GRIEVING UNNATURAL DEATH: A PASTORAL CARE CHALLENGE

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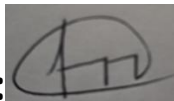
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i

DECLARATION

I the undersigned researcher hereby declare that the thesis entitled,'' **grieving unnatural death: a pastoral care challenge,''** which is submitted to the University of Pretoria for the Master of Art's Degree is my own work in design and execution, except for such quotations or references that have been attributed to their authors. This thesis has not been submitted to and will never be presented to any university for an equivalent or other degree award.

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DEDICATION

I dedicate this work to Johnson Mthethi and Ellen MaWanda Mqunyana's family members both the living dead and the survivors. I wish that the Good Lord may continue to keep us together in all seasons. I earnestly and unceasingly pray that in the present life we resemble the family that is in Ps 133: 1-3; and in the second coming of Christ (Parousia), we all attain eternal life.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

CHAPTER 1 (Introduction)

CHAPTER 2 (Literature Review)

CHAPTER 3 (Methodology)

CHAPTER 4 (Xhosa Death Rituals)

CHAPTER 5 (Data Collection & Analysis)

x

CHAPTER 6 (Healing Method)

CHAPTER 7 (Limitations, Findings & Recommendations)

NO	ITEM	PAGE

APPENDIX

Definition of Terms

1. **ANAESTHESIA**: Insensitivity to pain because of the application of gas, drugs or injection before one undergoes surgery.

2. **BISHOP**: The clergyman with an oversight of a geographical area known as the Diocese.

3. **CHAPLAIN**: A member of the clergy attached to an institution, a church guild or structure for spiritual guidance.

4. **CLERGY**: Church persons who are ordained to the office of Bishop, Priest or Deacon in the Anglican Church.

5. **COLLEGIATE CHURCH**: A place of worship or a church in the diocese that is led by the priest titled as a Provost.

6. **CULTURE**: The total (changing) body of utensils and *ARTEFACTS, BELIEFS,* MASTER SYMBOLS, values, institutions, social structures, etc. which distinguishes a particular ethnic group from other groups and which is transmitted from generation to generation.

7. **DEACON**: An ordained minister in the Anglican Church of an order below the priest.

8. **DIOCESE**: A geographical area under the authority of a bishop.

9. **GRIEF**: The cognitive and emotional reaction that follows death of the loved one.

10. **HOLY ORDERS**: Refers to the ordained ministries such as bishops, priests and deacons.

11. **FIANCÉ**: Traditionally this is a masculine form used to describe an engaged man.

12. **FIANCÉE**: Traditionally this is a feminine form used to describe an engaged female.

13. **PARISH**: A smaller geographical area or pastoral charge within the parameters of the Diocese, which usually has a Priest licensed by the Diocesan Bishop, usually called a Rector or Priest-in-charge. A Parish may have some branches to form up a pastoral charge.

14. **PRIEST**: A clergyman ordained for the office of priesthood in the church.

15. **TRAUMA**: Means, "wound" and is "a term used freely…for psychological injury caused by some extreme emotional assault" (Mitchell 1983:814).

16. **XHOSA**: The name Xhosa is a general term, used for an assortment of noble clans of Nguni descendent, the Pondo, Bomvana, Thembu and the Xhosa tribe itself.

17. **SYNCRETISM**: The amalgamation or attempted amalgamation of different religions, cultures or schools of thought.

18. **COVID-19**: An acute respiration illness in humans caused by a coronavirus, capable of producing severe symptoms and in some cases death, especially in older people and those with underlying health conditions. It was originally identified in China in 2019 and later became pandemic in 2020.

19. *Indaba zoSindiso*: It is a prayer movement in Tsolo, in the Eastern Cape, that was founded by Mrs. Paul Elizabeth who was visited by the Holy Spirit on the 14th of May 1950. The Anglican Church of Southern Africa canonized her and she is commemorated on the 13th of May.

ACRONYMS

1. **ACSA:** Anglican Church of Southern Africa

2. **COVID-19:** Coronavirus Disease of 2019

3. **NIV:** New International Version

4. **SACRRF:** South African Charter of Religious Rights and Freedoms

CHAPTER 1

1.   NARRATIVE

1(a). Introduction and Background

Research is an attempt to unravel the topic 'grieving an unnatural death: a pastoral care challenge'. It is the fact that the uncountable number of unnatural deaths occur yearly and globally.

They might be from different causes like accidents, homicides, suicides, medical errors, thunderstorms and lighting, drowning etc. Death is ensued by grief and mourning processes according to various and divergent cultural and ethnic human groups. They all dispose their loved ones differently, so is the amount of grief and mourning process. Some cultures exhort more pain than healing. The research will be based on pastorally working with families, in order to care for them. The other area of interest is based on pastorally working with families, in order to care for them and on a very strong note, to help caregivers like ministers, so that they can be able to journey with families experiencing pain and grief of their beloved one. The author will concentrate on what literature says about the issue of unnatural death in the Xhosa culture, and the pain it causes to the bereaved. The research was born out of the pain of lack of caring and barriers that occurred within the parish. The following story will help share light of caring that occurred during this time. The researcher is an Anglican Church priest in the Diocese of Mthatha. He has experienced complex grieving scenarios and noticed the negative and positive impacts of the Xhosa culture, in the process. Among many, he has the two scenarios to share that prompted him to this research topic.

Be in an urban Parish where you have to deal with congregants from different cultures; and the anguish of the pain caused by cultural traditions and customs. We must be having our own liturgy but there are areas in our pastoral care engagements, which at times cause us to move parallel with the family members. Services like funerals and weddings have the potential of causing a rift between the church and the family, where there are multi-cultural practices; ending up disturbing the pastoral care guidance and healing because of the interference of the family members, adhering to their cultural customs and traditions.

A weekend the researcher will never forget in his entire lifetime as clergyman had a series of perilous and heart-breaking incidents. On a Saturday, the researcher conducted a funeral of young man who was brutally murdered, whose body was found lying in pool of blood by the police; and such painful incidents were very much common in the area. The incident that attracted the attention of many happened at the graveyard where after much argument among the family men, about viewing the body or not, after receiving the remains from the funeral parlor. Some wanted to certify the corpse and others were reluctant; stating that the culture does not allow the body of the person who died unnaturally to be viewed, tabling cultural reasons for that.

At last, they reached the consensus as some succumbed to the deceased father's concluding utterances that the body should be viewed by the two family elders for identification and the final message; of which he should be one of them.

The officials opened the coffin, but to their surprise, the body was certified not to be their family's member.

That was a great moment of peril as there were hot arguments then, among the family members, and between the family and the funeral parlor's officials. The news quickly spread to those mourners at home, community, district, province etc. through social media. Even the funeral undertaker's officials admitted to be guilty and did means to rectify the mistake; but the anger it caused to the family was tantamount to nothing. People were divided over the issue; it was not only the funeral undertaker at fault but also the family for doing what is prohibited by the culture, some concluded. That the news spreading like a wild fire in the social networks; comments made by some people caused some to bargain a lot about such deaths, cultural customs and traditions; and their consequences as well. Some testified that they had to exhume their relative following a similar incident, where the body was buried without viewing, following the cultural traditions. Some angrily suggested the culture to be nullified whereas others supported the culture.

The graveside incident and the social media left the researcher emotionally and cognitively troubled and bruised. The Sunday scenario summed up all; it bore fruit to all what was growing in his mind, on the way the Xhosa culture deals with unnatural death and the pain it causes to those who are prohibited in the process; and the stigma to the departed one.

As the researcher was packing his vestments after the service, a widow whom he had just buried her son a year ago, who died through an accident, sneaked in his vestry. She was so indignant; it was as if someone smote her at the back. She exclaimed that she was completely baffled and devastated by the incident trending on the social media.

It rekindled the death of her son. She appeared to be too much depressed as the news caused her to bargain about her son's death and burial. She needed some prayers and clarity as she had some doubts if her family buried a right person. The incident brewed much anger inside her as she thought may be if her husband; whom she labeled as a Wiseman, was still alive, things could have been done differently; worse, his son died outside the province. The family elders only went to identify the body whilst the corpse was still in the custody of the police that was all. No one accompanied the funeral undertaker to repatriate the corpse from the government mortuary, for storage and burial thereafter. Subsequently, she had a number of rhetorical questions in her mind that had a potential of delaying the grieving process to the stage of accepting the death of her son.

This feeble, woeful and pathetic situation proved to the researcher that his arsenal as a pastoral caregiver is not having enough ammunition to get into the world of pain when death in an unnatural way happens; and the cultural customs and traditions find way in his process of healing and servicing his congregants.

That gave birth to the researcher's interest in researching and unraveling the pain, the anguish and the errors caused by the cultural customs and traditions in the process of burring the unnatural death victims.

On the other hand, to design the therapeutic model that will assist in mitigating the pain caused by the Xhosa culture; and help them to grieve with great fortitude.

1 (b) Motivation

The researcher as Priest who is concerned about the curing of souls, found himself in a very hard, stormy, acrimonious and uneasy situations.

A woman could not do closure because of burial traditions and customs of her culture. It aggravates the grief and the trauma when the loved one dies and there are barriers in burial and mourning processes. Unnatural death comes as a thief, causing too much pain and as the aftermath demanding too much care.

The feeble, woeful and pathetic situation occurred in his village Ncumbe Location (Not a real name) and the way those who died through unnatural death incidents such as suicides, homicides, medical errors, drug overdoses and accidents were buried differently and separately from those of natural death. According to the Xhosa Culture, there is a separate and special burial site for the unnatural related deaths. This culture prohibits the women, sick-male adults and children to go to the burial site. Even the remains of departed one are not allowed to enter or touch the home premises. The corpse will be repatriated from the funeral undertaker straight to the burial site. The home elders for identification and final message purposes only view the corpse. This is very painful to the restricted mourners, as they not do closure. Some of them died having been away from home for a number of years. There is the particular woman who lost her sons three years in succession, varying from homicide to suicide. The situation was unbearable with the last one as the grief rekindled the previous incidents and it was vivid that she never accepted the loss. She was so indignant; it was as if someone smote her at the back. She was completely baffled by these incidents. She could not stop crying as she continued rhetorical questions such as, why did this happen to her. She wondered why she could not cry or weep next to her children's grave site, why she cannot view or clean the graves of her children, why did they all leave her in a similar manner.

