like them do to you. This is the law and the prophets” (Matthew 7:12). This is encouraged by the words of Jesus, “the kingdom of God is among you” (Luke 17:21). Therefore, authentic Christian spirituality is undoubtedly concerned with the shaping of and practice of human life but embodies everyday practicalities and serves as a framework of ethics (Sheldrake, 2019: xi). In *Ubuntu* the failure to identify with each other could go beyond mere alienation and involve outright divisions between them as evidenced in the treatment of migrants and the subsequent violent actions of xenophobia directed at them. However, within theology the enabler is the Spirit while in *Ubuntu* it is identity and solidarity.

The Christian practices of hospitality within the Judeo-Christian tradition and scripture are theologically conceived as welcoming the stranger or alien into a home or congregation as an ethical responsibility mirroring the welcome of God in Jesus Christ (Sweeden, 2012:2). “A rather succinct description of the interrelation between *Ubuntu* and hospitality” is formulated by Mandela as follows (Stuit, 2013:31):

A traveller through our country would stop at a village, and he didn't have to ask for food or water. Once he stops, the people give him food, entertain him. That is one aspect of *ubuntu*, but *ubuntu* has various aspects.... (“*Ubuntu*”)

Many Christians scoff at the assertion that the sin of Sodom and Gomorrah was being inhospitable yet that is precisely the sin Jesus refers to when he talks about Sodom. Scripture is clear about the necessity of this for committed Christians as opposed to cultural Christians. What the Bible says is very important because the

Scriptures are the basis of our faith. Since Jesus clearly says the sin of Sodom was being inhospitable, not other failings associated with Sodom, and without ever mentioning homosexuality as the sin of Sodom, we can place the scriptures above human opinion and as wise Christians joyfully agree with Jesus on this issue.

Solidarity as foundational in *Ubuntu* is also encapsulated by Pope John Paul II's definition of solidarity as, "a firm and persevering determination to commit oneself to the common good; that is to say to the good of all and each individual, because we are all really responsible for all" (John Paul II, 1987:38). It is, therefore, the destiny of all to be in communion with God and to the fullest fellowship with all human beings. "Beloved, if God so loved us, we also must love another. No one has ever seen God. Yet, if we love one another, God remains in us, and his love is brought to perfection in us" (1John 4:11-12).

According to Gutierrez (1974:198), to refrain from serving is tantamount to refusing to love, and refusing to love is a sin as you reject the communion and fellowship of all people, and therefore you reject the very essence of human existence. The churches in Brazil have taken the attitude that if Christ's proclamation of God's Kingdom of love and justice is to make any sense, we must be at the forefront of public social issues in the country despite people having different theological perspectives. To accept migrants in our midst is to be mindful that acceptance is the cornerstone of the fellowship of all people. It is in the parable of the Good Samaritan that we find the inversion of the original question when Christ was asked "And who is my neighbour" and the reply "Which of these three, in your opinion, was neighbour to the robbers' victim" (Luke 10:29,36). Indeed, it is the Samaritan who was the neighbour as he approached the injured man and made him his neighbour. The neighbour is not whom you find in your path but rather it is whom you approach and actively seek out (Gutierrez, 1973:198-199). Pope Francis has made a call to us not to forget the tenderness and gentleness of Christ's love that has been aptly captured by the Prophet Isaiah "A bruised reed he shall not break, and a smouldering wick he shall not quench, until he establishes justice on the earth" (Isaiah 42:3-4). As disciples of Christ we are also enjoined to show gentleness to others (Brislin, 2017:9).

Individual local positioning and church positioning in the community suggests it is a challenge to be integrated and engage with issues affecting people in that community. The church and the individual Christian have a duty to be engaged according to *Ubuntu's* notion of identity and solidarity. Identity and solidarity imply a vector towards the other. The invitation into the community is also an invitation into the socio-cultural context of the community whereby hospitality has to be examined taking into account those cultural and socio-historical factors of society, the underlying models of worship and theological nuances as well as differences such as culture, race, ethnicity and language that can act as contributory factors to a welcoming or non-welcoming environment (Sweeden, 2012:3). Bennett (2004) argues that “practicing hospitality means a radical openness to the other, attending to him or her in sharing and receiving insights and perspectives about self and the world”. This means therefore, that being hospitable is a practice and discipline that requires us to do small things that might seem inconsequential in the eyes of the world but which from the perspective of the gospel is a manifestation of the kingdom of God (Newman, 2007:174). In fact, this is reinforced by the familiar verse “For God so loved the world that he gave his only Son...” as a testament to His love that is universal and that has been revealed in one particular place and time and in one particular person (Newman, 2007).

African hospitality is embedded in the notion that no one is an island and emphasis is placed on interdependence, as every person is part of the whole community. Gathogo (2008:276) asserts that this agrees with the Pauline theology that we need to recognise other people's talents and gifts in order to strengthen the community at large and the church (Ephesians 4:10-12, 1Corinthians 12). The communal nature of hospitality in the *Ubuntu* sense is aptly captured by the Sesotho idiom: '*matsoho a hlatswana*', meaning that one hand helps to wash the other hand. In other words, by helping another person you are helping yourself. This is related to the fact that Jesus said that “.... whatever you did for one of these least brothers of mine, you did for me” as a sign of his presence and active involvement in the worlds of those who are trying to do good and their loving deeds to others, a duty to act by Christians just like the solidarity and identity in *Ubuntu*. Hospitality is espoused by the verse (Leviticus 19:33-34):

When an alien resides with you in your land, do not molest him. You shall treat the alien who resides with you no differently than the natives born among you; have the same love for him as for yourself; for you too were once aliens in the land of Egypt. I, the Lord, am your God.

This could be used to exhort South Africans to desist from acts of xenophobia as this is contrary to the ethos of *Ubuntu* that teaches the dignity of all people, as our well-being is intertwined and communally shared.

According to Gathogo (2007:115-116) in Kikuyu language a person who is hospitable is called *mutugi*, which is synonymous with 'a gracious person' and/or 'hospitable person'. It shows that Africans associate grace with hospitality, as grace is a divine attribute. God is described as 'gracious' among Africans with the person being hospitable partaking in God's gracious acts of doing good unto others, including working, for assisting in economic or social well-being of the society in general as well as the individual. Gathogo (2007:118) asserts that the Kikuyu proverb *Indo nikurimithania*, meaning 'wealth comes by working together', enjoins the community to work together in cooperation and mutual support for prosperity and success which is an agreement with Christ's admonition that no town or house divided against itself will stand (Matthew 12:25); with God as determiner of our being it suggests our duty to our fellow human beings – be like your Father in heaven (1John 4:16-18).

In some theological discourses *Ubuntu* is construed as identical to the biblical concept of kinship and hospitality (Psalm 133:1). Thus, some of the Mediterranean biblical values are used in reference to the concept of *Ubuntu* by some scholars as being synonymous (Tutu 1999:6). The Christian ideal of existential being is synonymous with *Ubuntu* as it lends itself closely to biblical moral values such as love, compassion, friendship and peace. In the case of xenophobic attacks in 2008, the Bible was invoked in social media with the moral imperatives of verses like "blessed are the peacemakers, for they will be called the children of God" (Matthew 5:9), as these narratives reflect on moral bankruptcy as evidenced in the attacks, and a cry for a return to the moral and ethical reorientation of African society as guided by the ethos of *Ubuntu* – humaneness., According to *Ubuntu* one has a moral obligation to provide warmth for all humanity regardless of whether they are outsiders or not. However, the moral aspect of *Ubuntu* in South Africa has not yet

begun to arrive at any solid convictions or an authentic basis for actions. In an article, Walter Rauschenbusch (2014:286-287), illustrates that *Ubuntu* has been talked about in different spheres and has been dismissed, not because the country has been able to solve its problems, but because we have not yet confronted the problems the country faces.

4.7 Chapter summary and conclusion

African communal cultural behaviours like humanness, hospitality, respect and love are restored through *Ubuntu*. The Western individualistic way of life without offering, suggesting or allowing ways for Africans to participate fully in the different ways of life that have been introduced, has overtaken traditional values. Therefore, Buthelezi (1995:166-173) asserts that “we must focus on the present situation using the Good News to address itself to the problems of the culture and society in which it is immersed and rediscover what it signifies to be human in the situation we find ourselves in, with the different challenges of today”. Msafiri (2002:86-87) asserts that “the metaphors that reflect the relationship between the human community and the church can indeed be helpful in positioning *Ubuntu* ethos in the re-forming of communities that abide by the ethics that guide societal morality”. Thus, we need to revisit and reinterpret the Bible considering the contemporary socio-political problems (i.e. *kairos* – xenophobia) and our experiences as Africans.

Considered from a moral philosophical perspective, the above discussion revealed that the relationship between *Ubuntu* and hospitality can be characterised as two sides of the same coin. Genuine and true *Ubuntu* automatically assumes hospitality and vice versa. Such a human disposition can be maintained, sustained and made possible from humanity’s natural common grace perspective. However, as also illustrated from biblical texts and theological discussion, the relationship and interplay of *Ubuntu* and hospitality reveal the very heart, essence and outward expression of how Christians should relate to one another. These concepts indicate an embodiment of Christian love, neighbourliness and concern. Practising such ideals is an embodiment of the ‘one another’ formula of the New Testament, Matthew. 25: 35-45, Mark. 6:34, Mark. 12:30-31.

Chapter 5: Public practical theology and public pastoral care intersection with Christian ethics within the context of *Ubuntu* and hospitality to migrants

5.1 Introduction

This chapter explores the current state of public practical theology in South Africa in shaping public policy and its responses to issues affecting communities, with particular emphasis on xenophobia. The proponents of public practical theology while having the same or similar approaches on how it should be practised, seemingly differ on the pastoral mode of advocacy. The differences in perspectives vary from being occupied with the more abstract paradigmatic, epistemological and methodological concerns by the scholars in this field. This obviates the fundamental practical theological dimension of the task of public practical theology, which should prioritise a concern with the agency role of the church and other religious communities – albeit not in isolation from other role players – in shaping public policy.

5.2 Public practical theology and interconnection with Christian public ethics

The paradigmatic shift to the ‘public’ needs to be sensitive to the contexts, such as cultural, economic, social, political, racial, religious, ethnic, etc, therefore, there needs to be sensitivity to the plurality of the situations depending on the plurality of worldviews in each geographical space (Meylahn, 2017a:1). Meylahn further asserts that the paradigm needs to be radically hermeneutical according to his understanding of Caputo’s (1987; 2000) interpretation of the notion of radical hermeneutics as non-betrayal of the original difficulty of life with metaphysics. This entails that there should be an awareness that all that there is are texts/interpretations or stories and there should not be a single interpretation or a single story (Meylahn, *ibid*). Therefore, cognisance should be taken of the role of language in a world where the inability to escape language closing the door to the underlying universal structures or essential truths exists. The paradigm needs to be

open to and be aware of the multiple ways of interpreting knowledge and texts (Meylahn, 2017c:2).

It is important to note that the focus of public practical theology is not limited to inter-human or intra-human behaviour but is particularly concerned with the religious dimensions of lived life viewed according to the prevalent dynamics and of its involvement in particular situations (de Wet, 2017:83). The importance of the pastoral hermeneutic cycle, as developed by Holland and Henriot, and adapted for South African contexts by Cochrane, De Gruchy and Peterson (1991:13-25) cannot be discounted, as it offers an analysis of the context to give meaning to cause-effect reasoning. It thus addresses one of the tasks of a public theology that tends to reflect on the role of religion in the public sphere in modern or modernising societies such as in South Africa in challenging public theologians to reflect on, among other things, the issues in the public sphere by different religious claims (Dreyer & Pieterse, 2010:2). This may be related to, but not limited to, opposing views on marriage, homosexuality, abortion, migration, xenophobia, same-sex marriages, and so forth.

Public pastoral care involves “the shift from the “public” of the church and academy to the “public” of contemporary society informed by public theology in that it develops for public debate and political interpretation such things as acts directed towards the healing, sustaining, guiding, reconciling and nurturing of persons whose troubles and concerns arise in the context of daily interactions and ultimate means and concerns (Tracy, 1981:5; Graham, 2000:12).

It does, therefore, broaden the scope of pastoral responsibility and action beyond its conventional counselling and personal care to the public domain (Miller-McLemore, 2004:62).

To achieve the task of moving to the public sphere, pastoral care should move away from care that is only care of the human soul (*cura animarum*) to also include care of the human web. This could be achieved by contributing to a humane society, fostering values such as unconditional love and service to those in need, preservation of the earth and safeguarding it against violent exploitation and for telecommunication to foster equality to counter threats of domination (Louw, 2002:347-348). Therefore, the shift to the public arena involves a mind shift on the part of the Christian pastoral caregiver in that they should be mindful of the tensions

in the pastoral mandate of whether to “love God by loving the stranger as a neighbour (Luke 10:27) or making the disciples of all nations” (Matthew 28:18-20).

The Christian public ethic towards migrants can be aptly captured in two main messages in the New Testament or specifically the teachings of Jesus Christ. The first message is captured in Matthew 7:12, “Do to others whatever you would like them do to you. This is the law and the prophets”, which one would consider as the ‘golden rule’. It is this scriptural passage that prohibits us subjecting others to the brutality, violence and mistreatment that migrants are subjected to (Koenane, 2018:1-7). The second biblical text “The second is like it: You shall love your neighbour as yourself” (Matthew 22:39), which is the second commandment of Christ, hence, a moral imperative that suggests it is morally binding. It therefore compels the Christian to express his love to strangers instead of mistreating or oppressing them, as everybody desires to be treated with courtesy, compassion and kindness. Gula (1989:179) observes that in the scriptures the Greek word *agape* means love. According to him (Gula), it seems to be more appropriate to translate the word *agape* as ‘hospitality’ in contemporary terms as the Greek concept does not work for many these days, since within the Christian framework nowadays, love is expressed more profoundly as ‘hospitality’. This is reinforced by Matthew 25:35-36), with Jesus suggesting that the way a person was treated as a stranger would be the measure that will decide a person’s fate, (Koenane, 2018:6)

To advance the narrative further, it will be useful to quote briefly the views held by Vorster (2012) in his insightful article on ‘Christian ethics in the face on secularism’. Vorster’s understanding of secularism was shaped by the views of Laeyendecker (2005:903) and Martin (2011:105), as cited by Vorster. He asserts that it is a sociological concept that describes the marginalisation of religion in society and the declining influence of the Christian religion in certain parts of the world (Vorster, 2012:1). The decline in the influence of Christianity can be ascribed to the surge of rationalism, pluralism and relativism in the modern secular thought and action. Vorster (2012:1) poses the question: what exactly is Christian ethics? Christian ethics can be defined from the perspective of a Roman Catholic approach that is characterised by the insistence on mediation, acceptance of natural law and the role of the church; or, from the perspective of Protestant Christian ethics which is

moulded around the emphasis on freedom, the importance of scripture and the theological nature of the discipline (Gale, 2005:265).

Vorster (2012:2) argues that Christian ethics has a future as an important role player in the morality of secularised society if the discipline is based on a well-defined and plausible meta-theoretical foundation. Vorster asserts that the meta-theoretical foundation is based upon John 1:1 as the three manifestations of the revelation of God, namely, (1) the creational word (the book of nature), (2) the written word (the Bible), and (3) the incarnate Word (Jesus Christ), and these being necessary for a Christian ethical epistemology for contemporary secularised society (Vorster, 2012:5).