Are they really dead, how can she be given the opportunity to view them in order to find closure; etc? Even when attending other funerals it gravely pained her to see other women paying last respect to their children and throwing dusts and flowers into their graves and doing closer next to their graves; but her culture was a barrier to her feelings and wishes, and that retarded the healing process subsequent to grief. From that experience, the researcher saw the need to research about the grief caused by unnatural death and culture. The researcher, if possible, will seek to use news from the media, the information about and from the survivors and the parishioners, as well as the experience of the pastoral care givers, mindful of sensitivity and confidentiality. The main intention is to look at the lack of pastoral care skills; trying to pave and bring the best remedy for dealing with trauma that comes with grief caused by traditions and customs. This model will be of significant importance to the pastoral care givers as Gerkin summarized his perspective of pastoral care by saying, "The primary basis of care which the Christian community and its pastors offer to persons is the care that comes about by participation in the community and its word of interpreted meanings," (1997:19).

The researcher is aware of some barriers in getting the information more especially from the traditionalists. Nevertheless, he gets courage from the words of Gerkin as he encourages the pastoral care givers to model Christ the Good Shepherd. He suggests, "Like Jesus, the shepherding incorporates not only the wisdom expressed in certain parables and sermon on the mount, not only in His priestly leadership, in His relationship to his followers, but also elements of prophecy such as are found in the story of Jesus cleansing the temple and his confrontations with the Pharisees and Sadducees," (1997:27).

This research is not aiming at exposing anyone but it is the call to pastorally care. Gerkin articulates the above in the following way, the pastoral caregivers have focused primarily on the wise men and women of the early Israelite history as a root model for pastoral care. Four models of care are guidance; healing, reconciliation and sustaining carry a primary connotation of wise care of the individual or family (1997:27).

2.   PROBLEM STATEMENT

The above-shared stories raise many questions that will guide this research. The researcher could not journey well with the family when the tragedy was unfolded. That then triggered the desire to discover the model or theory that will empower the clergy to deal with such situations. The researcher will also investigate how other religions and cultures deal with the issue of unnatural death. The research will also assist on how to deal with the bereaved family members and those indirectly affected by the death of the loved one unnaturally. The stories shared at the beginning raise several questions that will guide the researcher.

The narrowing of the problem into key questions that capture the problem statement will focus on the quest for answers to the phenomenon.

I.   In what way does the caregiver work pastorally with the hurting and traumatized bereaved family of sudden death?

II.   What ways can a clergy apply in handling grief, trauma and pain of families to whom unnatural death has occurred?

III.   How do you cause awareness of the phenomenon, redress, and empower families to move on after the loss?

IV.   How does a caregiver negotiate a traumatized family in the hands of the health practitioners?

The above story raises a number of questions, which will assist in researching this problem. The main questions to ask are:

> How to pastorally care for families that are traumatized by prescribed cultural rituals due to unnatural death?

I.   In what way can pastoral caregivers support the family during this time?

II.   What can generally be done to avoid and accept the suspicious deaths?

III.   What therapeutic aid is given to both, the perpetrators and grieving families, subsequent to unnatural death?

IV.   At what stage do caregivers start therapy to the survivors; should it be before or after the funeral?

3.   RESEARCH GAP

The theological scholar like Madala (2016) in MA has researched and addressed the anguish of grieving unnatural death in cultures, but not in the Xhosa culture.

Even the medical and the law scholars dealt with death through a medical error, but did not address the trauma by unnatural death, and how to pastorally deal with both the survivors as well as the perpetrators.

They focused on statistics of medical errors, their causes and the cases against the perpetrators and the charges or legal consequences, nothing on caring for the bereaved families and their coping machinery. Some researchers only focused on medical error as a major cause of death but did not address the trauma caused thereafter. The main thrust of this research will be focusing on how one can pastorally care for the bereaved family members who are affected by the cultural rituals practiced in unnatural death. This field of practical theology has a formidable gap, which shall be a contribution of the research in bringing new knowledge and so promote the restorative pastoral approach. This study will add on the pool of knowledge revealing quality and quantity showing the reality not just theory.

A number of theological scholars, Master's and Doctoral researchers and authors like, Mditshane (2019), Kwakwari (2018), Makgahlela (2016), Madala 2016, Zabeko (2015), Yawa (2010) etc., addressed the anguish of death. Other schools and faculties have also done it especially the department of Psychology but based on issues of medical error or negligence. Furthermore, scholars in medicine and law researched and accentuated their focus on death and trauma.

4.   METHODOLOGY

In research of this approach, the qualitative methods could be employed as case studies that narrate the scope, concretize and localize the topic to realities that resonate with many souls who have experienced this phenomenon. Johnson & Christensen define qualitative in this way, "Qualitative research is research relying primary on the collection of qualitative data that is non-numerical e.g. words and pictures," (2008).

Anderson says, "This is a form of enquiry that explores phenomena in their natural setting settings and uses multi-methods to interpret, understand, explain and bring meaning to them," (1998:119). On the other hand, Hogan, Donal and Donnelly say, ''It is a multifaceted approach that investigate culture, society and behavior through an analysis of people's words and actions," (2009:3).

The researcher is in concord with the above authors. The research wishes to dig deeper searching for pain caused by unnatural death rituals in a Xhosa traditional family. In this research, qualitative approach will be so appropriate because inquires will be made to the affected individuals.

The focus is not only on investigating the pain but also on providing therapy. In order to address this problem, the researcher will use the methodology of Gerkin based on shepherding the flock. This process of Gerkin will help me to journey with families. The reader needs to note that Gerkin is not able to adamantly deal with the depth of trauma. This is where Kubler-Ross connects with the overlapping stages of the grieving process. In On Death and Dying Kubler-Ross famously delineated the grieving stages as, ''the "stages" of denial and isolation, anger, bargaining, depression, and acceptance to meticulously describe the emotional states seriously ill people commonly experienced and the adaptive mechanisms they used to make sense of and live with incurable conditions,'' (Kubler-Ross, 2014:xiii).

She also has this to say, ''A psychiatrist does not see the majority of these people. Their needs have to be elicited and gratified by other professional people, for instance, chaplains and social workers.

It is for them that I am trying to outline the changes that have taken place in the last few decades, changes that are ultimately responsible for the increased fear of death, the rising number of emotional problems, and the greater need for understanding of and coping with the problems of death and dying,'' (2014:2). It is for that reason the researcher wants to assist by designing a therapeutic model that will assist the pastoral care givers to journey well with the family members who are affected by unnatural death rituals.

5. AIMS AND OBJECTIVES

- The study is aiming:
    - To find a way of pastorally journeying with grieving families for an unnatural death.

- The main objectives are:
    - To find a pastoral care model that will therapeutically journey with grieving families due to the observance of cultural rites in unnatural death.
    - To equip clergy on how to pastorally care for grieving families due to the observation of cultural rites in unnatural death.
    - To facilitate co-operation between the families, cultural rituals and morticians in administering the grief process of the family.

6. THE RELEVANCE OF THE STUDY

This research falls under practical theology. The research findings are expected to be of great importance to:

I. The church in identifying the strength and the weakness of her bereavement support system and liturgy.

II. The clergy and chaplains, as they identify and expand the opportunities for complementing and supporting the bereaved families.

III. The bereaved families in understanding death broadly, its causes and grief stages, especially when faced with observing cultural rituals in unnatural deaths.

7. EPISTEMOLOGY

According to Given, '' Epistemology is the theory or science of the method and ground of knowledge. It is the core area of philosophical study that includes the sources and limits, rationality and justification of knowledge. Its etymological roots are Greek from *episteme* (knowledge) and *logos* (explanation),'' (2008:264). In this research, the researcher will enquire from those who are knowledgeable in order to check what other societies and religions are saying about grief and unnatural death. The researcher will investigate what therapy they use to heal the traumatic wounds subsequent to prohibitions of traditional rites when dealing with unnatural death.

8. CHAPTER OUTLINE

This research work will be having 7 chapters as briefly outlined below:

Chapter 1

Introduction and background, problem statement, research gap, relevance of study, motivation, aims and objectives, and research gap.

Chapter 2

Literature review on death and different perspectives of death, Western and

African views.

Chapter 3

Methodology:

Gerkin's methodology of shepherding and connect it with Kubler Ross's five overlapping stages of grieving process as a way of entering into the space of the one violated by death and cultural issues.

Chapter 4

Xhosa rituals on death and grief, as a basis of families affected by unnatural death.

Chapter 5

Interviews of families that have lost members through unnatural death, the community leaders, the parishioners and clergy who have dealt with such scenarios and analysis.

Chapter 6

Methodology of healing.

Chapter 7

Discussing limitations of study, findings, recommendations and conclusion and recommendations for further research studies.

CHAPTER TWO

LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1 INTRODUCTION

The previous chapter was the introduction of the research study background. It briefly discussed and exposed the methodology that is going to be used. The purpose of this Chapter is to understand the literature review on death and different perspectives of death: African and Western reviews. According to Bluff, B. "A literature review is an overview of the literature on issues relevant to the phenomenon to be studied," (2005:150). Death will be implicitly and explicitly defined. The researcher will also be exposing the literal and figurative implied meaning and the aftermath of death to both African and Western scholars. BameBame articulates, "It is equally important that we know what dying means,'' (1994:11). I treasure the latter's view as of great importance so that one is able to surpass the challenges of grieving unnatural death.

2.2 DEFINITION OF DEATH

According to King, ''Death is a natural transition from the visible to the invisible or spiritual ontology where the spirit, the essence of the person, is not destroyed but moves to live in the spirit of ancestor's realm,'' (2013). Kellehear cited recent definition of death as used by Bernat (1998), saying," The current most definition of death is the 'permanent cessation of the critical functions of the organism as a whole'," (2009:53).

He further clarified some of the key words in his definition by Graham and his associates (2005),"Critical functions are those without which the organism as a whole cannot function: control of respiration and circulation, neuroendocrine and homeostatic regulation, and consciousness. Death is defined by the irreversible loss of these functions," (2009:53). Bame-Bame further say, '' Death is a natural occurrence though it may appear and mysterious to us, for it is inherent in all that happens, it is nature. Therefore, human beings, being part of nature, succumb to it,'' (1994:9). The researcher subscribes with King's philosophy about death. It is through this definition that he will analyse, penetrate and hack into the space of the grievers who are troubled by the unnatural death and family rituals to mourn unnatural death. Emphasizing on how natural transition and regeneration will somehow bring therapy and revive hope.

2.3 World View

Every culture is premised on a certain worldview. As a result, unnatural death is treated differently and according to the customs and traditions of that particular culture; globally. Mkhize defines a worldview as, ''a set of basic assumptions that a group of people develop in order to explain reality and then place and purpose in the world. These assumptions provide a frame of reference in order to address problems in life,'' (2004). The literature has proved that in Africa there is a complicated relationship among death, evil and sin; the former occurs because of the evil and sin. Mbiti examines various African myths, which highlight the fact that when God originally created man, there was harmony and family relationships between the two and the first people enjoyed only what was good.

15

According to Mbiti, ''The Vugusu say that there is an evil divinity which God created good, but later turned against him and began to do evil.

This evil divinity is assisted by evil spirits and all evil now come from that lot,'' (1969:204). Moreover, Bame-Bame has this belief, ''the living dead can consequently become a source of fear, anxiety and suffering for the living. When they are hurt because the living have not fulfilled their duties towards them or have trespassed on their territory, they inflict all manner of suffering on the living. Physical and mental illnesses, misfortune, droughts, floods, famines and even death are known to have been caused by the living dead,'' (1994:88). In this case, human beings provoke the spirits of the dead to act in evil ways and therefore suffer the consequences through such catastrophes as unnatural death.

There is a variety of viewpoints and attitudes towards unnatural death. From one perspective in the African cosmic view, at death a person joins his or her ancestral community. This is not a traumatic experience. Death is not a radical break; it is a continuation of the mysterious life force. Mbiti says, ''Death stands between the world of human beings and the world of the spirits, between the visible and the invisible,'' (1990:145). Dickson qualifies this foresaid belief as he says, ''the occurrence of death is not considered to mark the cessation of life,'' (1984:193). He further says, "Death does imply loss, but it does not end man's self-expression. Loss may have occurred, but there is on-going life…, (1984: 50). Judging from the above definitions, it is clear that Africans view death not as the end of life but as the continuation of life in another realm. Hence, they perform a number of rituals when death occurs in order to cleanse both the survivors and the living dead. It is also a way of accompanying the living dead in their journey to the next world.

2.3.1 African View

The African worldview refers to the way in which Africans perceive their world, which, in turn, influences their ways of knowing and doing. It is through such studies and perceptions that even though families grieve subsequent to unnatural death and retard healing because some mourning processes are aggravated by the cultural and traditional practices. There are things that are beyond the confinements of reality, things spiritual. For example, it is too difficult to understand why unnatural death occurs despite all the possible predictions and technological advances.

The African philosophy, epistemology or worldview presented here underneath is not restricted to a specific African ethno cultural group, but rather reflects a basic historical consciousness and cultural unity, which offer an understanding of things African, African culture, cultural adaptations and what it means to be African when unnatural death invades the family.

According to Mbiti, ''The African philosophy is the understanding attitude of mind, logic and perceptions behind the manner in which African people think, act or speak in different situations of life, ''(1990). Nsamenang states, ''An African worldview envisions the human life cycle in three phases of selfhood. Namely:

(1) First, is *a spiritual selfhood*, which begins at conception, or perhaps earlier in an ancestral spirit that reincarnates?

(2) Second is *a social or experiential selfhood, which* begins at conception the cycle from site of incorporation or introduction of the child into the human community through to death.

(3) Third, is *an ancestral selfhood* which follows biological death, '' (1992).

The reality is that life has its rhythm and pattern. According to Mbiti, ''Birth is the first rhythm of a new generation, and the rites of birth are performed in order to make the child a corporate and social being. Initiation rites continue that process; make him a mature, responsible and active member of society. Marriage makes him a mature and reproductive being, linking him with both the departed and the generations to come. Finally comes death, that inevitable and, in many societies, most disrupting phenomenon of all,'' (1969:150). The fore made explanations about the concept of death signify an inextricable spiritual connection between the visible worlds. Most of the African myths on death portray death as an accident, a mistake, a type of punishment and something more fundamental to the whole of existence. Mbiti suggests, ''Death was present from the very beginning and not necessary added along the way. It is the natural consequence of the strong belief in African religion that human life does not terminate at the death of the individual, but continues beyond death,'' (1977:70). Healey J. and Sybertz D. have this to say about death, "Death is very important and influential in the African-world view. We are in the edge of a cliff of life and death. Life on earth is always transitory. In our human condition people are always alive but on the verge of dying. As they do about so many events, many Africans attribute death to God, the highest cause, saying: It is by God's action that he or she died (Swahili). The very common Arabic (North Africa) saying is: If God wills.

Some characteristic African proverbs are, when your turn has come, fold your sleeping mat (Ankole/ Kiga, Uganda). You can run away from the rain (sickness) but you cannot run away from the dew (death)…There is no medicine for death. There is no protection against death. Death is a lot of everyone. Every person has to die.

Everyone's work ends with death.

The Kwaya say: Death does not have an owner, which means death is necessary for everyone. The Akan say: If the Supreme Being has not killed you, even if a human being attempts to kill you, you will not die. Death being non-discriminatory is seen in two Lugbara (Uganda) proverbs: Death has no eyes. Death is blind. It takes everybody as a result everyone needs to be ready for it. Veraciously, there is no protection against death. Every person has to die. Everyone's work ends with death. In the plan of the Supreme Being, everyone – rich or poor, famous and unknown, powerful and weak- must die," (1996:207 & 208). Bame-Bame also states, ''we are all going to die. He further uses the analogy of the mangoes falling from the tree, where he stresses that when a child sees the four ripe mangoes falling from the tree, she/he becomes adamant that the fifth ripe one will of necessity fall,'' (1994:8).

Based on the above scenarios, stereotypes and credence, the researcher views death as an act of God of which no one can escape, whether it occurs naturally or unnaturally. If the Supreme Being has not killed you, even if a human being attempts to kill you, you will not die. From an African perspective death is a natural transition from the visible to the invisible spiritual ontology where the spirit, the essence of the person, is not destroyed but moves to live in the spirit of the ancestors' realm dead.

In the researcher's point of view, the end of the road for each of us is not a particular moment in the future, but potentially every moment in our life, for no one is too young to die. We are old enough to die as soon as we are born. Death even strikes at life in its embryonic stages in the womb, and what we often consider as the beginning of the road turns out to be the end of the road for some individual.

19

Briefly, we are all going to die whether naturally or unnaturally.

Mbiti concludes, ''Death is everywhere, not in the sense that it is lurking in every corner of the house or the road but rather because we carry it about in our very bodies,'' (1994:9). According to Bame-Bame, ''So in daily life we shove aside into one remote corner of our mind that famous argument the Greek philosopher Socrates used to illustrate the principles of his system of his reasoning. 'All men are mortal, Socrates is a man. Socrates is mortal.'… Whatever personality one fits in, be it the President of a Republic or a tramp, a great scholar or a lunatic, the conclusion will read the same. Death is a basic fact of our life and it is only natural that we try to come to terms with it,'' (1994:10). This simple means that death is rooted in mortality and it is because our bodies are mortal that we die. Therefore, no one is immune from death, whether death comes naturally or unnaturally.

A particular insight of African Theology is Mbiti's name for deceased people, "The living dead." Mbiti describes the living dead, "A person who is physically dead but alive in the memory of those who knew him or her in life as well as being alive in the word of the spirits…," (1994:199). In other words, the deceased do not die in the memories of the living as they continue to quote what they said when they were alive. Human spirits are those who were ordinary men, women and children. Belief in the existence of these spirits is widespread throughout Africa.

According to Mbiti, ''It is the natural consequence of the strong belief in African Religion that human life does not terminate at the death of the individual, but continues beyond death,'' (1977:70). Bame-Bame states, "In death we are united; in it we discover that we are children of one and the same Father, dull or intelligent, rich or poor…we must all die, wise and foolish alike," (1994:9).

20

On the other hand Mucherera says, "For example, the Shona believe that in the unfolding of the "Circle of life," God is at the centre, as well as encompassing the circle; sustaining humanity at every turn of life. The idea of the "cloud of witnesses" or the "living dead" as part of the spirit world is not found to be contrary to Christian beliefs,'' (2009:78). Even the New International Bible articulates, ''…even Moses showed that the dead rise, for he calls the Lord 'the God of Abraham, and the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob.' He is not the God of the dead, but of the living, for to him all are alive,'' (Luke 20:37-38). The forenamed African authors tempt the researcher to believe that the occurrence of death is not considered to mark the cessation of life. The dead are believed to be going on a journey, one that is described in such physical terms as crossing a river in a boat. This journey involves having the wherewithal to pay one's way, since she/he might become thirsty on the way, she/he would need water.

Dickson articulates, "Then once on the other side, in the land of the dead, he lives a physical existence which is patterned after his earthly existence," (1984:193). Bujo on the other hand says, "Dying people therefore are often conscious that they participate in the life-force of the ancestors. There is no question of despair in the face of death, and no sense that one is being deprived of life,'' (1992:123).

Bujo states, ''Europeans are surprised by the matter of fact in the way in which Africans seem to accept death,'' (1992:123). Dickson says, ''According to the African belief death does imply loss, but it does not end man's self-expression. Loss may have occurred but there is on-going life, and this is symbolised in various ways,'' (1984:194). The task of the living is to help the dying on their way.

That is why for Africans, unnatural death is accompanied by a series of rituals performed, which are believed to be the way of connecting the living dead and the living.

In many tribes, it is the custom to place coins in the hand or the mouth or just in the grave of the dead, in amounts appropriate to their position in the community. According to Bujo, ''these coins are to be interpreted to be the "fare" to the next world. Sometimes too, the dead person is given weapons, tools, and symbols of his rank and dignity,'' (1992:124). This practise happens especially if the family believes that the deceased was bewitched. There are always perceptions when unnatural death occurs, not only in a Xhosa traditional family but also in the entire African tradition. For example, Frey writes, "In 1922, archaeologists discovered the tomb of a Pharaoh known as King Tutankhamen or King Tut. Inside a small burial chamber, they found three coffins nested inside each other. The smallest coffin was made of solid gold. It held the king's mummy. On the mummy's head was a magnificent golden mask. Jewellery and good luck charms lay on the mummy and in the wrappings that protected it. Other rooms of the tomb were filled with statues, weapons, furniture, and even a chariot,'' (2004:73). He further explains, ''after they died, the pharaohs were thought to enter an afterlife that would never end,'' (2004:74). Africans believe that life goes on beyond the grave; unnatural death is not the final destination. As a result, African grieving families grieve with hope of reunion, as they are adamant of the life after death. According to Mbiti, ''…people combine their sorrow over the death of someone with the belief that is not the end and that the departed continues to live in the hereafter,'' (1977:113).

Therefore, there is a continuous and unbreakable communication and connectedness between the living and the living dead.

Baloyi articulates, ''For the traditional African, people the deceased is believed to be living in the ontology of the invisible intangible beings, dynamically engaging in an evolving state of existence in the world of the animated being,'' (2008).