Vorster is of the view that God bestowed on every human being a sense of morality in His revelation in the book of nature, which was called natural law in the early Reformation period, as embodied in the Catholic Tradition. He prefers to call them creational gifts as they were given by God to all humanity, not to bring about their own salvation, but to preserve law and order in human society through good moral norms (Vorster, 2012:5). However, the concept of natural law has fierce critics, especially among Protestants, who otherwise have very little in common except their vehement opposition to natural-law thinking, with the opposition not only limited to revisionist thinkers but also embraced by those who are confessed to be orthodox. Therefore, across the spectrum of Protestantism there is broader consensus on the rejection of natural law as a metaphysical notion of morality, namely, a law that God communicates to all people without the need for special revelation (such as the Bible), and that therefore it applies to all people at all times and in all places.

The recognition of natural law safeguards Christian ethics from its exclusive claim of moral authority and Biblicism (the literal and a-historical reading of the Biblical text), however, it fulfils one condition. Therefore, such morality should not distrust the other sources of Christian moral thinking being the written, and the Incarnate Word. The importance of the scripture in the classic Reformed view, is seen as the book containing a continuous message unfolding in various underlying themes, such as God's election of his people through to transience and resurrection, with the main theme being the kingship of God and His entering into a personal relationship with mankind (Vorster, 2012:6). The justification of scripture as the divine authority is

presented as an argument based on acceptance of its 'scope of the whole' in agreement with the 'consent of all parts' as espoused in Acts 10:43 (*ibid*). The Incarnate Word is Jesus Christ himself (John 1:1) from whom many exemplary Christian moral theories flow from His teachings and conduct (self-sacrifice, humility, servanthood, forgiveness, obedience to God, etc.), that require Christians to follow in his footsteps by promoting peace and bringing hope to their fellow mankind. The morals of the Incarnate Word instil in Christians the need to be the custodians of justice for the poor, oppressed and marginalised of society and the powers of the day (Vorster, 2012:7). According to Vorster it is imperative that Christian ethics is practised in accordance with the book of nature, the written word and the Incarnate Word.

There are many differing perspectives concerning the approaches to issues pertaining to Christians in contemporary society, such as: the elimination of xenophobia in South African society, synergies from public practical theology, public pastoral theology, and public Christian ethics. *Ubuntu* and hospitality are essential to achieve this end, as both rely on the context of the situation. As theology goes public it will be seen as transformational, taking into account the ethos espoused by *Ubuntu* of humanity, taking into account and learning from people's experiences, and being seen as bridging the three epistemological spheres by exploring: theological, historical Western approaches and African wisdom and tradition and be able to engage with issues on an ongoing basis (Magezi, 2018:8).

As Williams (2016:2) puts it, Christian communities are duty-bound to inculcate civic virtues that create social flourishing and endeavour to exercise those tasks of decision-making within the social milieu for maintaining and sustaining a humane environment. This is attested by Mnyadu (1997:81), who posits that "from an *Ubuntu* perspective it is the very human essence itself, which finds expression in daily living by acts of love and efforts to create harmonious relationships in the community and the world beyond". Koenane (2018), thus argues that "from the *Ubuntu* and Christian perspectives, in which the community is a foundational basis for the principles of becoming are established, it is unsurprising that collective guilt is not far-fetched". This he interprets from the "socio-moralist point of view in that Christian morality and *Ubuntu* go against the current response from the South African public towards nationalist prejudices and xenophobia in its Afrophobic form". It is in this context that

both Christian values and *Ubuntu* principles can foster a culture of *Philoxenia*, "the principle of loving, caring and showing compassion to strangers as set out in the Bible" (Koenane, 2018:2).

5.3 Practical theology as a theoretical and pragmatic understanding within the context of xenophobia: a shift in emphasis to public practical theology

Christian communities are called to act against all kinds of dehumanisation, which entails not opting out of public and social issues either current or existing but providing a different vision and identity in the lived world. Hence, every person has inherently good character, even though humans suppress the goodness and demonstrate bad behaviour, (Gyekye, 1991:324). This involves moving from the church existing within its own walls; including a clerical paradigm and its own praxis in the world, to examining the church's strategy for creating and influencing the structures of care in the wider secular society (Browning, 1996:57). This is reinforced by the view espoused by Gathogo (2007:119) that theological practitioners in Africa have to pursue an agenda that is pastorally holistic in society, in that it strives for relevance and engages with pressing public challenges for African Christianity and social development, while disentangling itself from Western theological approaches. It is therefore useful to be cognisant of the fact that, taken together and independently, both *Ubuntu* and Christian values prevail on human beings to act and treat vulnerable migrants or strangers with respect and kindness, and with compassion as was extended to the stranger in the parable of the Good Samaritan.

The theological studies undertaken by clergy are basically theory-laden, so practical theology attempts to demystify the underlying theory. The actions, as such, of the dominant theory are laid bare by the practical theological studies that are involved with the actions of the church as the guardian of moral values. According to Browning (1996:55-56), to understand and practise practical theology one must ask or undertake the four fundamental questions/tasks, that is:

- 'how do we understand this concrete situation in which we must act?' – this relies on the interplay of institutional systems and how they converge on the situation.

- 'what should be our praxis in this concrete situation?' – the bringing together of symbolic and actional norms into an intimate relationship with the particularities of the situation.
- 'how do we critically defend the norms of our praxis in this concrete situation?' – the defence of these norms is what distinguishes the revised correlational approach to practical theology, and,
- 'what means, strategies, and rhetoric should we use in this concrete situation?' – this poses the issue of where people are in the process of transformation.

Osmer (2008:4) maintains that the task of practical theology entails answering the following questions: first, what is going on, what is the situation and contextual analysis (empirical-descriptive)? second, why is this going on? This is an interpretation and understanding (interpretive) of the situation. Third, what ought to be going on (normativity)? This entails developing a perspective and understanding from the normative texts. Fourth, what are the specific, concrete steps that should be taken to respond to the situation (pragmatic action)? As by its very nature, practical theology should result in strategic actions.

Muller (2004:300) postulates that practical theology consists of seven movements which are informed by:

a specific context and interpreted experience; in-context experiences are listened to and described; interpretations of experiences are made, described and developed; a description of experiences as they are continually informed by traditions of interpretation; a reflection on God's presence, as it is understood and experienced in a specific situation; a description of experience, and augmented through interdisciplinary investigation and the development of alternative interpretations that point beyond the local community.

Miller-McLemore (2012:26) rightly stated that practical theology has disrupted the space occupied by academic theology by pushing for a fresh theology that is not abstracted from life. It is about taking theology out to the streets and using what is learned from the streets to assess the adequacy of biblical, historical and doctrinal claims.

Miller-McLemore (2012:20) usefully describes practical theology as referring to four distinct enterprises with different audiences or objectives. She (Miller-McLemore 2012: 20) stated that practical theology is:

{a} discipline among scholars and an activity of faith among believers. And it has two other common uses; it is a method for studying theology in practice and it is a curricular area of sub-disciplines in the seminary. Practical theology refers to an activity of believers seeking to sustain a life of reflective faith in the everyday life, a method or way of analysing theology in practice used by religious leaders and by teachers and students across the theological curriculum, a curricular area in theological education focused on ministerial practice and sub-specialities, and, finally, an academic discipline pursued by a smaller subset of scholars to support and sustain these first three enterprises.

Miller-McLemore (2012a:20) noted that each of the aspects of practical theology points to different locations, that is: from daily life to the library, and fieldwork to classroom, congregation to community, academic guild and global context. She (Miller-McLemore 2012a:26) remarked that practical theology is about returning theology to the people. She added that, as an academic discipline, practical theology is secondary to the work and practice of most Christians and scholars. It is also primarily a way of doing in daily life what is fundamental to Christian faith. This is emphasised by Grab (2005:196) that practical theology needs to explore the symbolic strength of Christianity in the face of today's complex socio-cultural conditions, for making sense of life and successfully coping with its needs.

Poling (2011:153) is of the opinion that practical theology can be defined according to the requisites of the research project and he categorises it into the following four definitions, namely:

- Scientific definition: "Practical theology is critical and constructive reflection within a living community about human experience and interaction, involving a correlation of the Christian story and other perspectives, leading to an interpretation of meaning and value, and resulting in everyday guidelines and skills for the formation of persons and communities."
- Ecclesial definition 1: "[Practical] theology is a set of beliefs, attitudes, and behaviours motivated by the Christian gospel and practiced by Christian

communities to care for all people-resources for survival and healing, trustworthy community, and empowerment for justice-work on behalf of others”.

- Ecclesial definition 2: “Practical theology is a sub-discipline of theology that generates theological reflection on the doctrines and practices of religious communities out of sustained attention to the suffering and hope of persons toward the goal of transforming the society”.
- Social transformation definition: “Practical theology is theological interpretation of the unheard voices of personal and community life for the purpose of continual transformation of faith in the true God of love and power toward renewed ministry practice and a transformed world”.

Poling (2011:161-168) addresses his definitions of practical theology by acknowledging that reflection in practical theology begins with the recognition of the presence of difference and otherness in experiences. This reflection then leads to the awareness of tensions within the self and the tension between oppression and liberation in the institutions and ideologies of community. He further posits that, the reflection leads to one’s ultimate horizon, one’s understanding of truth or God and whether these truths, which are part of our inherited and constructed religious vision, are abusive or redemptive. This reflection reaches a critical point when, he observes, God calls the researcher into practices of transformation and uncovers the resistance thereof.

The relevancy of these methods and definitions of practical theology in this work are crucial and important, as they will act as a guide alongside the research context without being pedantic to any of them, as Van Huyssteen (1999:428) is of the opinion that all theology should start from the context. Thus, public practical theology directed and in collaboration with *Ubuntu* and hospitality towards migrants in a multicultural context could only emerge from the moment of praxis, bearing in mind that *Ubuntu* itself has been used in diverse contexts by different people for various purposes (Buqa, 2016:21)

5.4 Public practical theology within the context of xenophobia

In recent years, practical theology has evolved from being primarily concerned with the practice of the church and clergy to include public issues such as poverty and the

plight of migrants. Dreyer (2004:919-920) argues that practical theology should not be solely understood as focusing on the church and clergy. The vision for practical theology should be broadened to include the everyday life of people at local, national and global levels. This position that practical theology should include a public dimension was noted by Dreyer (2004:919). Practical theology should critically reflect on both the Christian tradition as well as social and political issues (Dreyer 2004:919). Magezi (2019b:133) in his insightful article 'Practical Theology in Africa – situation, approaches, framework and agenda proposition' rightly observed that "Practical Theology in Africa is faced with a challenge of developing a holistic practical theological framework that includes practical spirituality, social, physical, political and economic issues" (Magezi,2019a:133).

The shift in emphasis from practical theology to public practical theology is a major development that is acknowledged by many practical theologians (Magezi, 2018; Dreyer, 2004,2011; Dreyer & Pieterse, 2010; Osmer & Schweitzer, 2003). Osmer and Schweitzer (2003: 218) helpfully explain that the task of public practical theology is discerned in three ways: first, it is about ensuring that the public is one of the audiences of practical theology. Second, it is to ensure that practical theology includes everyday concerns and issues in its reflection. Third, practical theology should facilitate a dialogue between theology and contemporary culture. Vanhoozer and Strachan (2015:16-17) in 'The pastor as public theologian' advised that the pastor should be a theologian by asking 'what is God saying in Christ'. At the same time the pastor should be a public figure which means that they should 'publicly be involved in and for the community'. The focus on public issues in public theology is to ensure that theology engages key social issues such as poverty (Miller-McLemore, 2005:95-106).

Graham (2017:1) argues further that the churches in the face of denominationalism and disunity could advance in a common cause of practical witness to society, and embrace the causes of social reform, justice and human welfare as living expressions of the Gospel. This will entail a move away from a primary objective as training for ordained ministry, towards an investigation into the church as a community of practice (Graham, 2017:3). Stoddart (2014a:321-329) in his article 'Public Practical Theology in Scotland: with particular reference to the independence referendum' submits that practical theologians had to engage themselves with public

issues such as spirituality in health care, violence against women, poverty, anti-sectarianism, peacebuilding and cultural identities as well as the independence referendum.

He (Stoddart, 2014a:345) observed that 'critical faithfulness' is a slippery objective that bears within it tensions for all practical theologians, as it is not self-evident as to the relative weight that should be ascribed to biblical and theological traditions in relation to people's contemporary experiences. Therefore, the practical theologian should help Christians to discern the tension and feel empowered to articulate their own struggles with the text without feeling that their ambivalence is maverick or 'unfaithful'. The more urgent issue will be how Christians in congregations are helped to draw on the Bible and theological traditions to develop a stance on specific public issues (Stoddart, 2014a:345).

Migration has been described in 2005 by Pope Benedict XVI as the 'sign of the times', meaning that it is a feature of our contemporary times that challenges the church to reflection and a new praxis (Field, 2017:2). Therefore, practical theology in the South African context must go public in response to the *kairos* (i.e. xenophobia) facing the church that affords a time of challenge and opportunity, that requires a response in praxis, ethics and theology (*ibid.*). Thus, practical theology in moving to the public sphere/issues ensures it will be in line with the argument of the *Kairos Document* (1985), that an adequate theological response must be grounded in social analysis that obviates glossing over the *kairos*, hence, offering a proper and adequate response to the *kairos*.

Dreyer (2010:1) opines in his incisive article 'Religion in the public sphere: What can public theology learn from Habermas's latest work?' that although religion still plays a role in the public sphere, practising religion in the public sphere is both problematic to the audience (i.e. the public) and the theologian. Habermas by his own admission said that his all-consuming passion was the conceptual triad of 'public space', 'discourse' and 'reason', hence his foray into religion in the public sphere, for its own sake, and the contribution it can make to the formation of public opinion and the public will (Dreyer 2010:4). Therefore, his (Habermas) observation that religion has to renounce the "claim to a monopoly of interpretation and to shape life as a whole" as "religious traditions contain a semantic potential that could contribute to 'social

solidarity' and 'normative awareness'" (Habermas, 2008:111). Dreyer (2010:6-7) surmises that theologians can learn from Habermas' work the importance of communicating rationality, life world and social solidarity and that there cannot be a religious claim to a monopoly on a world view. In addition, theologians can discern from Habermas' reluctance to acknowledge religion, that theologians need not enter public discourses from a position of superiority or from faith-based claims, but to approach public theology as described by Kim (2007:1) as a "deliberate use of common language in a commitment to influence public decision-making, and also to learn from substantive public discourse".

In the South African context, the approach to public theology cited in Dreyer's article also highlights the separate but similar views taken by De Villiers and De Gruchy. De Villiers (2005:530) states that:

The crucial question with regard to the effective promulgation of the Christian vision of a good South African society is: Should it be promulgated in the broader South African society in its distinctively Christian form, or is some translation of it needed to ensure its wider acceptance.

In his second thesis of the seven theses on the formulation of public theological praxis, he writes:

...good public theological praxis requires the development of language that is accessible to people outside the Christian tradition, and is convincing in its own; but it also needs to address Christian congregations in a language whereby public debates are related to the traditions of faith.

The observations of placing public theology in the public sphere and the subsequent impediments it may encounter, will be discussed in more detail later as we explore the meaningful contribution of *Ubuntu*, hospitality and Christian ethics in addressing the *kairos* (xenophobia).