Mbiti connects the above by saying, ''the dead are used as intermediaries because it is felt that they speak both the language of the invisible world and the language of human beings,'' (1977:63). In other words, the belief here is in the actual presence and influence of the deceased, the living dead, in the lives of the living. Africans do not conceive death and life as two separate phases instead; there is a harmonious and independent co-existence between the two-dimensional, community of the living and the living dead.

The above scenarios will never jump to mean that an African does not fear death. Bujo emphasizes, ''Of course, African fears death, in common with all human beings,'' (1992:124). Mbiti concludes, ''they also believe that even though individuals are born and die; human life as such has no ending since God is its Protector and preserver,'' (1977:41&44). The main problem is that human beings have no control over life and death as identical twins. This may easily have led people to speculate that there must be someone greater than they must and greater than the world, who had full control over death. Let us now analyse what western scholars are saying about death.

2.3.2 Western View

According to Rosenberg, "Death is pictured as terra incognita, a mysterious and unknown territory into which all men must journey but from which no man ever comes again," (1983:191). "Death has appeared to be a thing of mystery to human beings.

Throughout history and the span of cultures, many attempts at understanding death have been made, and many religions have formulated detailed accounts of its after-effects," (www.angelfire.com:10/10/2017.) Rosenberg further quoted Lucretius as he put it, ''Death is nothing to us, and does not matter at all.'' According to this view, most intimately associated, perhaps, with the Stoic philosopher Epicurus-death is simply one natural phenomenon among others and totally devoid of any evaluative status, either as an evil or as a good,…Where death is there, we are not; and when we are there, death is not," (Ibid:189). The above scholars' viewpoints, in fact, prove that unnatural death is not the sort of thing, which, in point of logic, can be feared, for it is not something, which can be experienced. A person's death is more simply than person's annihilation, whether the death was expected or it came unnaturally.

Rosenberg further says about death, "'Death' as the name of an occurrence, is ambiguous in much the same way. A person's death is the last event of that person's life (life-history), when that history is considered as a process," (Ibid: 31). "Death is certainly an end to the condition of life. To die is to cease to be in the condition of life, to lose one's life," (Ibid: 23). "Death is the loss of syntrophic capacity or ability. More precisely, an organism dies when it loses its power to preserve and sustain its self-organizing organization permanently and irreversibly.

That is to say, death is to some extent a matter of the state of the art, "(Ibid: 106). "To say death is the end of life suggests that all living things die," (Ibid: 21). "Of course, death is a passage between two conditions. A person who dies passes from of life (being alive) to the condition of death (being dead)," (Ibid: 24).

Not far from the above definitions, Allan Kellehear quotes two western authors defining death in this fashion, "The currently most accepted definition of death is the 'permanent cessation of the functions of the organism as a whole' (Bernat: 1998). Death is defined by irreversible loss of all these functions (Graham *et al*. 2005)," (2009:53). The Biblical creation myth recounted in Genesis in fact assigns to death the status of a punishment, the first, greatest of God's punishments for the first, and greatest of our sins of disobedience. Although the moral principles suggested by this story are dubious at best, the valuation status, which it mythopoetically assigns to death, is clear enough.

Reading from the Bible, the Genesis 3:1-24 it is vividly explained that death is an evil, which we have brought upon ourselves. The world would be (and, according to the story, once was) a better place without it. Consequently, the first death recorded in the bible in Genesis 4:8 was an unnatural death. The researcher fully agrees with the notion, thinking of the pain of losing a loved one through unnatural death. A phenomenon that leaves every creature in torment. No one can keep himself/herself from dying or put off the day of his/her death. Ecclesiastes 8:8, ''As no one has the power over the wind to contain it, so no one has power over the time of their death…,'' (NIV).

In other words, according to the western culture death is something to be feared, to be shunned, to be avoided, to be postponed as long as possible, and to be fought against with all our force and, being when at last it looms imminent upon our personal horizons. Let us now look at unnatural death, which is the root cause of the research.

Both the African and Western cultures believe that death comes to us in a natural and unnatural way.

2.4 Unnatural Death

According to Collins English Dictionary, ''the phrase unnatural death refers to death resulting from an external cause, such as intentional injury (such as homicide or suicide) or unintentional injury (in an accident). Homicidal death refers to a person that is killed by one or more persons, suicidal death refers to the act or an instance of taking one's own life voluntary and intentionally, and accidental death is defined as any death that occurs as the result of an accident,'' https://www.collinsdictionary.com (11/04/2020). The latter type of death is only deemed accidental if it was not intended, expected or foreseeable.

That the researcher is based in South Africa, the researcher has discovered that there is a very limited literature specifically on unnatural death. However, the researcher discovered that unnatural deaths are a serious and preventable public health problem in South Africa.

Comparing unnatural death with natural death, the former has a negative and longlasting impact on family members as well as on society as a whole, as it hits the family unexpectedly. This is a very traumatic event leading to the development of depression and anxiety symptoms, as well as other psychiatric disorders and heightened risk for prolonged grief reactions. Miyabayashi and Yasuda in their article state, ''the cause of death has been frequently examined as a factor affecting bereavement reaction. Unnatural death is a most devastating bereavement, usually preceded by a history of severe mental problems,'' (2007:502).

They also specified, ''There is much evidence that unanticipated or unnatural death leads to a severer reaction and it is still unclear how far the impact on survivors differs in a comparison between suicidal loss, accidental loss, loss from endogenous sudden death, loss from chronic illness, and loss from more prolonged illness,'' (2007:507). The stories in the first and the fifth chapters of this research vividly show how devastating and bad is the unnatural death to the survivors, especially the parents and siblings.

2.5 Good and Bad Death

According to Lee and Vaughan, ''African societies are perceived as being 'good' in dealing with issues of death, ''(2008: 341). They further clarify, "Distinctions made between good and bad deaths often reflected moral concerns over the living. Death of individuals through war, disease or accidents is perceived as bad deaths. Furthermore, among some, African communities, committing suicide is considered

to be a problematic death, a good death offers a chance of reincarnation while a bad death brings only evil spirits and possession," (2008: 345). Some African communities believe those who die because of good death will remain helpful in solving issues for their family members and they call them ancestors. In addition, Nichol explains ancestorship in the following way, "…becoming an ancestor is the goal of most Africans," (2011:8). He further explains, ''Being an ancestor is analogous to strengthen the ability to control visible and invisible things,'' (2011:8). For that reason, some people call their ancestors through reverencing them. The process of keeping the dead among their living family requires cultural practices.

According to Lee and Vaughan, ''In relation to the above reasons it is stated that the organization of death is fundamental in understanding the social fabric and belief systems of traditional African societies,'' (2008:343). Each culture perceives and deals with death differently; whether the death occurred naturally or unnaturally, in order to pave the way for the deceased as he/she resumes the journey to the world of the living death, through death rituals.

2.6 Culture

Culture is a concept that is acknowledged universally. It's phenomenal relevance varies from society to society. What is acceptable in one society may likely be an abomination in the other. This view derives from the fact that culture is an allembracing concept as far as person is concerned. It encompasses every bit of person's life and experience.

This is perhaps why the concept has attracted various definitions from different scholars, but these definitions revolve round a similar meaning. Lee and Vaughan state, ''for our purpose here, we tend towards Tylor (1958) and Malinowski (1931) definitions. Tylor (1958) explicates culture as a complex whole, which includes knowledge, belief, art, moral, law, custom any other capabilities and habits acquired by man as a member of society (Tylor, 1958). From Malinowski's perspective, culture is a functioning, active, efficient, well-organized unity, which must be analysed into component institutions in relations to one another to the needs of human organism, and in relation to the environment, man-made as well as natural (Malinowski, 1931 cited by Adegoke *et. al*). Drawing an inference from the above, culture is an all-embracing concept having a broad interpretation.

Culture embraces religious beliefs, languages, dresses, style of living, political organization and all other aspects of life. In the context of this paper, culture is used as the totality of the way of life of African people including their tangible and intangible products, habits, customs, thoughts as well as the arts, technology, music, literature, theatre, health, drama and education. Besides, the implicit, shared and learned, ideal and manifest, covert, organic and supra-organic, corruptible and reforming. An African person inherits a cultural heritage from the proceeding generation, which they use, add and pass on to the succeeding ones (1996:236-238).

Culture has various meanings. To generalize it all "Culture" is simply the way we do things that are important to us, whether they are cloths, cars, boats, food, church, sports, the arts, whatever. Culture, as a way of defining one's self, needs to attract people's interest and persuade them to invest a part of themselves in it. In Africa,

people like to feel a part of a tribe and understand their identity within that tribe. Culture is understood as the entire way of Life of the people (past and present), is the traditional law in African societies, a central thread guaranteeing the protection of life and property, the harmony of members of society among themselves and with nature, their linkage to the divine through the ancestors and the deities. It is said that every people have a culture, a way of life that links their past to the present and the future. Even though culture is not static but steady dynamic, some of the elements that provided rationality for cultural practices in the past may have disappeared in the face of modern realities of religion migrations, new technology, scientific discoveries, wars to mention but a few ingredients.

Nonetheless, there is need to enhance the linkage and sustainability of cultural developments and its interpretation at least on the levels of principles that identify these societies even in the face of a modern age. Let us now look at what the western scholars say about the process of bereavement, even though it will be explained fully and extensively in chapter 3.

2.7 Bereavement

2.7.1 Intrapersonal Processes of Bereavement

This refers to what the bereaved person experiences internally during his or her bereavement. Oates argues, ''in all cultures the intrapersonal experience of the process of bereavement is the same,'' (2003:15).

Different scholars and investigators have proposed several theories about grief. Other scholars prefer to describe grief in terms of phases, others in terms of stages

while others prefer to describe bereavement in terms of tasks. Since there are, many models of bereavement the researcher will just confine himself to two, which are by Kubler-Ross and by Oates.

2.7.2 Kubler-Ross Model of Bereavement

According to Biermann, "Kubler-Ross proposes five overlapping stages of the grieving process namely, denial, anger, bargaining, depression and acceptance. She argues that not everyone ill experiences all these stages and if one experiences all of them, she or he may not experience them in a particular order. The first stage is denial in which the bereaved is unable to unwilling to accept the loss.

The bereaved considers denial and shock as normal reactions to loss as long as they are not prolonged. As a bereaved person comes out of denial, she or he experiences anger and she or he recognizes that she or he does not have control over the loss. Feelings of abandonment may also occur. Once the bereaved recognizes that they do not have control over the loss, they begin to bargain for the return of the loved one. The phase involves promises of better or improved behaviour in exchange of better behaviour,'' (2005:15).