Pieterse (2017:140), writing in the context of missiology, asserts that theology today should engage itself in public themes being global in scope, have a holistic depth and reach, and be robust in clarifying Christian truth as public speech. Pienaar and Muller (2012:7) assert that a theology that allows for personal stories, in the present study – xenophobia, and takes them seriously, has the possibility of being authentic and relevant, therefore can be acknowledged as public theology. In light of the

student movement concerning the issue that statues must fall at South African universities, Magezi (2018:2) makes an observation that practical theology could make a significant contribution by adopting a public practical theological stance by drawing from theological traditions and resources as a means of making a meaningful contribution to public discourse and coexistence. Magezi (2018:6) asserts that in the South African context, where theology has a baggage of association with apartheid, a concerted effort should be undertaken to explore the opportunities and possibilities of explicitly making practical theology assume a public practical theological approach, and pastoral care assume a public pastoral care role. Therefore, theology will enter the public debate and make its contribution through a public practical theology nexus.

5.5 Public pastoral care within the context of xenophobia

The diverse challenges for the churches in the South African contextual synopsis are to respond to public issues that engulf and directly affect the lives and progress of people, and the need to participate in discourses that tend to address the socio-public issues such as xenophobia, corruption, oppression, et cetera. This necessitates a need to respond to public issues as a concern for theological disciplines such as practical theology, public theology and pastoral care (Magezi, 2018:1). Osmer and Schweitzer (2003) are of the view that practical theology should be a facilitator of a dialogue between theology and contemporary culture. This is emphasised by Koppel (2015:151) in his assertion that practising public theology will require that both the pastoral care practitioner and theologian be cognisant of the issues that concern groups of people (migrants facing xenophobia in South Africa) and the population as a whole (South Africans perpetrating acts of xenophobia), rather than individuals in isolation. This will enable theorists and practitioners to refine their methods and purposes through the broader lens of framing pastoral care ministries.

Lartey and Sharp (2015:134) maintained that public pastoral practice encourages engaging with multiple public conversation partners, negotiating complex tensions in society and being accountable to those where pastoral theology is implicated, to discern thoughtful dialogue. Williams (2016:2-3) contends that this shift to public pastoral care, effectively posits theology to engage with social issues to participate in

creating a healthy community in addition to spiritual issues. Forrester (2005:39) warns that “existing religious debates and reasons from the public sphere take away an important tool for understanding the current climate that is the post-Christian, post-secular world that needs new practices of theological interpretation”. This new location of accountability poses a dilemma for pastoral theologians as it requires a new language, new rules of engagement, and new conversation partners where it is important to note that there is no such thing as a generic public or society (Leslie, 2008:83). This has been aptly described, by one of the leaders in pastoral care, Miller-McLemore (2018:318) as moving from the exclusive focus upon “living human documents”, to attend also to the “living human web”.

Practical theology at this public intersection is ‘murky’ and unclear (Magezi, 2019:1). Magezi (2019:1) writing in the context of a public pastoral care definition, rightly noted that:

Despite the recognition of the need for pastoral care to address broader social issues, the vexing questions and issues that currently remain somewhat like a black box or lacking clarity are the following: what does public pastoral care look like? How should public pastoral care be conceptualised in practice? How can public pastoral care be done? What does pastoral mean when engaging with social issues?

However, it should be noted that public theology has been practised for centuries as it is about the lived experiences of Christians where a Christian interacts with social, political and practical issues and challenges. The ever-present shortcomings during this period has been that public theology has been practised leading individuals to call for a reimagining of how Christians engage with the world around them (Levesque, 2014:38). This has led to a re-think as espoused by Miller-McLemore in the metaphor of the living ‘human web’, recognising that the world an individual Christian and the institutional church exists in is diverse and complex (Magezi, 2019:4). Mannion (2009:151) rightly observed that public theology is about public ecclesiology as it is concerned with ecclesiological questions of the church’s relevance to issues affecting people today. Unsurprisingly, public ecclesiology, pastoral care and *diakonia* intersect indicating a clear public pastoral role for the church. Pastoral care needs a “theological theory that enables practical theological reflection of pastoral ministry that can draw insights from the core task of practical theological interpretation” (Osmer, 2008:4):

- as descriptive-empirical practice it will inform the pastoral theologian/practitioner to gather information that is useful to discern patterns and particular contexts, episodes, or situations
- as an interpretive task to draw on theories of the humanities and sciences to better understand and explain why these patterns and dynamics are occurring
- as a normative task it will enable the pastoral theologian/practitioner to draw on the biblical concepts to construct ethical norms to guide and provide responses to the existential questions in order to interpret the situations, episodes, or contexts presented from a hermeneutical perspective
- as a pragmatic task to devise holistic specific, concrete causes of action that will influence situations in ways that are desirable through emotional-narrative support and cognitive behavioural interventions.

Therefore, the usefulness of the cycle proposed by Osmer (2008:4) “serves as a development of praxis that functions as a constructive expression of the interplay between tradition (Scripture), context and interpretation” (Smit, 2015:2).

Kim’s (2017:61) concluding analysis of current public approaches to public theology promoted two key approaches that are relevant to pastoral care. The first emphasises the interplay between theory and practice, between theology and the church and practical theological disciplines, while the second appraises particular issues in different socio-political contexts to develop methodologies for contextual public theology (Magezi, 2019:4). The two approaches as espoused by Kim (2017:61-62) directly apply to a public pastoral care approach, as it pertains to our discussion on xenophobia in South Africa, taken with the fourth gap in current public theological conceptualisations of supporting minorities, the poor, marginalised and the voiceless, which needs to be given a top priority. Moving pastoral theology and care into the public sphere requires a re-think on the part of the pastoral theologian/practitioner to modify their theological assumptions and mandates (Leslie, 2008:95). According to Tracy (1981:5), this involves being mindful of the three publics that should be engaged by theology: society, academia and the church. The church must embody and influence the ethical and moral standards expected by society as public theological approaches challenge and refute methodologically the bipolarity and division of secular and sacred, it is interdisciplinary and dialogical. The

public theology approach resonates with practical theology and pastoral care as its discipline is embedded into such a dialectic and spiral approach (Magezi, 2019:4).

Pastoral theology and care have been understood by “Christians to be a conscious acting out toward one another of the love of God and Jesus Christ” (Gerkin, 1997:111). The love of neighbour and of God and bearing witness to Christ’s love is expressed clearly when acted out within a Christian context, despite our differences, as we claim a central connection to God and Christ (Leslie, 2008:95). She (Leslie) further asserts

that when we move pastoral care outside the Christian context of following Christ and bearing witness, complexities arise in loving a stranger as a neighbour, particularly when we have to bear in mind that others who are not Christian are not viewing it from a Christian context (*ibid*).

Leslie (2008:95) warns that “the pastoral care practitioner/theologian must be aware of the theological tensions involved in the shift into the public sphere about the pastoral theological mandate: Is the pastoral mandate to love God by loving the stranger as neighbour” (Luke 10:27) or is it to make disciples of all nations (Matthew 28:18-20)? Therefore, the salient point in this conundrum is to come to terms with “how to strike a balance between the Great Commandments and the Great Commission” (Leslie, 2008:95).

Hiltner (1958:17) stated that

the notion of Christians caring for each other’s well-being as observed in spontaneous expressions of mutual love and in formal ministry of the church, is a lived Christian experience borne out of their relationship with God and to other people as inseparable and based on the commandment of love presented by Jesus as the ultimate ethical goal, encapsulated in Matthew 22:37-40.

Therefore, ‘pastoral ministry forms an integral part of the theological encyclopaedia’. Hence, pastoral care as *cura animarum* (care of souls) is shifting from an individualised focus to addressing public issues (Louw 1996,2014; Miller-McLemore 2004,2005,2018; Leslie 2008). This, Louw (1998:7) observed, was the challenge to pastoral care as “how should the church in all her expressions listen to people in order to understand and interpret the human existence in terms of God’s revelation”.

The shift to addressing public issues has been aptly captured by Miller-McLemore (2018:311) by “identifying at least three trends behind this shift as: the interest in congregational studies; the call for new public theology; and most importantly in her (Miller-McLemore) view, the rise of liberation movements”. She (Miller-McLemore, 2018:315) further opines that “the metaphor of the living human web emphasises the need to identify and attend to social inequities and injustices that perpetuate suffering, and therefore have an impact on the shape of health, and illness care”. Therefore, pastoral care should socialise practitioners to have particular understandings of the church and the social ethics of public care because religion has public consequences.

Graham (2000:12) argues that shifting pastoral care into the public domain in order for the efforts of care to bear upon individuals and society, the task of pastoral theology will be to develop public pastoral strategies for healing, sustaining, guiding and liberating individuals, cultures and the natural order. Leslie (2008:95) notes that

the pastoral care practitioner’s task is to meet a person where they are, theologically, emotionally, physically, culturally and communally with his/her best tools of intercultural empathy to help them reflect on how they make meaning in the light of ultimate distress and help them mend their own brokenness.

Pastoral care should transform the lives of people by addressing the three publics of society, academy and the church. Therefore, the practitioners of pastoral care in the public sphere should be equipped to work in the public space by arming themselves with the requisite tools for the fundamental work of reflection and theorising. This, however, entails translation of language to suit the public space. De Gruchy (2007:39) is of the view that public theology should use a common language that is understandable by people outside the Christian tradition. This view is shared by Koopman (2012:16) in expressing the need for a language for public discourse. Koopman (2012:1) drawing from lessons from Etienne de Villiers’ theology, posits that prophetic public theology should include a vision of a redeemed and new society (habitat) of people, with new habits (habitus), who engage in challenging public issues of their time. Dreyer (2011:3) in his informative article ‘Public theology and the translation imperative: A Ricoeurian perspective’ argues that a communicative approach in the public sphere in a multicultural and multi-religious democratic society (South Africa) requires “a translation of our Christian language in a language that is

understood and accessible in the public sphere”. It is notable that the need to position pastoral care in the public sphere has been met with confusion concerning the language of public pastoral care. Leslie (2008:96-97) has clarified the somewhat interchangeability at one level of public pastoral care, public practical theology and public theology and she has clarified that public pastoral care is pastoral care practised in a public sphere. Therefore, public pastoral care entails committing and striving to be experts in many areas for pastors to engage in the public space (Magezi, 2019b:5).

5.6 Public practical theology, public pastoral care and Christian public ethics within the context of xenophobia

In the context of xenophobia, the practices of public practical theology, public pastoral care and Christian public ethics represent the health of the church, an apt metaphor for the church as an “organism” – the “sent” church – that has a public role to play. The church should not be akin to cancerous cells that only reproduce in the body but do nothing for the benefit of the rest of the body. The church rather needs to be what human life would look like under the lordship of Christ. The purpose of the church is to serve the Lord in serving the world filled with people who are reaching out and repairing the society. The task of public practical theology, public pastoral care and Christian public ethics according to Osmer (2008:4), is

to interpret situations or contexts presented, from a hermeneutical perspective relying on biblical concepts to construct ethical norms to guide and provide responses to the existential questions and devise holistic strategies of action that will influence situations or public policy in ways that are desirable.

The pastoral hermeneutic cycle adapted for the South African context by Cochrane, De Gruchy and Peterson (1991:13-25) is important in this study for addressing the *kairos* (xenophobia) as it offers an analysis of the context in order to give meaning to cause-effect reasoning. Essentially the hermeneutic cycle considers the role of scripture, tradition and reason in addressing everyday concerns and issues in its reflection. Grab (2005:196) contends that practical theology needs to explore how the symbolic strength of Christianity in today’s complex socio-cultural conditions can make sense of life and for successfully coping with life under the guidance of the church. This notion advanced by Gathogo (2007:101) is based on his understanding

of African Reconstruction Theology as being pastoral because it seeks to restore and address the challenges experienced in many African communities. Gathogo (2007:119) further contends that African Reconstruction Theology is a theological exercise that holistically engages with life issues such as oppression, tribalism, HIV, et cetera. Miller-McLemore (2005:95-106) noted that the movement of pastoral care to public theology was out of concern for the silence of mainstream Christianity on key social issues and awareness of limitations of the pastoral focus that was exclusively on the individual. Hence, the need for pastoral care to focus on the whole person and public issues such as xenophobia, in our South African context.

The practices of practical and pastoral theology differ in context, as suggested by many scholars, however, there is greater consensus on the common characteristics that unify practical and pastoral theologians from different contexts. Miller-McLemore (2012a:5-26), has broadly outlined five main characteristics of practical theology, as:

- First, the reflection upon lived contemporary experience as it privileges the methodology that reflects on the daily lives and experiences of people in what practical theologians commonly refer to as the “living human web” (Agbiji, 2013:12);
- Second, it involves a critical dialogue between theological norms and contemporary experience by drawing on the insights of both theological and non-theological fields as an enabler in dialogue with the cultural norm and theological norm regarding the human experience within its context (Agbiji, 2013:12);
- Third, practical theology adopts an interdisciplinary approach as critical reflection on the “living human web” as a tool that helps practical theologians link the human to theological and non-theological traditions and perspectives (Agbiji, 2013:13);
- Fourth, pastoral care as a practical theology discipline adopts a more liberal approach rather than a conservative model of theology by virtue of giving present experience preference to tradition in shaping theological concepts;
- Fifth, practical theology should seek theoretical and practical transformation by being critical and self-reflective for its practices to be relevant and have an

impact on the way things are understood and done in order to contribute to addressing South African and African challenges at large as well as enhance well-being and wholeness (Agbiji, 2013:13).

Pastoral and practical theologians should always be mindful that, for religion to have any recognition in the public domain, it must be devoid of any sectarian interests. This fact, acknowledged by Miller-McLemore (2012a:26), is that practical theology is essentially the returning of theology to the people. Practical theology is theology previously abstracted from life, that is now being taken to the public sphere and is using what has been learned from the public sphere to assess the adequacy of biblical, historical and doctrinal claims. Therefore, the pastoral practitioner should interpret the biblical and Christian language and its ways of seeing and evaluating the world in the contexts of people's lives and their affairs in order to shape their everyday life despite its mode, level and approach (Magezi, 2016:2). First, practising pastoral and practical theology in the African context requires that one should be mindful that African society, even South African society in this instance, warns Magezi (2016:3) in his thought-provoking article on the assessment of the conundrum, is not simplistically homogeneous but heterogeneous. Second, in African terms there is a discernible gulf between academic reflection and grassroots congregational ministry. Third, the practice of pastoral care ministry is diverse among denominations with a noticeable difference between traditional missionary started churches and the budding emerging African founded churches with a largely Charismatic and Pentecostal outlook. Fourth, he (Magezi, 2016:3) states that practitioners from different theological persuasions have a significant diversity of pastoral care approaches. Last, Magezi (2016:3) observes that there is a lack of narrowed focus on questions considered in pastoral care. Magezi, however, concedes that this should not be a hindrance in addressing the current challenges in pastoral care in Africa.

One of the leading proponents of pastoral care in Africa, Daniel J. Louw, has stated that public theology must be humanised by dealing and engaging with real life's practical issues such as xenophobia and democratised with its focus on ethical questions and public issues as its mainstay (Louw, 2014:6). Therefore, pastoral care in Africa should adopt an intentional address of real-life practical issues by placing issues on the church agenda to both intentionally reflect on and explore practical

solutions. Christian ministry and public theology should intervene, and pastoral care should be used as leverage, when social and community challenges, such as poverty, xenophobia, gender-based violence, and abuse, are experienced. This view of public practical theology is reinforced by Juma's (2015:3) assertion that public theology is about interpreting and living theological beliefs and values in the public sphere. This entails strengthening capacity of churches to think (theological reflection) and exemplify (model) Jesus and His kingdom. This involves a grassroots incarnational Christianity where the church demonstrates what "it means to be truly human by living" and expressing the desired human-human interaction that God desires for humanity (as people created in His image) and in this way the church becomes a mirror of good.

The development of a response to xenophobia must be rooted in adequate analysis of the context in which it manifests itself. Therefore, the churches need to take an ongoing reflexion and reflexivity in contexts of ethically challenging issues, such as xenophobia and develop practical theological responses to the phenomenon. Reflexivity has to do with self-examination of own feelings, reactions and motives and how these (feelings, reactions, thoughts) affect and influence us in xenophobic situations. This is about being a church that self-examines and reflects in its 'being a church' in light of the ideal of God's kingdom. This suggests that churches should be in a perpetual state of being dissatisfied with themselves as they seek to strive to be an ideal church. This causes self-inflicted discomfort and yet it involves doing the right thing.

This self-examination by the churches should be guided by the notion that Christian ethics directs us in a particular way, since it is based on the scriptures which often served as the basis for absolute moral norms and laws (Curran, 1998:73). Ethics is about doing while the space and target for doing is the public, i.e. non-church environment. Xenophobic practices are performed in the public sphere where Christians exist in an institution (church) and as private human beings (an individual in the community and in their home). This suggests that our human actions as Christians should have an intentional goal to influence and shape the public in a multiplicity of ways, e.g. demonstration of being humane; standing as a wall between perpetrator and victim; advocating for justice and right; et cetera. The public space is characterised by 'messy-ness' with no simple unidirectional processes but chaotic,

intermixed, entanglement, et cetera. Hence, public Christian ethics should adopt a multiplicity of strategies. This was aptly described by Magezi (2019b:2-3) as an “expert generalist” who makes critical strategic choices on where and how change may likely occur. This public pastoral care approach was aptly described by Grader who stated that pastors should continuously make choices on where to ‘triage’ in their communities (Grader, 2008).

Public Christian ethics should draw from people’s life experiences and capacities, which Magezi (2007) called natural potentials. *Ubuntu* serves as a crucial natural ethic potential that enforces and engenders hospitality, neighbourliness and care for the rest of humanity. *Ubuntu*, like the Christian fellowship, means being bound together and seeking the good of the other. Metz (2007:335-337) rightly observed that *Ubuntu* is summarised by two concepts in Africa: solidarity and identity. One must identify with others and act in solidarity with them. Solidarity and being identified with the other person entails being on the ‘same team’. There is no Jew or Greek (Galatians 3:28) from the perspective of God’s image.

Christian ethics may certainly not abandon the Bible as it remains the *sine qua non* of basic theological insight (Vorster, 2012:5). The use of scripture must be more open and deeper that commits Christian ethics to theological reflection that is more than exegetical, with the theological task employing scripture, tradition, experience and reason (Vorster, 2012:5). This is particularly helpful in making Christian ethics relevant in the face of secularism and the rise of Christian fundamentalism with its claims of the revelation of God being embedded in scripture, especially in a literal and a historical reading of the biblical text (i.e. Biblicism) (Vorster, 2012:5). Ritschl (1999:255) argues that the term Biblicism is applied as a way of dealing with the Bible to conform to the expectation that it can be transposed directly into modern thought and forms or lifestyles. The danger of such a practice is that it neglects to account for the different circumstances between the time of writing the texts, and now. Within a pluralistic context where human rights are given a privileged position, the only foundational reference point seems to be human rights as outlined in the South African Constitution’s Bill of Rights. Xenophobia or migrants’ exclusion in African discussions particularly in South Africa has been blamed on ‘African-hood’ as represented by *Ubuntu* and human rights.

However, there has been little critique of the actions from the perspective of Christian theological tradition or concepts. While *Ubuntu* is a very useful integrating concept, its shortcomings should be noted. Collective humanity as denoted by fellowship as spelt out by being one in Christ, is much deeper and broader than *Ubuntu* that focuses on relational bonds. Magezi (2017:116-118) calls for transformation of *Ubuntu* by Biblical principles. Public Christian ethics devoid of Biblically guided principles runs the risk of being a social good that is devoid of Christian telos and motive. Christian telos and motive should be the undergirding principles.

5.7. Altruism: selfless concern for the well-being of others

Altruism is recognised and practiced as a value present in both traditional African cultures and Christian cultures. Like Christianity, African culture also emphasises altruism). Kanungo and Mendonca (2004:143) articulate that “Christianity’s command to love God and love others as we love ourselves is the most important obligation in Judeo-Christian ethics”. Jesus supports this point with the parable of the Good Samaritan when he says “...which of these three do you think was a neighbour to the man who fell into the hands of robbers?... the one who had mercy on him”. The story ends with Jesus’ request to “go and do likewise” (Luke 10:30-37). African folktales are full of similar stories of generosity and hospitality. Johnson (2001:112) sees the correct understanding of altruism as “an ancient yet contemporary principle and yet new”. Thus, there is an invitation and at the same time a challenge in the Good Samaritan’s story to do likewise in our communities that are experiencing all kinds of situations of unrest, such as xenophobia, crime and violence.

While human beings have a social instinct to behave benevolently and act to promote care and support, as is the case when people give to charity to help create communal-social connection and trust, welcome migrants and open their homes to those ravaged by wars, however, others are influenced to act selfishly (Kholopa, 2016:45).

This is argued by Haught (2001:67) that “evidence suggests that human beings have deeply ingrained tendencies to act in either direction”. Foreign nationals were killed, maimed and displaced in South Africa during xenophobic episodes in recent years supposedly because of varied claims labelled against migrants such as stealing their

jobs, their women, their housing, they commit crime, and so forth. We now have a great challenge on our hands, as African theologians, to find ways to evoke the better part of human nature. The pluralistic nature of South African society can make it difficult to focus on common values. In the South African context altruism offers significant ethical value and promises to aid in attending to some social ills such as xenophobia, poverty, crime, and so forth. Creating communal altruism will cause the young generation to value and respect human life, their beliefs, traditions and cultures (Kholopa, 2016).

We are called to “love your neighbour as yourself” (Mark 12:31). Applying Jesus’ plea, the whole community will function more effectively. According to Sider (2012:111), “this is an example of biblical justice that has a corrective, restorative character that enables the weak and needy to return to a state of wholeness, dignity and participation in community”. The Good Samaritan could be everyone who recognises humanity in every suffering person and acts on it as willed by the golden rule precept that we “do to others whatever you would have them do to you” (Matthew 7:12), which is akin to how *Ubuntu* operates. Boff and Boff (1987:4) remind us “that we begin with love of norms, beliefs and values as love is a praxis, not a theory”.

Hence, love is a driving force that impels a person to action and describes goodness done to others as it is for certain, not mere words. As stated, “let us not love in words, not in mere talk, but indeed and in truth (1John 3:18). This text emphasises the common good as an ideal, however, while this does include respect for human life and dignity, it also opens the door for all people to achieve their meaningful potential. It involves a long-term cultural sustainable justice between the individual and community in love. Hence, to apply communitarian ethics is to question why society has drifted away from community, love, good dispositions, good habits and the common good, which should be its identity (Kholopa, 2016).

The challenge then for the church and society is how we can make our social and religious communities more humane, based on our fundamental human dignity and our identity as people created in *imago Dei*. *Ubuntu* should inform our Christian understanding of community, therefore, Christianity should be communitarian. Christians without the spirit of *Ubuntu* are not truly Christian because the life of Jesus was characterised by *Ubuntu*. The image of the church should be a

community of believers, not just in name but authentic in action. We are told how this community began in Matthew's Gospel 10:1-15. Jesus formed a new community of 12 disciples that went far and wide to make communities of believers. These communities had no specific limitation to a particular clan as they encompassed different clans that were united by the same goal of love.

Paul's letters to the Galatian and Ephesian communities (3:28 & 2:10-20) illustrate Jesus breaking down barriers that divide people and gathering them together into a new community. As a result, these communities expanded and it is our belief that love, especially towards migrants and the marginalised in society, will make South Africa expand and develop into a caring society through *Ubuntu* values and nothing should be allowed to prevent this expansion (Kholopa, 2016).

5.8 Chapter summary and conclusion

In view of the differing viewpoints on approaches to issues pertaining to the Christian in contemporary society, such as the elimination of xenophobia within South African society, synergies from public practical theology, public pastoral care and public Christian ethics; to this end *Ubuntu* and hospitality can be achieved, as all rely on the context of the situation. When theology operates in the public domain, it will be transformational by considering the ethos espoused by *Ubuntu*. This involves ongoing learning from our contexts and reflecting on it, as at stake is discerning what God is saying in our situation, e.g. of xenophobia and by bridging the three epistemological spheres by exploring: theological, historical Western approaches and African wisdom and tradition, and be able to engage with issues on an ongoing basis (Magezi, 2018: 113).

As Williams (2016:2) puts it, Christian communities have a duty to inculcate civic virtues that create social flourishing and endeavour to exercise those tasks of decision-making within the social milieu for maintaining and sustaining a humane environment. This is attested by Mnyandu (1997:81), who posits "that from an *Ubuntu* perspective it is the very human essence itself that finds expression in daily living acts of love and efforts to create harmonious relationships in the community and the world beyond". Koenane (2018) thus argues, that "from the *Ubuntu* and Christian perspectives, in which community is a foundational basis on which the principles of becoming are established, it is unsurprising that collective guilt is not far-fetched". He

(Koenane) interprets from the socio-moralist point of view where Christian morality and *Ubuntu* are counter-cultural to the current response from the South African public towards nationalist prejudices and xenophobia in its Afrophobic form. It is in this context that both Christian values and *Ubuntu* principles can foster a culture of *Philoxenia*, “the principle of loving, caring and showing compassion to strangers as set out in the Bible” (Koenane, 2018) by dealing, engaging, and intentionally addressing real-life practical issues (*kairos* – xenophobia) by placing them on the church’s agenda to both intentionally reflect on and explore practical solutions.

“Public theology is an attempt to understand the relationship between Christian convictions and the broader social and cultural context” (Bezuidenhout and Naude, 2002:8). It concerns itself with theological engagement with the public and making sense of these interactions, especially focusing on issues in the public sphere outside the confines of the church. Juma (2015:3) asserts that public theology assumes the role of interpreter of theological values and beliefs in the public domain. Thus, by applying a public practical theological approach, theology will engage in meaningful conversations that foster unity, coexistence, mutual trust, peaceful and compassionate existence (Magezi, 2018:6). This will entail developing a theological language that does not focus on a binary approach of ‘them’ and ‘us’, migrant and native, and sojourner and inhabitant. This is important in the current conversation as it entails a shift in thinking about migrants as people who arrived in the country to steal jobs, housing and so forth. The resulting shift in society from a language of destabiliser to contributor will be the ideal result.

Gerkin (1997:35) states that “context both influences our understanding of the caring aspects of the church’s ministry *and* becomes itself an object of the church’s caring ministry”. This reinforces the argument that pastoral care, as a practical theology discipline, should shift from the individual alone to the whole person and public issues as part of its public function. In the context of the current conversation on xenophobia, practical theology should use the public pastoral care nexus as a contextual launch pad. Practical theology should be critical and self-reflective in its praxis, initiating reforms in its practices to be relevant and contribute in addressing South African problems (Magezi, 2018). The pastoral task is to facilitate Christian living in the contemporary world by relating actions and behaviours to the deeper underlying meanings, analysing concrete events, their contexts and causes, their significance

and desirable outcomes (Gerkin, 1997:118). The interpretation of the pastoral situation aims to formulate a language of the good or the normative, particularly relating to human identity and ultimate purpose, thus it is teleological and ethical in nature (Gerkin, 1997). This focus of practical theological interpretation, as in the words of Miller-McLemore, is the “living human web”, as it draws attention to various forms of interconnection (Osmer, 2008:16).

The ‘preferential treatment of the poor’ embodied in the Catholic Social Teaching affirms the ethical core of the Gospel as the advancement of the dignity and full participation of the poor with any of the aspects of the tradition that deny or preclude this being considered inauthentic. Gerkin (1997) reinforces this stance by seeing pastoral theology and care as being understood by “Christians to be a conscious acting out toward one another of the love of God and Jesus Christ”. Leslie (2008:95) similarly observes that the love of neighbour and God and bearing witness to Christ is manifested clearly when acted out within a Christian context despite our differences as we claim a central connection to God and Christ. “The role of theology is determined by its ability to transform the world through its epistemological status and the norms by which such sources are validated” (Gerkin, 1997:132).

The church is called upon to actively help the vulnerable and strangers in society by always reflecting on its identity and unequivocal love of God for the hapless (Matthew 25:35,44). McGovern (1989:43-46) opines that the *orthopraxis*, the proper living out of faith, in the service of the marginalised and the poor, becomes the theological ‘truth’ by which the church and its faith practitioners’ ‘truth’ is determined. Therefore, public pastoral care outside the confines of the church and the Christian context by following Christ in bearing witness, will encounter complexities in loving the stranger as a neighbour, especially when we have to bear in mind that the stranger may not be, nor become a Christian. Hospitality should characterise the life of a Christian as through it some have unknowingly entertained angels (Hebrews 13:2), as being hospitable is not intended for some, but for all, especially local churches in South Africa in the face of xenophobia and hostility towards migrants. In Ephesians (2:19-22) we are reminded that in Christ we are children of the common household of God where everybody is equal in dignity and privileges, and no longer a sojourner or stranger as access to God has been achieved through Jesus by his death that broke all barriers. To quote Irenaeus “*Gloria enim Dei vivens homo, vita autem hominis visio*” – for the

glory of God is the living man, and the life of man is the vision of God. The public practical theologian and the public pastoral theologian therefore must envision the glory of God in their dealings with public issues in the public sphere.

Personal experience shows that the attraction of modern secular culture blurs the values of *Ubuntu*, pastoral care, Christian ethics and hospitality (Kholopa, 2016). This is especially the case in the townships, the cities and urban places in South Africa. There is, therefore, the need to emphasise the caring side, revisiting our *Ubuntu* heritage, and the Christian value of hospitality that can indeed enhance *motho ke motho ka batho ba bang*; a person is a person because of others. Menampampil (2010:15) states that if we believe in any situation or a cause that needs support, we should move to it with a profound sense of mission and absolute determination and willingness to help or pay the price for it because humanity needs each person's support to welcome and care for those who need help, regardless of the geographical background of the other. Even though collectively we have not confronted the issue of xenophobia satisfactorily, and our institutions are partly to blame for the rapid expansion of xenophobia, there is still a ray of hope. Consumerism, and self-centred values and attitudes are heavily promoted through the media. However, according to Nehemiah 6:11 and Exodus 23:8-9, "unethical people make the society blind to what is right and ruins the cause of those who are innocent". Scripture has remained strong and clear against unprincipled people. When society is not alert, the process of accountability and retribution are not implemented and ways of enforcement lie idle, thus, communities remain silent. As a result, an ethical-practical voice has become vital in our communities and society at large (Menampampil, 2010:21).

CHAPTER 6: Towards a church-driven model to shift xenophobia to Philoxenia within the South African context of xenophobia

6.1 Introduction

This chapter in dealing with xenophobia as a public practical theological challenge will integrate literature, and objectively present and discuss the building blocks of a church-driven model of pastoral care to shift xenophobia to Philoxenia in the South African context. As previously stated, the pastoral hermeneutic circle developed by Holland and Henriot and adapted for the South African context by Cochrane, De Gruchy and Peterson (1991:13-25) will be used. Also, texts from the Old and New Testaments will be used to ring-fence the *kairos* (i.e. xenophobia) facing the church, notably, the books of Exodus, Leviticus, Peter, Philippians, Hebrews and Ephesians. The chapter will highlight emerging findings and conclusions from the previous chapters and discern some guidelines that will be employed in developing a model.