When the bereaved realizes that bargaining does not yield results hoped for, she or he goes through a next phase, which is the period of depression and despair. In the depression phase, the bereaved releases the inevitability of the loss and their helplessness to change the situation. During this phase, the bereaved may cry, withdraw from others relationships, and or experience sleep changes.

The last phase is when the bereaved enters a stage of accepting the loss. According

Biermann, ''It is at this stage whereby the bereaved begin to plan about the future,'' (2005:15). These grieving stages of Kubler-Ross may not come in a sequential way. However, the scholars have promoted them to be of great importance when dealing with the pain of losing the loved one through unnatural death in a traditional family. Let us look at what Oates suggests in his model of bereavement.

2.7.3 Oates Model of Bereavement

According Oates, ''There are four phases which a bereaved individual passes through. These phases include avoidance, denial, confrontation and accommodation phase.

The avoidance phase begins when one learns about death. One becomes confused, disoriented wonders whether what she is feeling is normal. There are also physical characteristics, which are prominent in this stage. These include trembling, physical weakness and exhaustion. Depending on the cause of death, the emotional shock may vary from mild to acute physical manifestation. As the numbness wears off the client may move into denial (as explained under Kubler-Ross). The next phase after denial is confrontation phase, which is, regarded as a difficult one since the bereaved experiences an intense emotional pain of sadness, anger and frustration. Due to the pain, the bereaved may try to numb the pain by resorting to drugs and alcohol for instance. In addition, one may return to the avoidance phase. The last phase is called accommodation phase, which is regarded as a recovery stage.

This is a phase whereby the bereaved learns to live with the loss and adjusts to the present reality by integrating the past and the present. Sometimes the bereaved may see themselves going back emotionally and physically to the previous phase,''

32

(2003:30). These phases and stages will be of great importance to the pastoral caregivers in the journey with the troubled family members, towards therapy.

The aim of the research is to elicit the pain that is caused by the unnatural death. It aims at enabling the caregivers to therapeutically journey well with the family grieving members. It also aims at assisting the caregivers with the model to use to be able to comfort the bereaved. These models sound to be appropriate and helpful to the success of this project.

This is where the religion is found to be helpful in bringing therapy to the survivors, for them to be able to deal with pain and turmoil of unnatural death and the prohibition in the process of the rituals thereafter.

2.8 The Role of the Religion in Dealing with Death

Both the Western and the African literature used by the researcher prove that there is a high level of religious culture among African people. Religion is fundamental, perhaps the most important influence upon the lives of Africans. A significant number of Africans believe in the existence of some Higher Power. Religion permeates many activities of life and can hardly be isolated among Africans. As they move to other faiths, they move with their religion. Mbiti asserts, ''People take their religion with them wherever they go,'' (1991:1). Wink and Scott also put this emphasis, ''religion plays a major role in managing the fear of death,'' (2005).

The researcher concurs with the above scholars; the belief in life after death makes it easy for the religious people to have a different perception about death.

Among Africans, traditional customs dealing with death and religious practice are often separated. According to Nichols, ''Most African communities believe that

33

their departed souls have a special place to go- such as certain lands or rivers,'' (2011). This does not differ in any significant way from Western religious beliefs of going to heaven or hell when they die. For both culture and religion, death is seen to be a form of relocation. It is where the deceased move from the flesh to spirit. The deceased are sent to a certain place determined by their culture or religion.

Nichols further clarifies, ''the body is often "sent off" through the performance of rituals. For example, when a Muslim dies, the body must be taken to a place where there is no smoke. As well, there is a certain category of people- those who have not been purified - who cannot enter the place where these rituals are being performed,'' (2011).

In this instance, religious and traditional rituals are usually performed to have the dead cleansed and transformed into ancestors. Religion and culture perform rituals for the purposes of life after death and the protection of the survivors. Religion, particularly the Christianity, which is the religion of the researcher has embraced, an important role during the time of bereavement. If the deceased is a practicing Christian, the family will always make sure that the church is notified. This is the family's invitation to the pastoral caregiver to enter their space of bereavement. This will give the pastoral caregivers an opportunity to journey with the bereaved. Christian denominations have special liturgies for burial services, but not specific for to unnatural death.

For example, the researcher's denomination the Anglican Church has a designed liturgy for the funeral services not specific to natural or unnatural death from page 541 in the Anglican Prayer Book (APB). There are also special rituals that are performed before the committal or cremation. Before the procession proceeds to

34

the crematorium or graveyard, Anglicans perform the service of the commendation of mortal remains and absolution of the dead. The coffin of the deceased is sprinkled with the holy water for cleansing and surrounded with the smoke of the burning incense, using the thurible. Graham defines, ''the thurible is the metal container that holds the hot charcoal for the incense,'' (2015:82). Graham also states, ''the smoke of the incense is said to represent the prayers of the faithful,'' (2015:72). During that period of cleansing and supplication, the designated clergy person says prayers. Bible verses relevant for penitence and confessions are said on behalf of the deceased person. The relevant hymn verse is sung after each petition, in a very dignified and tender approach.

When the coffin is taken out of the church, home, or yard of the deceased to the burial or cremation site the following prayer is said from the Anglican Prayer Book, "May the angels lead you into paradise; may the martyrs come to welcome you and take you to the holy city the new and eternal Jerusalem, may the choir of angels welcome you, where Lazarus is poor no longer, may you have eternal rest,'' (1989:543).

This service is performed whether the deceased has died through the natural or unnatural death, as long as she/he is an Anglican Church member.

The church performs the same death rituals for any kind of death in order to accompany the deceased in his or her journey and to comfort the living, giving the hope of reunion in the afterlife to the survivors.

2.9 Death Rituals

According to Mbiti, ''a rite or ritual as a set form of carrying out a religious action or ceremony is a means of communicating something of religious significance through word, symbol and action. These symbols: embody a belief or set of belief,'' (1991: 131). Shanthi on the other hand, says, ''In the African contexts that during a liturgy, incorporating of movements and gesture derive their meaning from the community's experience of the universe,'' (2000:238). She further makes a point and says, ''These actions will include going barefoot, tapping the hands, swaying of the body in dance and emitting strident cries during a religious ceremony,'' (2000: 238). The above scholars are correct. The researcher has observed the way the traditionalists act and vest when performing these death rituals.

Rituals, ceremonies and sacrifice form a very important part of the African worldview on death.

Within an African community, according to Masango, "Ritual relates to crisis such as death and also contains therapeutic healing elements," (HTS 62 (32) 2005). Masango is also of the view that, "The more threatening and potentially disruptive the crisis, the more detailed and carefully patterned the ritual is which addresses the crisis," (HTS 62 (3) 2005).

Keya further says, "The different rituals and ceremonies are experienced at all stages of all life which is marked by prescribed rites of passage," (2010:38). There are rituals and ceremonies, which are connected to the birth of a child, celebration of the first year after birth, initiation into adulthood, marriage and death. Masango says, ''In other words the crucial moments in life such as birth, marriage, vocation, and death are accompanied by complex series of ritual and liturgical acts, (HTS 62

(3) 1030). Death rituals performed are often intended to help move the deceased from a state of impurity to a state of harmony with the spirit world. African rituals vary across ethnic groups.

However, they can be separated according to three phases: the period when the living are mourning and the period after death and mourning. The first phase begins with testament of the customs that must be observed during the mourning period. Prior to the death of person, last rites are observed. Among the many communities, these vary. For instance, according to Spijker, ''In Rwanda, sorghum grains and sheep's wool are placed in the hand of the deceased. Certain areas milk or sorghum beer is poured into the deceased's mouth. Incarnations are then pronounced,'' (2005). Ayiera articulates, ''It is believed that members of the family who do not observe these rituals are at risk of danger,'' (2009).

Even though the practices may differ because of changing times, but still Xhosa traditionalists have their unique customs with specific protocols during the unnatural death mourning rituals. To ensure a positive outcome of the rituals performed, human and material resources are needed. For example: the presence of elders who are assumed to have the capacity of performing the rituals.

As for material resources, trees and rivers are often an important part of the ritual at the time when families deal with the issues of death. According to Ayiera, ''When African people die outside their homelands, the performance of rituals may often be obstructed due to the absence of both human and material resources necessary for the performance of such rituals,'' (2009).

37

He further clarifies, ''among some African communities, the absence of performed rituals, or if the deceased is buried outside the country, there is an assumption that the soul of the departed cannot rest in peace,'' (2009). Yet in other communities, when a family member is buried "out of place," rituals are performed to bring his/her soul back home. According to Nichols, ''this is done in order to fulfil the expectations of the loved one who dies,'' (2011). This all emanates from the belief of life after death. Rituals of cleansing are often practised to bring the spirit of the deceased back to the family. In Africa, cleansing rituals often use water to fulfil the washing ceremonies as well as animals used for variety of purposes. In some communities such as the Nguni in the Sub-Saharan Africa, an ox is slain. According to Nichols, ''this is called 'the returning ox','' (2011). He further articulates, ''the slaying of an animal is connected with the ideas an ox accompanies the dead back to the living to protect their families,'' (2011).

This is performed to comfort the bereaved as well as to accompany and prepare the deceased for his/her journey to the next world of the living dead. The process of ritualistic expression is believed to be essential for ordering individual survival and security and the life of the society.

The built-in worship embedded in ritualism provides the internal locus of control and governs the people's total life activities. Shanthi made this observation, ''Rituals reflect the interconnectedness of humans, their relationship to nature, the need for healing, and the promotion of peace, justice, and unity in the family. She was of the view that true worship that allows creative symbols wherein the people express struggle for life, would liberate and call to wholeness,'' (2000:239). Keya

argues that rituals are developed and maintained within the community (cf. Switzer, 1970:213).

He further brings the following observation, ''The community provides the symbols and rituals with power both to strengthen the fellowship and as one aspect of its strengthening function, to dramatize the major events, including the crisis of life,'' (2010:39). The researcher is in line with the above scholars, as the researcher has witnessed these activities performed in his own community and the church when unnatural death is mourned. The issue of death rituals will be dealt with extensively in chapter 4 of this research.

The main aim of the rituals, which are related to bereavement through unnatural death, is to help the family members to deal with their loss and to engender life here and after. According to Dames and Dames, ''the rituals serve to help family work through the pain of grief and to adjust to an environment in which the deceased is missing. This depends to a large extend, on the nature of the relationship and roles fulfilled by the deceased.

They correctly point out that the goal of rituals is to emotionally relocate deceased and move on with life,'' (2009:43).