6.2 Summary of chapter findings and conclusions

Human migration as outlined in chapter 2, is a severe contemporary issue of the 21st century with multiple complexities and underlying factors that requires churches/pastoral care practitioners to understand the contextual causes of migration and the challenges faced by migrants. The study endeavours to address one (xenophobia) of a myriad of challenges faced by migrants in South Africa by undertaking a critical understanding of xenophobic manifestations in the country as noted in chapter 2, the probable causes and possible remedial courses of action. This will require the pastoral care practitioner to understand the context in which xenophobic actions

occur, be guided by Christian ethos driven by ethical behaviour and intentional motive to address the lived experiences of both the victims and perpetrators.

The proponents of *Ubuntu* perceive it as an African philosophy based on the maxim, 'a person is a person through other persons', whereby the community prevails over individual considerations. It is not merely an empirical claim that our survival or well-being is causally dependent on others but is in essence capturing a normative account of what we ought to most value in life. This has been established in chapters 3 and 4. Therefore, *Ubuntu* as an African view of life and the world in which people share and treat each other as humans based on the underlying 'universal brotherhood' of Africans, should be useful to pastoral care practitioners to inculcate its principles of compassion, human dignity, hospitality and respect for others to fellow believers in the face of xenophobia. Good character is the true essence of the African moral system, the linchpin of the moral wheel, as the centrality of character implies that a person should possess the ability to act in accord with the moral principles and rules of society, hence, the quality of a person's character is of fundamental importance. The church as the embodiment of good and discourager of bad, should learn from traditional African culture how good character is nourished and guided. The shortcomings of *Ubuntu* should not preclude the pastoral care practitioner from reflecting on *Ubuntu* as a natural ethic potential that enforces and engenders hospitality, neighbourliness and care for all humanity. In this instance, *Ubuntu* should shift to liminal *Ubuntu* with Christ as the bond to combat xenophobia since we are all *imago Dei*.

Ubuntu seeks to restore African communal cultural behaviours like humanness, hospitality, respect and love. Hospitality should be practiced by doing or reflecting on things which might look insignificant such as, supporting the vulnerable, the poor, the marginalized, and the migrants that come to the country from the neighbouring African countries that bear the brunt of xenophobic acts, as explored in chapters 3 and 4.

As Christians when facing different challenges, particularly xenophobia, we should use the Bible to reflect on what it says about the strangers/foreigners in our midst as detailed in chapter 4. The legislative codes in Exodus (22:20 & 23:9) remind us that God gives the strangers special protection under the law and in Leviticus (19:34) an

instruction for Israelites to love them. The pastoral care practitioner must shift Christian ethics to public Christian ethics to exemplify the message through the works of mercy towards migrants.

The beginning of the ministry of the Messiah is characterised by the presence of foreigners, the vulnerable and the sick, and He constantly interacted with them, showing that God's love is ever present in the world, therefore, the inclusion of all people through faith irrespective of their linguistic, racial or ethnic difference and gender (Galatians 3:26-28) is how Christians should relate to one another. We need to revisit and reinterpret the Bible considering the contemporary socio-political and economic problems and our experiences as Africans by positioning the *Ubuntu* ethos in the reforming of communities that abide by the ethics that guide societal morality. This entails that the pastoral practitioner needs ongoing learning and formation to understand our contexts and reflect on them to meaningfully impact the lived realities of people's lives. It is incumbent upon the church to actively help the vulnerable and strangers by always reflecting on its identity and unequivocal love of God for the hapless (Matthew 25:44) and hospitality to characterise the life of a Christian (Hebrews 13:2; 1 Corinthians 12:28-29; cf. Acts 13:1-2).

Theology operating in the public domain will be transformational by considering the ethos of *Ubuntu* in South Africa, as detailed in chapters 4 and 5. This entails ongoing learning from contexts and reflecting on them to discern 'what God is saying', in particular to xenophobic instances, by bridging the three epistemological spheres by exploring: theological, historical Western approaches and African wisdom and tradition, and being able to engage with issues on an ongoing basis (Magezi, 2018). Public theology concerns itself with theological engagement with the public and making sense out of these interactions, especially focusing on issues in the public sphere outside of the confines of the church and placing them on the church's agenda. By applying the public practical theological approach, theology engages in meaningful conversations that foster unity, coexistence, mutual trust, peaceful and compassionate existence (Magezi, *ibid.*). Thus, meaningful conversations lead the pastoral care practitioner to develop a theological language that is devoid of a binary approach of 'them' and 'us, victim and perpetrator, and migrant and native.

The pastoral task is to facilitate Christian living in the contemporary world by relating actions and behaviours to the deeper underlying meanings, analysing concrete events, their contexts and causes, their significance and desirable outcomes (Gerkin, 1997:118). Gerkin (1997:132) asserts that “the role of theology is determined by its ability to transform the world through its epistemological status by which sources are validated”. This transformation in Christian life should be borne out through hospitality as through it some have unknowingly entertained angels (Hebrews 13:2), as being hospitable is not intended for some, but for all, especially local churches in South Africa in the face of xenophobia and hostility towards migrants. There is a need to emphasise the caring side, revisiting our *Ubuntu* heritage, and the Christian value of hospitality to foster a culture of Philoxenia.

6.3 Towards discerning guidelines for the design of a model for pastoral care in South Africa

The framework for positioning and shifting pastoral care to the public domain in South Africa offers an opportunity to develop a strategic model to shift xenophobia to philoxenia within the South African context. This entails finding ways to communicate and minister the full implications of the gospel of reconciliation to the perpetrators and victims of the acts of xenophobia. However, we must be mindful of the challenges that we have to encounter in the pluralistic and diverse South African society in our pastoral care efforts. The question is: what are the public pastoral care principles and guidelines that can guide us that specifically communicate and minister the full implications of the Gospel message of reconciliation to address the *kairos* (xenophobia) in the South African context? In answering this question, I would like to suggest the development of a strategy for change flowing from the description of the normative viewpoints based on seven principles that could assist us in our task of fostering public pastoral care in South Africa.

6.3.1 Principle one: The imperative to maintain the Christian compass guided by tradition and scripture

Within the pluralistic context where human rights are given a privileged position, the only foundational reference point seems to be human rights as contained in the South African Constitution and outlined in the Bill of Rights. Xenophobia or migrants' exclusion in African discussions, particularly in South Africa, has been blamed on 'African-hood' as represented by *Ubuntu* and human rights. However, there has been little critique of the actions from the perspective of Christian theological tradition or concepts. While *Ubuntu* is a very useful integrating concept, its shortcomings should be noted. Collective humanity denoted fellowship as spelt out by oneness in Christ is much deeper and broader than *Ubuntu* that focuses on relational bonds. Magezi (2017:116-118) calls for a transformation of *Ubuntu* based on Biblical principles. Public Christian ethics devoid of principles based on the Bible runs the risk of being simply a social good since it is merely public Christian ethics that lacks Christian telos and motive. Christian telos and motive should be the undergirding principles.

The primary ethical task of the pastoral care practitioner is to be an "embodiment of character" who contributes to the formation of strong Christian values in the "public". Magezi (2020:5) argues that the key driver of pastoral caregiving is identity as the identity of pastoral care practitioners is intricately linked to the ontology of who we are as pastoral care practitioners. According to Agbiji (2013:307), it could be argued that the notion of identity relates to character as the trajectory established by identity formation and consistency over time that bears on the integrity of a vision for the future. "Therefore, identity gives clarity to pastoral care as a discipline and to the pastoral care practitioner. Pastoral care as a discipline, illuminates the need to maintain an identity of its vision and goals for their realisation and maintenance" (Agbiji, 2013:308). Identity provides the pastoral care practitioner with meaning for the assumptions, motives, intentions and goals that lead to the interpretation and understanding of human needs informed by the theological and hermeneutical analysis of the practical-pastoral problem by the caregiver. The understanding and interpretation of the human needs provide the pastoral care practitioner with the motivational means to offer this pastoral care from within their theological convictions (Streets, 2014:1).

Thus, pastoral caregiving calls for service to other humans in a deontological sense as it entails our duty to fellow human beings in a manner informed by critical

Christian presuppositions to give meaning and concern (Magezi, 2020:5). This manifests itself in the way the pastoral care practitioner thinks, relates, their motivations and emotions, and the way they interact with others. The relationship of the pastoral care practitioner with self, others and God is central to this concern as it has a bearing on the restoration to wholeness of the person in need.

6.3.2 Principle two: The need for ongoing learning and formation from our contexts and reflection on it

Analysis of the context is not merely a casual observation of any event(s), but it means to involve oneself in the lived experiences of the individuals and communities in which a tacit pastoral response is elicited, as at stake is discerning what God is saying in our situation, i.e. xenophobia. According to Sands (2018:3) the analysis of the context is not merely a tool that is employed as a teleological method to achieve a particular end, but as a fundamental weapon to reorient one's life towards social justice and solidarity. Therefore, the analysis of context requires the pastoral care practitioner to reflect on the biblical point of view with the message of reconciliation at its heart for critical evaluation of the *kairos* (xenophobia) to shift it to Philoxenia. This entails understanding what people are feeling, what they are undergoing, how they perceive this and how they are responding in order to have that moment of insertion whereby pastoral care is needed most to intervene when the community of faith is struggling to be faithful to its prophetic task (Cochrane, *et al.*, 1991).

The pastoral care practitioner must display *interpathetic caring* as a process of 'feeling with' and 'thinking with' other people from different contexts (Magezi, 2020:7). One can develop empathy that moves towards understanding the situation of others leading to a concerted effort to enhance solidarity and reconciliation in communities affected by xenophobia that is guided by "brotherly love which is the spiritual benevolence and affectionate solicitude of Christians towards one another" (Dienga, 2011,104). Gathogo (2008a:42-43) opines that *Ubuntu* is linked with hospitality and the generosity of giving freely that is informed by the articulation of respect and compassion to others as it is a philosophical and religious concept that

defines an individual in terms of his relationship to others. It is therefore noteworthy that the perspective of the other is important in the process of healing and their perception and experience of healing, as Louw (2018:178) defines transfection, “an effort of putting oneself into the head of another person”, plays a role in the healing process.

6.3.3 Principle three: Humanisation of practical theology

The pastoral care practitioner should be aware of the social dynamics at play in South Africa that affect the humanisation of practical theology, such as economic factors, political factors, social factors, historical factors and cultural factors, as noted in chapter 2. These have a bearing on the attempt to understand the life experiences arising from the moment of insertion as they may or may not be the fuel and determinants of the *kairos* (xenophobia) and be an impediment in assessing and implementing ways of inculcating humaneness in pastoral care.

Humanisation entails engaging and dealing with real-life practical issues such as xenophobia. According to de Wet (2017:83), “the focus of public practical theology is not limited to inter-human or intra-human behaviour but is particularly concerned with the religious dimensions of lived life according to the prevalent dynamics and of its involvement in particular situations”. It broadens the scope of pastoral responsibility and action beyond its conventional counselling and personal care to the public domain (Miller-McLemore, 2004:62). This could be achieved by contributing to a humane society, “fostering values such as unconditional love and service to those in need and speaking up against unjust laws and when foreigners are ill-treated”. The inspiration to be at the forefront of acting or speaking-up against injustices to migrants is aptly captured by two main messages drawn from the teachings of Jesus Christ in Matthew 7:12 and 22:39, “Do to others whatever you would like them do to you’ and ‘You shall love your neighbour as yourself”.

It is these scriptural passages that prohibit us from subjecting others to the brutality, violence and mistreatment that migrants are subjected to and imposes on the Christian a moral imperative to express his love to strangers instead of mistreating or oppressing them, as everybody desires to be treated with courtesy, compassion and kindness. This is summed up within the African context, particularly in South Africa,

by *Ubuntu's* emphasis on solidarity and communion with fellow human beings. Humaneness, the quality that makes us human, describes our quality of relationships in the way we approach, converse, step up to help others and be hospitable (Magezi, 2020:8). Thus, pastoral care must endeavour to be guided by humaneness to offer meaningful care across all races, cultures and beliefs in South Africa to heal the wounds caused by the past (apartheid) and the scourge of xenophobia, as well as other social ills in the contemporary South African social milieu.

6.3.4 Principle four: Intentional address of real-life practical issues

The intentional address of real-life practical issues entails placing the issues on the church's agenda for both intentional reflection and for the exploration of practical solutions. This places the church as intertwined with the socio-political life of society, a true participant, therefore, its role within society has to be put in context in order to analyse its structures and dynamics that shape and determine the life and witness of the church. The change praxis affecting the church should involve a shift from its conservative nature that is steeped in tradition that is preserved in scriptures, rituals, doctrines and dogmas dating back over the past two millennia. In addressing the *kairos* (xenophobia), the church in South Africa should draw from the past interaction of religious communities and their importance in dealing with the socio-political ills (apartheid) of the time. The church should also be cognisant that hermeneutical interpretation creates temporary communities of dialogue and conversation which have persistent differences and deferment of knowledge and understanding. This enhances our understanding that the interpretations we support are greatly influenced by the knowledge that there is not only difference, but also deferment of knowledge or interpretation.

The church by putting public issues on the table, i.e. taking a public practical theological stance, puts the spotlight on public ecclesiology as it is concerned with ecclesiological questions of the church's relevance to issues affecting people today. Also, the movement of pastoral care to public theology was out of concern for the silence of mainstream Christian churches on key social issues and for the limited pastoral focus on the individual (Miller-McLemore, 2005:95-106). There was a need for pastoral care to focus on the whole person, "living human web", and public issues

such as xenophobia and corruption in South Africa. Public ecclesiology, pastoral care and *diakonia* intersect, indicating a clear public pastoral care role for the church.

6.3.5 Principle five: Church as the embodiment of good and discourager of bad

Recognising the church as the embodiment of good and discourager of bad involves strengthening the capacity of churches to think (theological reflection) and exemplify (model) Jesus and His Kingdom. This entails a grassroots incarnational Christianity where the church demonstrates what it means to be truly human by living and expressing the human-human interaction that God desires for humanity (as *imago Dei*). In this way the church becomes a mirror of good. The theological reflection of the church is an exploration of the lived experiences and seeks its deeper analysis in the light of faith, scriptures, the social teachings of the church and being in dialogue with the resources of religious tradition. It is in lived experiences of Christians where Christians interact with socio-political and practical issues and challenges that inform theologians and pastoral care practitioners to refine methods and purposes through a broader lens for framing pastoral care ministries.

The church as the embodiment of good should influence the ethical and moral standards expected by society as public theological approaches challenge and refute methodologically the bipolarity and division of sacred and secular, as it is interdisciplinary and dialogical. However, Leslie (2008:95) warns that, when we move pastoral care outside the Christian context of following Christ and bearing witness, complexities arise in loving a stranger as a neighbour, particularly when engaging with others who are not Christian and are not viewing it from a Christian perspective. Dreyer (2011:3) opines that a communicative approach in the public space in a multi-cultural, multi-ethnic and multi-religious democratic society (South Africa), requires the translation of the Christian language to a language that is understood and accessible to all citizens in the public sphere. "Theological reflection should lead us to ponder; human dignity, solidarity, common good and the preferential option for poor, and lead us to new insights and meanings as belonging to the one Body of Christ".

6.3.6 Principle six: Ongoing reflection and reflexivity in contexts of ethically challenging issues

The basis of the pastoral care task is the development of a spirituality that enables the Christian community to exercise the gift of discernment (Cochrane, *et al.*, 1991:23). This gives the pastoral care practitioner the ability to develop reflexivity, self-examination of our own feelings, reactions and motives and how it affects and influences us in xenophobic situations. According to Gula (2014:44) “spirituality designates a way of living that strives to integrate our diverse experiences into a meaningful whole by connecting all of life to what we believe gives meaning and value to our lives”. Spirituality understood this way, characterises those who believe in God and those who do not, as there is nothing religious about it. However, Christian spirituality presupposes belief in a personal loving God, revealed in Jesus through the Holy Spirit in the community of the church. The exercise of the gift of discernment comes from the Holy Spirit for the church to self-examine and reflect on its ‘being a church’ in light of the ideal of God’s kingdom.

The pastoral practitioner must be in a perpetual state of being dissatisfied with themselves as they strive to be an ideal caregiver. Gula (2014:50) opines that a relational-responsibility oriented morality begins in the heart as it bears on the sensitive awareness of the worth of another. Our moral call to do good and what is right that arises from the encounter with the other is a manifestation of the call from God (cf. Matthew 25:35-36). The church being in a state of perpetual dissatisfaction with itself in striving to be the ideal church, causing self-inflicted discomfort, should instil in Christians a desire to do good and assist believers to become more attuned to living out their commitments, care for their neighbours and struggle to maintain personal integrity. In doing so, faith can be seen as a conscious appreciation of salvation that bridges theology to salvation.

6.3.7 Principle seven: Shift the notion of Christian ethics to public Christian ethics – lived experiences

South Africa is a secularised state where religious communities enjoy a constitutionally recognised sphere of autonomy and are encouraged to play an active role in the formation of public policy (Duncan, 2002:334). Duncan (2002:334-335)

observes that religious leaders are obliged to maintain the historic role of being the moral compass of society by raising their voices and acting against violations of human dignity, despite the church's sometimes both ambivalent and ambiguous role in legitimising the state. Our human actions as Christians must have an intentional goal to influence and shape the public in a multiplicity of ways as ethics is about doing, while the space and target for doing is in the public sphere. Pastoral care practitioners must approach the public in a manner and in ways that demonstrate values of good humaneness, advocacy of justice and right, respect for human dignity, and the expression of daily living acts of love towards both victims and perpetrators of xenophobic acts.

The pastoral care practitioners should see themselves duty-bound as *diakonoi* (servants) to inculcate civic virtues that create social flourishing and make strategic choices on where and how change may likely occur for maintaining and sustaining a humane environment. Thus, from *Ubuntu* and Christian perspectives whereby community is the foundational basis for the principles of becoming, *Ubuntu* serves as a natural ethic potential that enforces and engenders hospitality, neighbourliness and care for other human beings. If *Ubuntu* just as Christian fellowship means being bound together and seeking the good of the other, i.e. in solidarity with each other and having the same identity, then both *Ubuntu* and Christian morality can militate against the South African public's response to nationalist prejudices and xenophobia in its Afrophobic form. Solidarity and being identified with the other person fulfil the message of Paul to Galatians (3:28) that there is no more Jew or Greek from the perspective of God's image, hence, *Ubuntu* principles and Christian values can foster a culture of Philoxenia.

6.4 Towards a model to shift xenophobia to Philoxenia within the South African context

6.4.1 Proposed model

A model presents a visual picture of how different parts of an issue are interconnected. Louw (1998, 1-9) explained that a model shows how issues are linked and interconnected so that one can understand life better. The development

of a model is based on the presupposition that insight into the systemic networking of attitudes and paradigms, helps individuals to consider different strategic options, especially, when one must connect the options to basic theological categories. Louw (2016) rightly maintained that when one sees the bigger picture it brings about a kind of soberness and realism. It also opens up options which create a sense of 'hope'.

The suggested model will be an adaptation of the pastoral hermeneutic circle developed by Holland and Henriot (1982:7) and adapted for the South African context by Cochrane, De Gruchy and Peterson (1991:13-25). To practically operationalise the model, an adaptation of Cardinal Joseph Cardijn's three-step approach will be employed. According to Sands (2018:1) the three-step approach enables a framework for moving theory to praxis by allowing theoretical portions of interdisciplinary dialogues to happen without any discipline ceding the core principles that respectively identify each discipline. Cardinal Joseph Cardijn's three-step approach was recommended by Pope John XXIII as essential for reading and responding to the signs of the times (*kairos*) such as xenophobia in our South African context. The researcher will moderate Cardinal Joseph Cardijn's approach by adding 'Hear' in tandem with 'See' as it could assist us in our task of finding a practical and easy method for cultivating a new culture of pastoral care in the face of xenophobia in South Africa.

In interreligious praxis, the proposed model hinges on the following seven dimensions that are integrated as espoused by Cochrane, De Gruchy and Peterson (1991:14). "The seven dimensions are; (1) faith-commitments: the confessing of Christ, (2) the moment of insertion: context analysis, (3) social analysis, (4) ecclesial analysis, (5) theological reflection: retrieval of tradition, (6) spirituality, and (7) pastoral planning" (Cochrane, *et al.*, 1991:14).

The pastoral cycle has its origins in activist circles as a tool for mobilising the Christian working class for transformation in their daily predicaments, which was formulated by Cardinal Joseph Cardijn (Brussels, 1955) as a three-step approach: See, Judge, Act. It was thus affirmed in Catholic Social Teachings by Pope John XXIII as a way of reading and responding to the signs of the times, being captured in *Mater et Magistra* (Pope John XXIII, 1961: #236) thus:

There are three stages which should normally be followed in the reduction of social principles into practice. First, one reviews the concrete situation; secondly, one forms a judgement on it in the light of these same principles; thirdly, one decides what the circumstances can and should be done to implement these principles. These are the three stages that are usually expressed in the three terms: observe, judge, act.

The proposed model integrates the pastoral cycle and three-step approach. The two dimensions of the pastoral cycle, namely confession of Christ and spirituality, define the being of a Christian, which defines the essence of being a Christian. This being gives rise to Christian ethical expectations that should be consistent with this state. The new Christian state of being is a pneumatological state. A pneumatological perspective entails that an individual becomes part of the kingdom now (Kingdom of God) through spiritual transformation and exists in this ontic being and continues right through to the end through the pneumatological enablement (Holy Spirit). Locating the discussion within a context of pastoral care, Louw (2014:2) clarified that eschatology provides a constructive perspective because “due to the not-yet factor, life is never complete and our being human is always incomplete and unfinished, thus the notion of *homo absconditus* [the essence of being is a mystery, hidden in the not-yet of human existence]” (Louw (2014:2). The two dimensions of the pastoral cycle, namely, (1) faith-commitments: the confessing of Christ, and (2) spirituality – describe Christian ontic being and not necessarily intervention model design elements.

Table 1: The correlation between the pastoral cycle as espoused by Cochrane, de Gruchy and Peterson and the three-step approach of Cardijn

Pastoral cycle	Cardinal Joseph Cardijn's three-step approach
The moment of insertion: context analysis; social analysis; ecclesial analysis	See and hear
Theological reflection: retrieval of tradition	Judge

Pastoral planning	Act
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Depicted above is the schematic representation of the correlation between the pastoral cycle as espoused by Cochrane, de Gruchy and Peterson and the three-step approach of Cardijn. The moment of insertion can be juxtaposed with the first step, See and Hear, as both are inherently interested in analysing the context, social analysis and ecclesial analysis as a framework for moving theory into praxis. The second step, Judge, is a moment of discernment that is done in solidarity with those who seek help which relates to theological reflection on 'what is God saying' to alleviate the suffering of those who seek help, or how they can be empowered to alleviate their own suffering. The third step, Act, entails looking towards actual remedies to alleviate and solve problems they face in their daily lives by meaningful contribution to changing their circumstances. This is precisely what pastoral planning endeavours to achieve after critical reflection that is engaged in social transformation for the common good.

The active participants in implementation of the model are the Christian community, the church and academia:

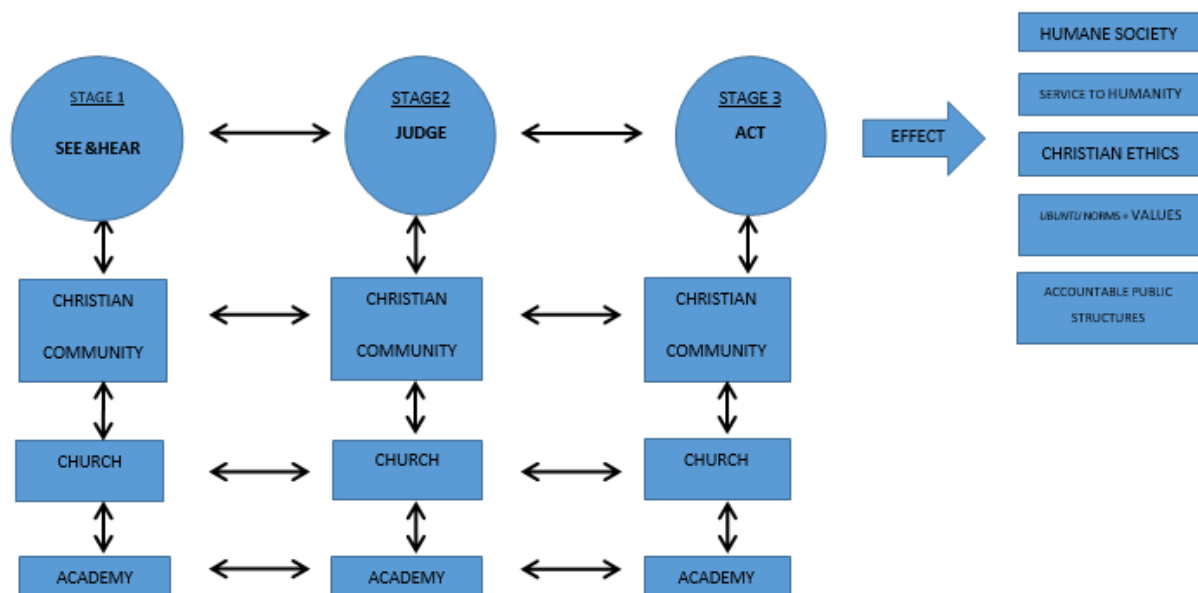


Figure 1: Cardinal Joseph Cardijn

The figure depicted above is an adaptation of Cardinal Joseph Cardijn's three-step approach – See, Judge, Act – for the purposes of this study. The approach was recommended by Pope John XXIII as essential for reading and responding to the signs of the times, as migration is a sign of the times with its associated problems such as xenophobia in South Africa. I would like to suggest adding Hear in tandem with See as it could assist us in our task of finding a practical and easy method for cultivating a new culture of pastoral care in the face of xenophobia in South Africa.

6.4.2 Stage 1: See and 'Hear'

Xenophobia is not an academic exercise in terms of definition as recurrent events in South Africa have shown attitudes of dislike, fear and hatred, but it is embraced in practice with, among other things, inverted tensions, violence, hostility and abuse that often lead to death and destruction of property, and is especially directed at African migrants by black South Africans (Dassah, 2015:128). There is unanimity in the literature on xenophobia that African migrants have borne the brunt of xenophobic acts over the years but with differing explanations from both researchers and politicians alike in naming the attacks xenophobia and providing adequate reasons for cause and effect, in which this model tries to establish the importance of pastoral care in discerning the phenomenon.

The addition of Hear in the first step is a deliberate attempt to address the impact of technology in the way life-experiences are captured and perceived in contemporary society. The fusion of Hear and See is an attempt to draw the attention of the pastoral care practitioner to the influence of social networking platforms (e.g. WhatsApp, Facebook, Twitter, etc) and their relevance to contemporary life-experiences. People form opinions on issues based on the perverse influence on daily life by social networking platforms such as the internet and smartphones. News and events are disseminated through these platforms without being authenticated; leading people to take uninformed decisions and actions with dire consequences to others. The caregiver should always be vigilant about what is happening in the social networking arena, which at times might need their engagement. This is the 'new'

public of contemporary society, akin to God's response to His people's suffering in Egypt (Exodus chapters, 7-9).

The role of pastoral care for the Christian community in Africa should be understood as being embedded in relationships of humankind, both the living and the dead, and not merely confined to ordained pastors. The pastoral care practitioner in the "African context, including South Africa, should advocate a theological method that is developed and contextualised to enable it to speak and respond to the daily life-experiences of people in the African reference". Pastoral care should be cognisant of the African world views, i.e. *Ubuntu*, and religious thought to engage in public debate and policy interpretations of our common life norms by which this life will be lived. The pastoral care practitioner should not be caught in the tangles of the past in South Africa where the church's stance against apartheid was at times both ambivalent and ambiguous. Pastoral care in the face of xenophobia should take a role that addresses the transcendent dimension in suffering that includes the participation of God in Jesus Christ through the Holy Spirit to impart the comforting effect of grace, compassion and presence in human suffering. Xenophobia calls on the pastoral care practitioners to make a profound reflection on how they think or view other human beings as well as desisting from viewing other human beings as inferior, subhuman or unequal. This is the message they must project to the Christian community and the public to reflect on their perceptions, stereotypes, prejudices and relationships with others.

To analyse the social context is akin to "reading the signs of the times" (Matthew 16:3) as Christ puts it, or "interpreting this *kairos*" (Luke 12:56) as being the beginning of an attempt to understand the life experiences arising from the moment of insertion (Cochrane, *et al.*, 1991:18). The social analysis is a tool that helps to assist us obtain a more complete scenario of the social situation that explores its historical and structural relationships in an attempt to make some sense of the reality that manifested itself in the moment of insertion. The more pertinent questions we need to ask are: why does the situation exist, what are the root causes, what are the probable consequences, and who are the actors and what linkages need to be delineated? In order to try and address these questions, we need to examine the economic factors, political factors, social factors, historical factors and cultural factors involved.

In the South African context, the economic factors have largely been dominated by the white minority through the legacy of apartheid as the owners, controllers, paymasters, determiners of who gets what and when, and the sole arbiters of who should benefit (Misago, *et al.*, 2016). In the post-1994 era, this has somewhat changed, but the nation's economic psyche is deeply scarred by the past injustices, which may or may not be the fuel for current *kairos* (xenophobia). The political factors have largely been ascribed to the failure of government to fulfil the promises of service delivery to the previously marginalised, disenfranchised and poor black people leading to violence against foreign nationals for social ills which are not of their making (Monama & Landau, 2016).

The social factors emanate from the entitlement mentality of black South Africans that basic services meant for them are usurped by the foreign nationals, who are seen as the 'other', in the post-apartheid national identity in the social landscape of South Africa (Murray, 2003:430). The historical factors are influenced by the apartheid era policies of race-based urban influx control, racially designated group areas, and "ethnic" homelands as well as the international isolation of South Africa (Dodson, 2010). Cultural factors manifest themselves in increased immigration of African migrants from the diverse Pan-African set of countries. The subsequent mutual stereotyping by South Africans of African migrants, results in the exaggerated perception of cultural differences thus, giving rise to prejudice and antagonism (Morris, 1998: Harris, 2002).

The ecclesial analysis according to Cochrane, *et al.* (1991:19), "places the church as an integral part of the socio-political life of society", a true participant, hence her role within society has to be put in context so as to analyse her structures and dynamics that shape and determine the life and witness of the church. In doing ecclesial analysis one is mindful that religious communities are steeped in traditions and are inherently conservative through their nature which is preserved in scriptures, rituals, dogmas and traditions dating hundreds, if not, thousands of years. What I am proposing goes beyond the confines of the ecclesial analysis espoused by Cochrane, *et al.*, to include an observation by Meylahn (2012:12) that there should be a shift in understanding the change praxis affecting the church. What makes this attractive is that from the vantage point of addressing the *kairos* (xenophobia) from an interreligious encounter, it informs the previous interactions of the religious

communities and their importance in dealing with socio-political ills of the past. First, it recognises that hermeneutical interpretation creates temporary communities of dialogue and conversation which have persistent differences and deficiencies of knowledge and understanding. Second, this enhances our understanding that the interpretations we put forward are critically inspired by the knowledge that there is not only difference, but also deferment of knowledge or interpretation.