Dames and Dames further stress, ''This does not imply mechanically withdrawing all emotional investment in the deceased or giving up on them, rather it can be seen as relocating or evolving a new relationship with the deceased that leaves no room for new relationship and growth,'' (2009:43). The literature used by the researcher makes it vivid that it is always a matter of community interest that these rites of passage be satisfactorily completed. Rituals have a curative value to the

bereaved. This value is said to derive from social interaction, which brings people together to share in grief. Burial of the mortal remains is another important ritual, when unnatural death occurs in Xhosa traditional family.

2.10 Burial
In my society, burial is the preferred method of interment. Presently, it is the only mode of disposal of the remains of the deceased. In the event of the natural death, in the morning of the burial is preceded by the viewing of the body by the family members, moreover if the family wishes, that can be extended to some of the community members. This ritual is to acknowledge the fact that the family and the community will never meet the deceased again, in this life and everyone is free to view. Before the deceased leaves home, the ritual of sending off is observed. It is an opportunity to wish the deceased a pleasant journey and to request the deceased to take messages to the ancestors. It is mostly messages of greetings and requests for blessings. It is also to have a closure of the life of a person.

Writing on the rage of bereavement, Keya states, "Seeing a body does ram home the message that our minds and bodies resist: the dead person is dead indeed," (2010:42 cf. Ironside, 1996:18).

Alexander adds this, "viewing the body of the person, who has died, can help in beginning to acknowledge the loss," (1993:35). It is one thing to know, intellectually, that someone has died. It is quite another issue to accept it at a deep and unconscious level because nothing can change. In a case where the person has died unnaturally, his or her body is, sometimes, not allowed to enter the home premises, according to Xhosa culture. It is believed that if the body is allowed to enter the house it may bring about another tragic death to the family. In this

instance, the funeral undertaker will bring the body in the morning, varying according the families. In some families, the body is allowed in the house. Yet in some families, it is only allowed in the yard for some time.

In some families, the body is prohibited to enter even the village. Thus, the burial site is far away from the settlement area. According to Whyte, ''It is also common practice among African communities to bury their dead in their homeland,'' (2005). As divulged by Whyte (2005), ''East African mothers ought to be buried where the children are living to reinforce the idea that the children should care for the spirits (*emigu*) of their dead parents,'' (2005). Through the study of the literature, the researcher concurs with the above scholars as the researcher has learnt that among some Africans, spirits of the dead are perceived to be a good means of security as well as other assistance for the family members. However, those who die unnaturally are buried separately from the natural death victims, women do not view their remains, and children, according to the Xhosa culture because they are a danger to the living dead and the survivors up until certain cleansing and appeasing rituals are conducted and certain period has lapsed.

At the graveyard, during burial, the immediate family elders of the deceased are expected to stay together on one side of the grave, at a designated place. Seeco has made this observation, ''at the graveside it is possible to see who are the family and the relatives of the deceased. This takes place after the deceased's coffin has been lowered into the grave, when the family and relatives are expected to approach and drop a handful of sand into the grave, a sign of respect and grief, but also a way of saying good bye. In other families, it will be an uncle who will make sure that the right people are the ones who perform these rituals. In others, it is in

the order of seniority within the family and in others, it will be men who start and then, followed by women,'' (2010:216).

Keya continues to say, ''as they do so, they announce their acceptance of death as the lot of human kind saying: don't worry brother/sister: we too shall follow you because where you are going is our real home,'' (2010: 46 cf Malusu, 1978:9). Nevertheless, with unnatural death issue, the story is completely different because some family members are prohibited from going to the burial site by Xhosa culture. Mourning is another important ritual in the Xhosa culture, in dealing with death whether death occurred in a natural or an unnatural way.

2.11 Mourning

According to Manser, ''Mourning is described as the outward sign of bereavement or grief, e.g. the wearing of back clothes. It denotes the social prescription for the way in which a person is expected to display grief and often reflects the practices of one culture. It also helps those who come to know the state of affairs in your life,'' (2001).

Contrary to grieving which is said to be an internal reaction to loss, morning is an external reaction to loss. It refers to the external things that one does for example the shaving of a head or the lighting of the candle. Oyugi argues, "Mourning in contrast, is the external expression of grief. Mourning entails culturally and socially acceptable coping mechanism employed to adjust with the lost,'' (2008:3). According to Keene and Reder, ''Mourning is influenced by the bereaved cultural expectations, customs and gender,'' (2006: 251). Ndetei articulates, ''Grieving and

mourning are culturally determined,'' (2006:517). Learning from the above scholars the researcher is of the view that grieving and mourning in Africa need to be viewed within the context of communal existence.

Looking at the definitions of bereavement, grieving and mourning, it can be argued that these concepts are interrelated to death. Bereavement is an individual response to a loss of a loved one, which may manifest itself through grief (intrapersonal experience) and mourning (external experience; the cultural display of grief).

Oates argues, ''within the bereavement phases there are six processes of mourning. The first process involves recognizing the loss, which is part of phase one namely is avoidance. In this stage, the bereaved is expected to acknowledge and understand the death. By acknowledging the death, the bereaved is expected to accept death emotionally and intellectually. Funeral services, obituary notices and honoring the deceased help the bereaved to acknowledge the death. Sudden death may be difficult to acknowledge since the bereaved had no time for anticipatory grief.

Regarding understanding death, the bereaved want to know what caused the death. Without this understanding, the bereaved may become anxious or confused.

The second process is confrontation. Oates regards it as reacting to the separation. Confrontation process is part of phase two, which is denial about the death of the loved one. This process requires the bereaved to experience fully the pain of the loss. The pain can be experienced in many dimensions including spiritual, psychological, physical and social dimensions. The bereaved can put his or her

feelings into words by writing in a journal. Joining a support group can also be helpful to some people.

The third process is to recollect and re-experience the deceased and the relationship, which the two had, that is the deceased and the bereaved. Reexperiencing, reviewing, re-collecting is part of healthy grieving. The bereaved has to remember the good times, good qualities and admit the conflicting areas about the deceased. Such remembering is useful in the healing process. Remembering and reviewing may involve collecting memories of the deceased such as his or her pictures and photographs.

The fourth process requires the bereaved to relinquish old attachments to the deceased and old assumptive world. The old assumptive world means the deceased's beliefs, hopes, dreams, daily routines, which were taken for, granted before his or her death. Marked events can be used to relinquish old attachments and old assumptive world. The bereaved can create their rituals such as going for camping with mutual friends in celebrating the life of the deceased.

The fifth process is readjusting and moving to the world without forgetting old assumptive world and adopting new ways of being in the world. This fifth process goes with phase three, which is accommodation. The bereaved must readjust his or her life to fit in new identity. In other words, the family is now dealing with death as they close the chapter of a beloved. The sixth and the last process involves reinvesting and is part of the last phase, which is accommodation. This final process involves reinvesting emotional energy that has been invested with the deceased. This may involve setting new goals, learning new behaviour or taking new roles,'' (Oates, 2003:30-33). The mourning process and the rituals performed are also

there to bring therapy to the family members who are in grief because of the loss of the loved one through unexpected death.

2.12 Grief

According to Herbet, '' grief is a mental wound which heals slowly and leaves scars and can sometimes become complicated,'' (1996:2). Hornby affirms, ''Irrevocable loss causes real grief, which is experienced as acute sadness, particularly when somebody dies,'' (2006:521). On the other hand Louw argues, ''Grief is not merely an emotional reaction as a result of the loss of the loved one, but a result of the quality of attachment and an evaluation process of the worth of the loved one to the grief-stricken one,'' (2008:548). Anderson fuses the above views, ''Grief is the normal but bewildering cluster of ordinary human emotions arising in response to significant loss, intensified and complicated by the relationship to the person or the object lost, and by the way the person dies,'' (2010:128). The researcher is attracted by the latter explanations. Grief therefore is a natural response to loss.

It is an emotional suffering one feels when something or someone one loves is taken away. The more significant the loss, the more intense one's grief will be.

Grief can be described as an internal and emotional reaction due to the death of loved one. The scenario is exacerbated by the death that comes unexpected such as drowning, vehicle accident, gunshot, stabbing, suicide etc.; which is labeled as unnatural death. There are practices that the family may follow, where for instance the body of the deceased is disposed following a number of rituals that discriminate and segregate some family members. In the process of grieving unnatural death,

women and children are prohibited from partaking in other burial rituals because of their vulnerability.

Grieving is a highly individual experience, there is no right or wrong way to grieve. How one grieves depends on many factors, including one's personality and coping style, one's life experience, one's faith, and how significant the loss was to him/her. Inevitably, the grieving process takes time and can be complicated. According to Ndetei, ''The term 'complicated grief' is normally used to refer to abnormal grief, neurotic grief or pathological grief which provides various manifestations of complicated grief,'' (2006:517). It is clearly indicated that grief can be delayed, with the period of delay ranging from weeks to years. Grief could be chronic if it is prolonged, unending and unchanging. Such grief is marked by depression, sadness, withdrawal, prolonged pre-occupation with the person who has died, and prolonged unending distress.

The grieving process while experiencing loss is an inevitable part of life. However, there are ways to help the grievers cope with the pain, come to terms and eventually, find a way to pick up the pieces and move on with life.

Healing happens gradually it cannot be forced or hurried; also, there is no normal timetable for grieving. Some people start to feel better in weeks or months.

For others, the grieving process is measured in years. Whatever your grief experience, it is important to be patient with yourself and allow the process. To unfold, Worden confirms, ''The grief process usually takes one to two years for a person to work through the most intense reaction, depending on whom and what

is lost,'' (1991:70). This therefore proves and concludes that people grieve in different ways and periods.

2.13 Preliminary Conclusion

This chapter was reviewing the issue of death and rituals that are performed prior to burial. According to Clark D as he cited Dumond and Foss, 1972 saying, "Death is therefore always a problem for all societies since every social system must in some ways accept death, because human beings inevitably die, but at the same time social system must to a certain extent deny death to allow people to go on in dayto-day life with some sense of commitment,'' (1993). Nevertheless, Giddens notes, ''Death remains the great extrinsic factor of human existence, something which is ultimately resistant to social containment and control, making any social acceptance of it problematic,'' (1993:162). It is for this reason that Giddens says, ''Death above all else with those 'fateful moments' where individuals have to confront problems which societies have kept away from public consciousness. Here we can draw a clear parallel with Peter Berger's concept of 'marginal situations', which is an expression of broadly the same phenomenon.

Again, death is the most significant factor individuals can encounter in marginal situations because it has the potential radically to undermine their sense of being meaningfulness and reality of social life, calling into question even the most fundamental assumptions upon which social life is constructed...,'' (1993:13).