The SAMP (2008-2017) annual surveys inform the pastoral care practitioner (Christian community), the church and academia to discern patterns of particular episodes, situations and/or contexts to be proactive and influence an event before it occurs. Xenophobic hotspots are well documented in South Africa offering an opportunity for the three 'actors' to see and understand first-hand why these patterns and dynamics are occurring armed with knowledge emanating from the pastoral hermeneutical cycle, principles and guidelines proposed by this study.

6.4.3 Stage 2: Judge

Agbiji (2013:310) observed that pastoral care is founded on God's shepherding and suffering presence through Jesus Christ and the empowering of the Holy Spirit. Prior commitment to a particular way of being in the world for the Christian informs us through the scriptures of the way we hunger and thirst for fair treatment and justice for the migrants. Therefore, the analysis of context requires reflection on what the Bible says to foster a message of reconciliation at its heart for critical evaluation of the *kairos* (xenophobia) to shift it to *Philoxenia*. The awareness of the social dynamics in the public sphere, such as economic and socio-political factors that impede the realisation of humanisation of practical theology to achieve a humane society and unconditional love and service to others, should be challenged head-on to make a difference to the lives of migrants.

The intentional addressing of real-life practical issues by putting them on the church's agenda puts the spotlight on public ecclesiology as it addresses the ecclesiological questions of the church's relevance to issues affecting people today. The lived experiences of people where Christians interact with socio-political and practical issues and challenges requires academia and the church to refine methods and purposes through a broader lens for framing pastoral care ministries. Hence, the

Christian, the church and theologians should have a mind-shift from the principle *sola scriptura* to *paradosis*, as scripture should be used to seek textual meaning, not as a function of practical meaning, but for the interpretation of life according to scripture in its applicability to the current context and meaning.

Spirituality enables the Christian community to exercise the gift of discernment to self-examine and reflect on being the Body of Christ in the church, and for the church to reflect on 'being a church' in light of the ideal of God's kingdom. The church should instil in Christians the desire to do good and assist believers in becoming more attuned to living out their commitments, care for their neighbours and struggle to maintain personal integrity. Christians must have an intentional goal to influence public morality by demonstrating values of humanity, advocacy of justice and right, respect for human dignity and expression of daily living acts of love towards both victims and perpetrators of xenophobic acts.

Theological reflection is an exploration of the lived experiences and it seeks a more profound analysis in the light of living faith, scriptures, the church's social teachings and being in dialogue with resources of religious tradition (Cochrane, *et al.*,1991:19). "From this conversation we gain new insights as the Word of God is brought to bear upon the situation that raises new questions that lead to the opening of new responses" (*ibid.*). The two important sources for this theological tradition are to be found in the present study from the Scriptures and Catholic Social Teaching. It is through the scriptures in the normative sense that we bear witness and have access to the foundational events of revelation in the history of Israel and in Jesus the Messiah as preserved and understood within the faith communities, therefore it is imperative that we return to the scriptural passages in order to help us interpret the experience (Cochrane, *et al.*,1991: Australian Catholic Social Justice Council, 2011). The pedantic reliance on the principle *sola scriptura* by the largely Protestant Christian tradition, has been swayed by the realisation that scripture in itself is a living tradition, a *paradosis* and the fact that the Christian church has always understood the gospel and the church's identity through its historical journey which must be taken into account in theological reflection within our religious communities and contexts (Cochrane, *et al.*, 1991). According to Boff and Boff (1986:32), scripture is used for seeking textual meaning, not only as a function of the practical meaning, but also for interpretation of life according to the scripture in its applicability to the

current context and meaning. Thus, the advent of the ecumenical discussions has led practical theology to be mindful of the confessional traditions held by either side of the coin, either Catholic or Protestant, leading to new insights and meanings of belonging to the one Body of Christ. Theological reflection based on Catholic Social Teaching directs us to ponder the challenges posed by xenophobia since it is based on human dignity, the common good, human rights, solidarity and the preferential option for the poor (Compendium of the Social Doctrine of the Church, 2005).

6.4.4 Stage 3: Act

According to Pope John XXIII (1961: #236) this stage entails what should be done to implement the principles in accordance with the context, situations or circumstances. This relates to Osmer's (2008:4) assertion that "it is a pragmatic task that involves devising holistic strategies of action that will influence situations in ways that are desirable through cognitive behavioural interventions and emotional-narrative support". This entails how to transform the practice into action by addressing through contextual analysis and theological reflection to change the situation, address the root causes, transform structures and relationships that produce the situation, empowerment of those affected or disadvantaged by the situation, and devising a method of critically evaluating the effectiveness of the action.

The pastoral care practitioner should be driven by the ever-present fact that all human beings are made in *imago Deo*. This requires a Christian to treat and embrace others with respect in our daily interactions and be sensitive to their perceptions on the way we treat, engage and approach them. Christians should change their cognitive disposition towards migrants, especially in South Africa, where the inclination towards our differences and diversity with migrants influences how we regard them as inferior due to their sense of dress, physical attributes and culture. The ingrained attitudes towards migrants as evidenced by the adoption of a conference resolution by the ruling party, ANC, in 2014 that irregular migrants are both "an economic and security" threat to the country, calls for action from the religious fraternity to challenge such reckless statements. The church should use the latitude afforded it in the South African Constitution to act and speak-up against

polarising utterances and resolutions to show the marginalised and instigators that the church is unwavering in discharging diakonia (service) as the Body of Christ.

The churches should be actively involved and vocal about issues affecting migrants as evidenced by the appalling conditions migrants were subjected to at the Lindela deportation camp and humiliating queues at the Marabastad Home Affairs offices for asylum-seekers and temporary residence renewals. The church, through its migrants' ministry services, should take the government to task to change or transform those structures and relationships that exacerbate xenophobia, by continuously urging the government to implement a coherent and enabling legislation to deal with the plight of migrants that has been currently blocked in parliament. The church should deliberately use the common language of the people in a commitment to influence public decision-making and learning from substantive discourse. The desire for the translation of religious language to the public should be motivated by participation in the *missio Dei* and being a Christian witness in the world by caring for the stranger.

Pastoral care in its action towards issues affecting migrants should adopt interpathetic "caring in order to understand the assumptions, beliefs and values" of both the perpetrator and victims of xenophobic actions to empower and reorient them to understand their interrelatedness and interconnectedness within their network of relationships. *Ubuntu* as an embedded African philosophy of solidarity and identity promotes communal relationships as 'a person is a person through other persons' thus people have to be treated with human dignity and should be afforded profound reverence and sanctity. The church, together with academia, should develop innovative ways of critically evaluating the effectiveness of its pastoral care interventions in topical issues in the country such as xenophobia which shows a symptomatic mass antipathy and intolerance that is characterised by an embedded tension and hostility.

The above proposed visual model envisages the shift to a humane society, active service to humanity, a society guided by Christian ethical principles, *Ubuntu* norms and values, and accountable public structures.

6.5 Chapter summary and conclusion

The chapter dealt with xenophobia as a public practical theological challenge drawing from literature to present a holistic approach enabling a shift from xenophobia to Philoxenia in the South African context. We explored various psychological, sociological and anthropological insights to interpret the meaning of ethical responses in mitigating against manifestation of xenophobia in South African society. In the chapter, the opportunity was used to find avenues for exploring ways and means to communicate and minister the full implications of the gospel of reconciliation and respect to the country that frequently finds itself tottering on the brink of human disaster.

The pastoral cycle as well as the three-step approach were used as a mobilising tool for transformative action as well as an analytical tool for interpretive purposes. From the pastoral cycle as a tool for pastoral ministry in its interpretative and practical role one can decipher that it brings ministry events and life experiences together, albeit they are in critical tension with what emerges from the scriptures and tradition as a vision of life. The pastoral cycle infuses knowledge that one must seek understanding and solidarity with the foreigners to transform the social structures that contribute to suffering and injustice. The social and context analysis places the church as an “integral part of the socio-political life of society” by being an active participant to help shape and determine the life and witness of the church. *Ubuntu* being synonymous with ethics of care, has to be engaged as a principle of pastoral care that has biblical references, so that humanity is constantly reminded of fairness, love, compassion, hospitality, generosity, harmony and sympathy in biblical texts from Genesis to Revelations.

CHAPTER 7: Findings, conclusion and recommendations

7.1 Introduction

The main objective of the study was to develop an understanding of Christian ethics that is integrated with the notion of *Ubuntu* from a public practical theological perspective to foster a hospitality approach that positively embraces foreigners and promotes Philoxenia in South Africa. The theoretical framework for the study was based on Osmer's (2008:4) core tasks of practical theological interpretation. Following Osmer's framework, the study explored the causal factors and effects of xenophobia, and the influence of *Ubuntu* and hospitality in shaping the behaviour of South Africans towards foreigners. The study made use of theological concepts from public practical theology and the link between *Ubuntu* and hospitality to Christian ethics in shaping public moral policy. The previous chapter proposed principles and guidelines for a church-driven model to shift xenophobia to Philoxenia for the church in its ministerial approaches to pastoral care in South Africa. This chapter presents the findings, conclusions and recommendations of the study.

7.2 Findings

7.2.1 Churches in South Africa, including various church bodies like the South African Council of Churches, Southern African Catholic Bishops' Conference, etc. are lukewarm in their response to evils perpetrated against foreign nationals. Instead of speaking out clearly and unambiguously concerning the evil of xenophobic attacks, the churches and church leaders did not speak out strongly in public condemning the actions. Understandably, the study reveals that the factors underlying xenophobic actions affect all South Africans, including church members. The factors that give rise to xenophobia are complex and church leaders are equally caught up in this dynamic along with all other South African citizens. Theories concerning the causes of xenophobia revealed that it is easier to side with fellow South Africans who are perpetrators rather than try to discourage or form barricades of protection. Accordingly, the theories about xenophobia provided an insight and an analytical framework to understand xenophobia.

These theories include scapegoating theory, isolation theory and bio-cultural theory. However, the three theories inadequately address “the subjective and objective, as well as internal and contextual variables” that contribute to and perpetuate xenophobia in the country. According to these three theories foreigners are lumped together as a homogeneous group with no scope for differentiation between various types of foreigners and they fail to adequately explain the asymmetrical application of xenophobic acts towards African migrants vis-à-vis white or Asian migrants who seem to be at lower risk for violent actions. An alternative approach utilising the test of eight theories explains and understands xenophobia in South Africa by applying a wide variety of explanatory variables that are subjective and objective as well as internal and contextual.

According to the test of eight theories the variables explaining xenophobia are aligned with (1) resource competition; (2) poverty; (3) relative deprivation; (4) frustration with government; (5) social mobilisation; (6) political mobilisation; (7) group threat; and (8) symbol threat. Thus, the study discovered that xenophobic violence cannot be adequately explained by poverty and unemployment and the presence of migrants, nor can it be attributed to poor economic conditions, competition for resources or poor service delivery, as the key issue that emerges from the situation is the question of the humaneness (*Ubuntu*) or lack of it, as well as the absence of strong theological ethical guidance from the church.

The study revealed that the church as the vanguard of the poor, the vulnerable and marginalised should take the lead in persuading the government to pass appropriate legislation to protect the migrants. Notwithstanding the passing of legislation geared to make the lives of migrants bearable in South Africa, the churches by their muted response to xenophobic acts, could already have taken legal recourse under existing legislation to pressurise the government to act. The promulgation of the Immigration Act of 2003 by the South African Department of Home Affairs effectively criminalises undocumented migrants, ie by providing generous provisions for arrest, detention and deportation on the *suspicion* of being an illegal migrant. This Act should have been challenged by the churches as an infringement of human dignity. However, the government faces the tension between supporting national sentiment and the need to advance foreigners’ needs. The national sentiment is a perceived danger posed by migrants to the socio-economic, cultural and moral fabric of society, especially

among black South Africans in the face of social deprivation. The country's leaders are caught in this quagmire as first and foremost they are responsible to their citizens as their elected representatives and have to abide by their will, even if it is misguided. The church and government are caught in this dilemma, albeit, for different reasons and motivations.

7.2.2 The study provided insight and understanding that African philosophy must be understood in the context of its ability to create meaning for a culturally differentiated society. These meanings are not anachronistic but must be understood in the context relevant to the socio-political, socio-cultural and socio-economic conditions of the people. African societies rooted in traditional solidarity in a rapidly changing world must search for new values, identities and the self-consciousness embedded in time-honoured ideas of their forefathers. Thus, traditional African morality is cognisant of African ontological reflection (a reflection on being) that informs the discovery of human being, of meaning in himself/herself from the reflection on his/her being and his relation to other beings and how he ought to be.

The study revealed that the relationship between *Ubuntu* and the aphorism associated with it *umuntu ngumuntu ngabantu* is no coincidence as it was a desire to find something uniquely African in post-apartheid South Africa in an attempt to transform society by incorporating traditions from the past that were deemed to be noble or worthy. Human beings have dignity by virtue of their capacity for community that is understood as the combination of identifying with others and exhibiting solidarity with them, where human rights violations defile the common good. The study found that *Ubuntu* is well grounded and understood in African communities but is widely used by different peoples of the world with different meanings whilst still based on the same principles everywhere.

The study found that *Ubuntu's* foundation can be traced to both culture and religion, because seemingly both culture and religion influence each other. Just as *Ubuntu* has elements of cultural-religious aspects, so Christianity has its Judeo-Roman influences. African religion prepares the human person by embodying an explanation of the world, for instance, an understanding of the universe, and gives a response to the questions about the meaning of life which humans are unable to grasp or answer; for example, suffering, poverty, violence, injustice, inequality etc. Thus,

religion provides people with ethical values, offers them hope and provides solutions for people to lead harmonious lives. That is to say, it distinguishes between right and wrong and nourishes one's spiritual hunger through rituals like meditation, ceremonies and devotions.

However, based on the African understanding of *Ubuntu*, the incidences of xenophobia, endemic corruption and violence in South Africa are examples of anti-traditional African behaviour that ought to be part and parcel of discussions in the community. Despite its shortcomings, *Ubuntu* seeks to restore communal cultural behaviours like African humaneness, hospitality, respect and love. As a result, challenges such as xenophobia and violence in its many forms have lowered the esteem of the community.

7.2.3 The study revealed that *Ubuntu* suggests hospitality and acceptance of fellow human beings in that *Ubuntu* in its fundamental sense involves hospitality as one's human being is folded together with the other, that other human being, being the stranger. This is embedded in the *Ubuntu* ethic that has at its heart solidarity and identity. Solidarity involves having a relationship with every other human being and an obligation to pursue their well-being, especially in situations where they are not able to take actions on their own. This is because an individual is morally required to be concerned for the good of others as captured by Christian ethics that is guided by the principle "Do to others whatever you would like them to do to you. This is the law and the prophets" (Matthew 7:12). Solidarity being the recognition of interdependence and the duty to act for the common good, ultimately stretches to include all who inhabit this planet as encouraged by the words of Jesus, "the kingdom of God is among you" Luke (17:21).

Identity relates to a sense of shared belonging that is based on a common vision of the nature of human life and relations in coordinating their behaviour to realise shared ends based on norms governing these. Authentic Christian spirituality is undoubtedly concerned with the shaping of and practice of human life but embodies everyday practicalities and serves as a framework of ethics. In *Ubuntu* the failure to identify with each other could go beyond mere alienation and involve outright divisions between people as is evidenced by the treatment of migrants and the

subsequent violent actions of xenophobia directed at them. However, within theology the enabler is the Spirit while in *Ubuntu* it is identity and solidarity.