For Berger, ''Death is a fundamental and unavoidable feature of what it is to be a human being, and one with which societies have therefore inevitably, then not only

will individuals have to face extreme terrors of personal meaninglessness, but the social order as a whole becomes vulnerable to a collapse into chaos with a more wide spread attendant loss of meaning and order,'' (1993:14). Berger's input is the answer to the stories narrated in chapter 1.

The issue of family members practising different religions led to the chaos, as some bereaved members seem not to be tolerant to the beliefs of the other religion.

The information gathered here coerce the researcher to irrefutable believe the worldview and respond to death differently, culturally and religiously. In the western society, there is a fear and denial of death. People see death as an inevitable evil. African values can help Westerners to come to terms with death in a positive way. In turn, the Christian teaching on death and resurrection raises the world-view of the African and other cultures to even higher and deeper levels. Bujo summarizes these different viewpoints as follows: "Of course person is however to some extent reconciled to the fact of death by the belief in the community of the forefathers in which he is destined to live. He also knows that he will remain linked with the community he is leaving behind," (cf Healey & Sybertz, 1996:217).

According to Nwoye, ''It is vivid that the professional study of psychology in African has been and is still dominated by Euro-American approaches,'' (2013).

Similarly, views on conceptions of death psychology are based on traditional EuroAmerican epistemological paradigms. In the view and experience of the researcher, the misunderstanding and conflict that often arise in multicultural context especially during bereavements, is due to the different conceptions of experiences such as death, its cultural implications and meanings of the rituals

performed during and after unnatural death. This is so mainly because there is no or very little dialogical engagements and conversations between the different world-views and realities. Let us now move to chapter three where the researcher is aiming at outlining the research methodology.

CHAPTER 3

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

3.1 INTRODUCTION

In Chapter 2, the researcher dealt with Literature review. Chapter 3 will deal with a most critical part of this research that is based on research methodology and research methods. This chapter deals with the heart of the research, especially how it is going to explore ways of dealing with the problem of grieving the unnatural

death. This chapter analyses healing research methods that are commonly used by the research scholars in the field of Practical Theology like Yawa (2010), Madala (2016) and Mditshane (2019). It gives the clear picture and guidance on how the research is going to be conducted. Therefore, this chapter highlights, explains and presents a number of methodological concepts and the research methods that are going to be employed in this research.

The shared story in Chapter 1 caused several questions which the researcher could not answer, hence this research. The story introduces a problem that the researcher faced with the member of his congregation, whom the researcher could not help and that pushed the researcher to research in order to up skill himself to be able to deal with the situation and equip others. As a student of Practical Theology, the researcher could detect that no one has been able to get into her world of pain, and therapeutically working with her in order to find closure. This is what drew the attention of the researcher and as an aftermath, which gave birth, to this research project. The incident results to three phases of pain to be elicited.

That is:

- The pain of not knowing whether you have buried a person,
- The pain of unnatural death and
- The pain of burial and after burial in a Traditional Xhosa Culture.

It is also significant to give the brief background of the Xhosa ethnic group as the research centers around it.

Xhosa people are often called the Red Blanket People. They are the Nguni stock like Zulus. This was because of their custom of wearing red blankets dyed with red ochre, the intensity of the colour varying from tribe to tribe. Xhosa is a generalized term for a diversity of proud clans. South Africans that are part of the Southern Nguni group are mainly based in the Eastern Cape Province of South Africa. Xhosas are divided into several subgroups that are distinct but related. These subgroups are Bhaca, Bomvana, Mfengu, Mpondo, Mpondomise and Xesibe. The majority of the Xhosas live in the Eastern Cape, followed by Western Cape, Gauteng, Free State, KwaZulu Natal, North West, Mpumalanga, Northern Cape and Limpopo.

Xhosa speak isiXhosa, which is second most common language spoken in South Africa, "

(www.geometry.net/detail/basicx/xhosaindigenouspeoples) 11/05/2021.

Xhosa people have their own culture, which most is vivid when unnatural death occurs. There are many different meanings of the word culture as the word covers the wide and diverse field of social behaviours and understandings. Matthews and Ross define culture as, ''the set of social ideas and behaviours, customs and norms that constitute the way of life of people in a particular society,'' (2010:83). Indeed, these practices seem to negatively affect women and children when dealing with burial of the family members who die through unnatural death.

Throughout this research, the researcher aims at investigating and determining the impact of grief caused by unnatural death, and the effects of the traditional and cultural beliefs on our congregants. It is also the researcher's supreme desire to help both the grieving families and pastoral caregivers so that they are able to deal with grief of an unnatural death. It is evident that pastoral caregivers encounter

51

different challenges on a daily basis ministry, and the fact that there cannot be a one size fits all method of addressing the problems. Most of the challenges afford an individual time to ponder, pray and seek more guidance from others including God who is the source of all insights.

In a research of this approach, the qualitative research method will be utilized for the development of the research instrument. According to Hogan, Donal and Donnelly, ''Qualitative research is a multifaceted approach that investigates culture, society and behaviour through an analysis of people's words and actions,'' (2009:3). Denzin and Lincon put it in this way, "Qualitative research is a situated activity that locates the observer in the world,'' (2005:3). Whereas, according to Anderson, "This is a form of enquiry that explores phenomena in their natural settings and uses multi-methods to interpret, understand, explain and bring meaning to them," (1998:119). The researcher feels more comfortable with the latter explanation of the qualitative research as the researcher is going to search and interrogate the groups of people listed below in order to get information about the phenomena.

It is going to be important that the qualitative method could be employed in order to interview at least three people individually, from each of the following categories; the grieving family members, community leaders, the elders and the clergy who have experienced this phenomenon.

That will help the researcher in finding the ground level of the experience of people, which he will finally compare with the literature and see whether they tally with each other.

This process will help the researcher to journey with family members who are bereaved and who are troubled by the restrictions and barriers prescribed by the Xhosa cultural traditions, concerning the rituals that performed in the burial of the unnatural death bodies.

The researcher will then have an insight and understanding of the interviewees' inner feelings and behavior. This action may bring to the fore their anxieties, miseries and concerns. In order to address that problem, the researcher will use the approach of Gerkin based on shepherding the flock. Gerkin reminds us of our need to reclaim all the three-fold functions of the Old Testament biblical structure of leadership, namely priestly, prophetic and wisdom as primary guides for the caring ministry of the Christian community. It also focuses on its leadership by interpreting and examining the long history of this pastoral care, because it grounds the faith and practice of the life of the people of God. According to Gerkin, ''In the Old Testament the Priests provided ritual liturgical celebration for the community. The Prophets were to be the mouthpiece of God in challenging injustices practiced against the poor and the marginalized.

The wise men and women dealt with matters, which may not have been religious, but contributing to the well-being of the community. They focused on four modes of care, that is guidance, healing, reconciling and sustaining, '' (1997:23-27).

The reader needs to note that though Gerkin's work is able to help him in journeying with the grieving people as a pastor; however, it is unable to adamantly deal with the depth of trauma, subsequent to losing a loved one accidentally and pain caused by Xhosa rituals to women and children. It also lacks a way of entering their troubled souls, which eventually will enable the researcher to work on the

problem they are facing. This is where Kubler-Ross connects well with her overlapping stages of the grieving process to buttress Gerkin. In book On Death and Dying, Kubler-Ross famously delineated the " 5 stages" of death, namely denial and isolation, anger, bargaining, depression, and acceptance to meticulously describe the emotional states seriously ill people commonly experienced and the adaptive mechanisms they used to make sense of and live with incurable conditions (2014: xiii). According to Kubler-Ross and Kessler," They are tools to help us frame and identify what we may be feeling," (2014:7).

A psychiatrist does not see the majority of these people. Their needs have to be elicited and gratified by other professional people, for instance, chaplains and social workers. It is for them that the researcher is trying to outline the changes that have taken place in the last few decades, changes that are ultimately responsible for the increased fear of death, the rising number of emotional problems, and the greater need for understanding of and coping with the problems of death and dying.

Even though these stages are there, one does not stay or move sequentially to them, can jump or move to another depending on the level of trauma of the grieving family member. Nevertheless, they are useful in journeying with the grieving family members who are grieving doubting the burial.

Not sure whether the grave belongs to their loved one or not because of the burial traditions and customs that prohibited the viewing of the mortal remains by women and children; adhering to their beliefs and culture.

3.2 Epistemology

According to Mouton and Marais, "The word 'epistemology' derives from the Greek word 'episteme' meaning true knowledge. Views and notions about phenomena are usually articulated as statements about truth. A statement can, therefore, be defined as any sentence in which a knowledge claim relating to truth or reality is made. This is the reason that the study of human knowledge is known as epistemology," (1996:8).

Epistemology in this study is defined as the study of scientific knowledge directed to the realities of social life. The depth understanding of epistemology will help the researcher to be able to share his pastoral methodology of caring so that the reader to be able search for the truth. It is vivid that without epistemology, practical theology could not work. On the other hand, it is the study or a theory of the nature and ground of knowledge, especially with reference to its limits and validity. This is a concept that is taken from a branch of philosophy that is concerned with a theory of knowledge. It deals with the question of what we know and how we do, we know what we know?

According to MacCleod, ''Qualitative research has three levels of knowledge it deals with, namely: The knowledge of other, the knowledge of the phenomena and reflexive knowledge,'' (2001:9). It is imperative then to enquire from the people who have experienced this pain, as they know what to say. However, the researcher also has to analyze and verify the information given by the participants.

The researcher will receive a better understanding when engaged in in-depth interview, which will be one on one. During interviews, the researcher is able to observe body language. Considering the fact that to some of the participants the

phenomenon is still traumatic, therefore, it is expected that during the process of the interviews they will display their emotions and shed tears.

The researcher's research design in this study will use the narrative hermeneutical emancipator relationship approach to the grief and trauma that affect the family members after unnatural death in a multi-cultural society.

3.3 Research Design

According to G.K. Huysamen, "Research design as the plan or blueprint according to which data are to be collected to investigate the research hypothesis or question in the most economical manner. It deals with the proposed operationalization of variables and the involvement of research participants,'' (1994:11). In addition, P. Pandey & M.M. Pandey put it in this way, ''A research design is simply the framework or plan for a study that is used as a guide in collecting and analyzing the data. A blueprint is followed in completing a study. Research design is the blue print for collecting measurement and analysis of data. Actually, it is a map that is usually developed to guide the research,'' (2015:18).

Thus, we can say that a research design is the arrangement of condition for collection and analysis of data in a manner that aims to generalize the findings of the sample on the population.