The study provided an understanding that the church and the individual Christian have a duty to be engaged according to *Ubuntu's* notion of identity and solidarity. Identity and solidarity imply a vector towards the other. The invitation into the community is also an invitation into the socio-cultural context of the community whereby hospitality has to be examined taking into account those cultural and socio-historical factors of society, the underlying models of worship and theological nuances as well as differences such as culture, race, ethnicity and language that can act as contributory factors to a welcoming or non-welcoming environment.

The study found that the communal nature of hospitality in the *Ubuntu* sense is aptly captured by the Sesotho idiom: *matshoho a hlatswana*, meaning that one hand helps to wash the other hand. In other words, by helping another person you are helping yourself. This is related to the fact that Jesus said "... whatever you did for one of these least brothers of mine, you did for me" as a sign of his presence and active involvement in the worlds of those who are teaching to do good and their loving deeds to others, a duty that Christians accept, just as *Ubuntu* promotes solidarity and identity. Hospitality as espoused by the verse (Leviticus 19:33-34) means in Kikuyu language a person who is hospitable is called *mutugi*, which is synonymous with 'a gracious person' and/or 'hospitable person'. It therefore shows that Africans associate grace with hospitality, as grace is a divine attribute. Africans describe God as 'gracious' with the person being hospitable partaking in God's gracious acts of doing good unto others, including working, assisting in the economic or social well-being of the society in general as well as for the individual.

7.2.4 The study provided insight and understanding that public practical theology in South Africa is struggling with its identity as it seems, in my opinion, occupied with the more abstract paradigmatic, epistemological and methodological concerns. According to the assessment of the literature, while not exhaustive, there seems to be a lack of agreement on the pastoral mode of advocacy on public issues according to the literature, in light of events (xenophobia, corruption, etc.) occurring in the country. This undermines the agency role of the church and other religious communities as well as other role players in shaping public policy. Some have

observed that as theology goes public it will be seen as transformational; taking into account the ethos of humanity embedded in *Ubuntu* and taking into account and learning from people's experiences. The study emphasised that practical theology will be bridging the three epistemological spheres by exploring theological, historical Western approaches and African wisdom and tradition to engage with issues on an ongoing basis. From a social-moralist point of view Christian morality and *Ubuntu* principles will act as a barrier/shield to counter current responses from the South African public towards nationalist prejudices and xenophobia in its Afrophobic form.

7.2.5 In view of the findings and discussions in the previous chapters, the development of the church-driven model to shift xenophobia to Philoxenia within the South African context of xenophobia was to integrate *Ubuntu* and hospitality into public pastoral ministry. It was an intentional motive to influence a paradigm shift in ministerial approaches to migrants and xenophobia in the current public practical theological responses to the challenges faced by the churches in dealing with xenophobia. The principles driving the formulation of the model were based on the premise that they (the principles) will entail finding ways of communicating and ministering the full implications of the gospel of reconciliation to the perpetrators and victims of xenophobic acts with *Ubuntu* principles as a guide.

7.3 Conclusion

The study objective was to develop an understanding of Christian ethics that is integrated with the notion of *Ubuntu* from a public practical theological perspective to foster an approach based on hospitality that positively embraces foreigners and discourages xenophobia in South Africa.

To achieve this objective, the following study question was posed: How can Christian ethics be integrated with the notion of *Ubuntu* from a public practical theological perspective to foster a hospitality approach that positively embraces foreigners and discourages xenophobia in South Africa?

To clarify the main question, the following sub-questions were posed:

- What is the situation, context and extent of xenophobia in the contemporary South African scenario? What theoretical framework could be utilised to analyse and understand xenophobia?
- How could the challenge of xenophobia be framed as a public practical theological and Christian ethical issue in South Africa within the context of *Ubuntu* and hospitality?
- How can the intersection between public practical theology and public pastoral theology within Christian ethics be utilised in the context of *Ubuntu* and hospitality to migrants?
- How could an adapted and integrated understanding of *Ubuntu* be employed to reconfigure and inform public practical ministerial approaches towards a shift from xenophobia to Philoxenia within the South African context of xenophobia?

In response to the above questions, the following conclusions can be made:

7.3.1 What is the situation, context and extent of xenophobia in the contemporary global and South African scenario? What theoretical framework could be utilised to analyse and understand xenophobia?

Human migration is identified as a cause of people leaving their country of abode either voluntarily or involuntarily. They are then placed in a position of vulnerability in the recipient countries because of social ills, such as xenophobia in the case of South Africa. Xenophobia as a concept was defined for the purposes of this study with fear not being the operative word as it tends to obscure a plurality of beliefs and effects associated with the phenomenon. Furthermore, in the South African context, xenophobia manifests itself at times as a bias-motivated crime of violence and is directed towards individuals who are of the same colour as local citizens, hence the term Afrophobia.

Three different theories were advanced to explain xenophobia namely: scapegoating theory, isolation theory and bio-cultural theory. However, these three theories inadequately address the subjective and objective, as well as internal and contextual variables that contribute and perpetuate xenophobia in the country. The test of eight theories explains and understands xenophobia in South Africa by applying a wide

variety of explanatory variables that are subjective and objective as well as internal and contextual. However, xenophobic violence cannot be adequately explained by poverty, unemployment and the presence of migrants, nor can it be attributed to poor economic conditions, competition for resources or poor service delivery, as the key issue that emerges from the situation is the question of the humaneness (*Ubuntu*) or lack of it as expressed in xenophobia.

7.3.2 What is the interplay and interdependence of *Ubuntu* and hospitality as factors that influence reception and acceptance of other nationals in South Africa?

Ubuntu shapes every facet of African life as it is a process and philosophy that reflects the African heritage, culture, beliefs, value system and the extended family structures. African cultural practices such as relatedness are embodied in the principles of *Ubuntu* that are dependent on interpersonal relations which are the basis of tightly woven societal fabric. The adage in Zulu *umuntu ngumuntu ngabantu* (I am a person through other persons) is both a factual description and a social ethic that not only describes an individual as being-with-others, but also prescribes how one should relate to others and articulates a basic respect and caring for others that is encompassed by the concept of all about being-with-others.

Identity and solidarity are the two recurrent themes in typical African discussion of the nature of community as an ideal. Identity refers to identify with each other whereby people think of themselves as members of the same group, and to conceive of themselves as 'we'. This entails people taking pride or feeling shame in the group's activities. For people to exhibit solidarity means to engage in mutual aid and to act in ways that are reasonably beneficial to each other. While identity and solidarity are conceptually separable and logically distinct, in African thought they are viewed morally to be together. They indicate communal relationship with other human beings. Thus, solidarity and identity are in a way conferred by *Ubuntu* and are viewed as central definitive tenets or elements of *Ubuntu*.

The conception of community in terms of sharing a way of life and of exhibiting solidarity toward others is naturally understood in terms of caring about their quality of life. Hence, *Ubuntu* with hospitality as its central tenet, provides the authority to foster acceptance of migrants in South Africa and discourage xenophobia.

7.3.3. How could the challenge of xenophobia be framed as a public practical theological and Christian ethical issue in South Africa within the context of *Ubuntu* and hospitality?

Ubuntu suggests hospitality and acceptance of fellow human beings because *Ubuntu* in its fundamental sense is hospitality. It involves one human being folded together with the other; that other human being, being the stranger. The interconnectedness in African society is highly valued and recognises the role of the other in the intensity of its expression in daily life. Christians have an identity defined by a new union in Christ, which has resultant ethics that flow from this relationship. At the same time Christians, as members of the human race, are bound by the bond with other human beings as people created in the image of God (*imago Dei*). However, ethical expectations and conduct for people bound by Christ's fellowship have explicit ethical obligations to one another and a duty to their fellow human beings. These ethical obligations are explicitly drawn from divine revelation (Bible). The challenge, however, is to answer the question: from where does the challenge for non-Christians to act and respond ethically arise? Does it arise from human rights, legal rights or natural revelation – herein lies the challenge of public pastoral care. Pastoral care in the public sphere needs to account for these dynamics.

The church and the individual Christian have a duty to be engaged according to *Ubuntu's* notion of identity and solidarity. Identity and solidarity imply a vector towards the other. The communal nature of hospitality in the *Ubuntu* sense is aptly captured by the Sesotho idiom: *matshoho a hlatswana*, meaning that one hand helps to wash the other hand. In other words, by helping another person you are helping yourself. This is related to the fact that Jesus said "... whatever you did for one of these least brothers of mine, you did for me" as a sign of his presence and active involvement in the worlds of those who are models of doing good and loving deeds to others, a duty to act by Christians just like the solidarity and identity in *Ubuntu*.

7.3.4 How can the intersection between public practical theology and public pastoral theology within Christian ethics be utilised in the context of *Ubuntu* and hospitality to migrants?

Public pastoral care involves the shift from the "public" of the church and academia to the "public" of contemporary society informed by public theology in that it develops

for public debate and political interpretation such things as acts directed towards the healing, sustaining, guiding, reconciling and nurturing of persons whose troubles and concerns arise in the context of daily interactions and ultimate means and concerns. To achieve the task of moving to the public sphere, pastoral care should move away from care that is only care of the human soul (*cura animarum*) to also include care of the “living human web”.

This could be achieved by contributing to a humane society, fostering values such as unconditional love and service to those in need, preservation of the earth and safeguarding it against violent exploitation and for telecommunications to foster equality to counter threats of domination. The shift to the public arena involves a mind shift on the part of the Christian pastoral caregivers in that they should be mindful of the tensions in the pastoral mandate of whether to “love God by loving the stranger as a neighbour (Luke 10:27) or making the disciples of all nations” (Matthew 28:18-20).

The public Christian ethic of behaviour towards migrants can be aptly captured in two main messages in the New Testament or specifically the teachings of Jesus Christ. The first message is captured in Matthew 7:12, “Do to others whatever you would like them to do to you. This is the law and the prophets”, which one would consider as the “golden rule”. It is this scriptural passage that prohibits us from subjecting others to the brutality, violence and mistreatment that migrants are subjected to. The second biblical text “The second is like it: You shall love your neighbour as yourself” (Matthew 22:39), which is the second commandment of Christ, hence, a moral imperative that suggests it is morally binding. It therefore compels Christians to express their love to strangers instead of mistreating or oppressing them, as everybody desires to be treated with courtesy, compassion and kindness.

Firstly, practising pastoral and practical theology in the African context requires that one should be mindful that African society, even South African society in this instance, is not simplistically homogeneous but heterogeneous. Secondly, in African terms there is a discernible gulf between academic reflection and grassroots congregational ministry. Thirdly, the practice of pastoral care ministry is diverse among denominations with a noticeable difference between traditional missionary

started churches and the budding emerging African founded churches with a largely charismatic and Pentecostal outlook. Fourth, practitioners from different theological persuasions have a significant diversity of pastoral care approaches. Last, there is a lack of narrowed focus on questions considered in pastoral care. This should not be a hindrance in addressing the current challenges in pastoral care in Africa as the public pastoral theologian must envision the glory of God in their dealings with public issues in the public sphere.

7.3.5 How could an adapted and integrated understanding of *Ubuntu* be employed to reconfigure and inform public practical ministerial approaches towards a shift from xenophobia to Philoxenia within the South African context of xenophobia?

The development of a church-driven model aims to integrate *Ubuntu* and hospitality in public pastoral ministry to shift xenophobia to Philoxenia within the South African context of xenophobia. The primary aim of the model is to embody principles that will entail finding ways of communicating and ministering the full implications of the gospel of reconciliation to the perpetrators and victims in the spirit of *Ubuntu*.

The fusion of the three-steps approach and the pastoral cycle was a deliberate effort to infuse the two dimensions of the pastoral cycle, namely confession of Christ and spirituality that defines being a Christian, as tools for the pastoral care practitioners to arm themselves in the public space. The two dimensions of being a Christian, give rise to the Christian ethical expectations that should be consistent with this state. In carrying out the model the public pastoral practitioner will be able to move theory to praxis by allowing theological portions of interdisciplinary dialogues to happen without any discipline ceding the core principles that respectively identify each discipline. Thus, the model empowers the public pastoral care practitioner to interpret situations or contexts presented from a hermeneutical perspective relying on biblical concepts to construct ethical norms to guide and provide responses to the existential questions and devise holistic strategies of action that will influence situations or public policy in ways that are desirable. Christian ethics has a future as an important role player in the morality of secularised society if the discipline is based on a well-defined and plausible meta-theoretical foundation.

7.3.6 Study conclusion

The study adopted the practical theological framework developed by Osmer, using the four basic guiding questions of the task of practical theology. The context and extent of xenophobia in contemporary South Africa was explored guided by the first question of the task of practical theology; viz. what is going on? Xenophobic incidents in South Africa were noted and analysed to discern the underlying causes thereof. This entailed gaining insight and understanding of the theories explaining xenophobia and their shortcomings.

Ubuntu, as an African view of life and the world in which people share and treat each other as humans based on the underlying universal brotherhood of Africans, was utilised to understand why xenophobic acts are occurring in South Africa. The engagement of *Ubuntu* is based on its principles of compassion, human dignity, hospitality and respect for others. In *Ubuntu* character is the true essence of African morality whereby character is the linchpin of the moral wheel as a person should possess the ability to act in accord with the moral principles and rules of society.

Ubuntu seeks to restore African communal cultural behaviours like humaneness, hospitality, respect and love. Christian ethics is a reminder to the Christian that God gives strangers special protection and how Christians should relate to all people through faith; irrespective of their linguistic, racial or ethnic differences or gender. This ought to be going on as we need to revisit and reinterpret the Bible in light of the contemporary socio-political and economic problems and our experiences as Africans by positioning the *Ubuntu* ethos in the reforming of communities that abide by ethics that guide societal morality.

Public theology concerns itself with theological engagement with the public and making sense of these interactions, especially focusing on issues in the public sphere outside of the confines of the church and placing them on the church's agenda. Public practical theology can take a leaf from the notions of hospitality and justice embedded in *Ubuntu* to make a meaningful contribution in a pluralistic society since *Ubuntu* is not hierarchical or triumphalist, but rather it involves subject-subject relationships. The Christian effort will also be able to address itself to the wider community beyond the Christian membership in terms recognisable to them all. This is because the Christian message will not overemphasise forgiveness to the detriment of justice. In *Ubuntu* understanding forgiveness accompanies justice.

There is a need to emphasise the caring side, revisiting our *Ubuntu* heritage and the Christian value of hospitality to foster a culture of Philoxenia.

7.4 Recommendations

- Churches should negotiate the in-between space they occupy, whereby on the one hand they are loyal citizens of the country, and yet on the other hand they are ambassadors of the Kingdom of God. This situation needs to be understood within the context of global compassion fatigue. Empirical studies are encouraged to determine the positions of churches in order to meaningfully engage them.
- The churches, by framing xenophobia and related social ills such as corruption in South Africa, should be the facilitators of research-based inquiry on the moral-ethical causes of the phenomenon.
- The church's ministry towards migrants should be strengthened by having well-developed, resourced and conceptualised migrant ministries that offer holistic pastoral care to migrants, irrespective of whether they are Christians or non-Christians. An investigation of the merits and motivation for this approach is recommended for future study.
- In allowing further research on xenophobia as a challenge to public pastoral care and public practical theology, I am of the opinion that future studies should focus on and try to answer the following question from a public pastoral theology perspective: From what basis does the challenge for non-Christians to act and respond ethically arise?

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