Research design carries an important influence on the reliability of the results attained. It therefore provides a solid base for the whole research. This makes research as effective as possible by providing maximum information with minimum spending of effort, money and time by preparing the advance plan of all about the research on the effects of unnatural death to women and children in a Xhosa

56

traditional family. P.D. Leedy emphasizes the significance of design saying, ''nothing helps a research effort to be successful as much as planning the overall design carefully,'' (1993:114). The researcher plans to visit local people from different families, religions and denominations who have experienced unnatural death in order to investigate the phenomena.

3.4 Research Method

In order to address this research problem, the researcher will use the approach of Gerkin based on shepherding the flock. This process will help the researcher to journey with families that have experienced grief subsequent to unnatural death. Using Gerkin's method, with the two stories in mind, the researcher will steadily and tenderly journey with the affected people in order to pull them out of their traumatic situations. According to Gerkin, ''The Shepherding Model is one of the four Biblical Models (priests, prophets, wisdom and shepherd) which he first used and it was first appropriate within the religious life of Israel as a metaphor within which to talk of Yahweh for Yahweh's people,'' (1997:23).

He persuasively articulates it in this way," The prophetic, priestly and wisdom models of caring ministry we inherit from the Israelite community are not to be sure, they are only biblical images with which we pastors have to identify. Another one, in a certain way which is a more significant, is that of a caring leader as a shepherd," (1997:27).

This method is approved by Matsaneng saying, ''Gerkin's shepherding method is of paramount importance in given situation of this grieving woman as it enables a pastor to redefine his/her role in pastoral caring,'' (2009:31). The researcher is of

the view that redefining one's role means understanding how to function in different scenarios encountered while leading God's people. Therefore, Gerkin's method is able to strike a balance between faith, culture, family and individuals' issues. In order to understand Gerkin's model one has to unpack each of the notable roles played by the leaders of Israel, as listed below:

1. The prophets who spoke for the tradition and its concern for response to the voice of God,

2. The priests who led the community in its cultic worship

3. The wise ones who offered guidance to the people in the daily affairs of individual and family life

4. Another, in certain ways more significant, model is that of the caring leader as shepherd…with which to speak of the care of Yahweh for Yahweh's people, (1997:26&27)

To put this concisely, the researcher summarizes Gerkin's views in this way:

i.   Prophets had to give moral guidance to the people.

ii.   Priests had specific roles during worship and ceremonial, including offering prayers and ceremonials to Yahweh.

iii.   Wise men and women had to deal with social problems. iv.   Shepherds had to watch over Yahweh's people.

That Yahweh reached out to Israel through priests, prophets, wise men and women, and shepherds, the researcher will refer to them as caregivers.

In other words, in this study, pastoral caregivers are encouraged to implement Gerkin's model of caring for troubled souls. In shepherding, pastoral caregivers will

be journeying with the grieving women and children who are forbidden to participate in the burial processes of the victim of unnatural death. The priestly function of caring will challenge pastoral caregivers to use their spiritual influence in the society. The prophetic function will be for pastoral caregivers to be the voice of the voiceless. Shepherding function should be caring for the flock using God's wisdom and guidance in helping them to do away with grief and find closure.

Gerkin places emphasis on shepherding as the key role to be demonstrated by pastoral caregivers while leading the flock. He brings back the concept of a shepherd who lived a nomadic life. This could be clearly understood by most Africans, as shepherding is part of their daily living. Gerkin views pastors as prophetic leaders who are to care for the people of God in season and out of season. Such type of caring should involve care that confronts issues of injustice and moral integrity in the lives of the people. If therefore pastoral caregivers could follow Gerkin's suit, barriers and pain in the process of paying last respect to unnatural death victims could be dealt with accordingly.

For that reason, the researcher predicts that the element of shepherding will be needed in order to help the Priests care for or shepherd the flock through their leadership.

The reader needs to note that Gerkin might be appropriate and helpful in journeying with the sheep but he is unable to adamantly deal with the depth of trauma.

The reader needs to note that Gerkin is able to journey with grieving family members, but lacks stages that will help them go through grief. This is where Kubler-Ross connects with the overlapping stages of the grieving process.

In book On Death and Dying Kubler-Ross famously delineated the "5 stages" as, ''denial, anger, bargaining, depression, and acceptance to meticulously describe the emotional states seriously ill people commonly experienced and the adaptive mechanisms they used to make sense of and live with incurable conditions,'' (2014: xiii). According to Kubler-Ross & Kessler, ''The majority of these people are not seen by a psychiatrist. Their needs have to be elicited and gratified by other professional people, for instance, chaplains and social workers. It is for them that I am trying to outline the changes that have taken place in the last few decades, changes that are ultimately responsible for the increased fear of death, the rising number of emotional problems, and the greater need for understanding of and coping with the problems of death and dying,'' (2014:2). Through the deep study and analysis of these stages of grief, it vividly dawned to the researcher that Kubler-Ross originally developed this model to illustrate the process of bereavement. Yet she eventually adapted a model to account for a type of grief.

Kubler-Ross noted that everyone experiences at least two of the stages of grief. She acknowledged that some people might revisit certain stages over many years or throughout life.

3.4.1 Reasons for Choosing Gerkin's Shepherding Model

Charles Gerkin's model of shepherding, appeals to the heart of the researcher because the researcher's background connects him well with the shepherding model, especially as a priest.

This draws him back to his teenage stage, where he was so much committed in taking care of his father's livestock, as his father was practicing the subsistence farming. This background without doubt, was a perfect cushion for Gerkin's model of shepherding in the heart of the researcher.

3.4.1.1 The work of the shepherd

The work of a shepherd is clearly described by Phillip Keller in his book, 'A Shepherd and his sheep' when he says, "Folding sheep is another way of saying a shepherd is maintaining his flock with maximum skill. It is to say that he handles them with expertise, moving them from field to field, pasture to pasture, range to range in order to benefit them as much as he can, as well as to enhance his own land," (1983:23). Tendering the sheep, is encompassing many activities like pasturing, gathering, defending, nurturing, seeking for the lost, nursing the sick and healing the broken and wounded, resulting to the researcher knowing precisely what shepherding is.

This model also reminds the researcher of his ordination charges both to the Deaconate and Priesthood, which state, "…Following the Good Shepherd, you will care for the sick, bring back those who have strayed, guide his people through this life and prepare them for death and the life to come, that they may be saved through Christ forever. At all times your life and teaching are to show Christ's people that in serving those in need, you are serving Christ," (An Anglican Prayer Book 1989:588). The Liturgy of the Anglican Church for the services like Baptism, Confirmation and Ordination always reminds the clergy and the laity about the fact

that they are called by Christ in order to share in His ministry of shepherding God's people and to speak in His Name.

Jesus the Good Shepherd says, ''I am the good shepherd; I know my sheep know me,'' (John 10:14). In the New Testament Jesus is depicted as a Good Shepherd who knows his sheep and is known by his sheep. That is the key role that should be modeled by the caregiver in their journey with the grieving family members.

3.4.1.2 The Key Role of the Shepherd

Gerkin places emphasis on shepherding as the key role to be demonstrated by pastoral caregivers while leading the flock. He views pastors as prophetic leaders who are to care for the people of God. Such type of caring involves care that confronts issues of justice and moral integrity in the lives of the people. If therefore, pastoral caregivers could adopt Gerkin's views of a pastoral leader, anguish and pain caused by cultural traditions to the mourners when unnatural death occurs, could be dealt with accordingly.

That death and cultural traditions form part of our daily living, a method in pastoral practical theology that will help grieving families and pastoral caregivers need to be developed.

The researcher strongly believes that pastoral care is about addressing all spheres of people's lives and living. Gerkin uses the metaphor of a shepherd as a model of the caring leader. He is of the view, "The pastor should be viewed as shepherd as the image clearly and powerfully given to us by Jesus," (1997:80).

He further suggests, "The like Jesus, shepherding. He further says, '' With the coming of Jesus, who, according to John's Gospel, identifies himself as "the good shepherd," the shepherding image takes its place as a primary grounding image for ministry,'' (1997:27). Gerkin summarizes pastoral care, saying," It is care not only to the individual and families, but also the care of the Christian community and the tradition that gives that community its identity," (1997:35).

According to Gerkin," The caring leader will have to play the role of being prophet, priestly and needs to have wisdom," (1997:27). He further describes the caring leader as, ''the facilitator of the dialogue between people stories and the Christian tradition; and offer interpretative guidance,'' (1997:112). Gerkin continues to speak of the Old Testament biblical structure of leadership, which consists of the three functions: the Priests, the Prophets, and the Wisdom; with different but complementary functions. In other words, Gerkin is saying that the wisdom role and priestly leadership are not sufficient to help the pastor to be able to relate to people at all levels of their social, individual and Christian community life; the prophetic role is also needed.

However, the model that is more significant to complete the caring ministry is the shepherding model. Shepherding incorporates all above named functions of the biblical structure of leadership.

3.4.1.3 *Pastor as a Shepherd: A Supreme Model*

The model that embodies all the three is the one of a pastor as a shepherd. For example, priests in the Old Testaments provided rituals, prophets were the

mouthpiece of God in challenging injustices practiced against the poor and the marginalized and the wise men and women dealt with matters, which may not have been religious, but contributing to the wellbeing of the community.

According to Gerkin, "Applied to Jesus' ministry, the shepherding image incorporates not only the wisdom expressed in certain of the parables and the Sermon on the Mount, not only his priestly leadership in relationship to his followers, but also elements of prophecy such as are found in the story of Jesus' cleansing of the Temple…,'' (1997:27). Gerkin also says, "The middle ages also left us the imagistic legacy of the pastor as the physician of the soul. That image conveys to us that it is not enough for our care simply to express a superficial goodwill toward others. It is not enough simply to wish our parishioners well or to express our desire that they have a good day. No, from some of our medieval priestly ancestors we learn that to be a good pastor is to seek to understand the deepest longings, the secret sins and fears of the people so that the healing unction of our understanding may communicate that we and the God we serve care deeply and intimately for them," (1997:82&83).

He further articulates, "For the pastor involved in the day-to-day relationships with persons at all levels of social life, at least two observational capacities are of critical importance, each of which has been emphasized by one or the other approach - concern for the individual or concern for the community-during the twentieth century. The first is the art of listening. It is this; above all else, what the twentiethcentury clinical pastoral care movement has taught pastors.

Listening involves more than simply learning the words that people say, it means being attentive to the emotional communication that accompanies the words. It

means listening to the nuances that may give clues to the particular, private meanings that govern a person's inner life. It means listening for hidden conflicts, unspoken desires, unspeakable fears, and faint hopes," (1997:91). Unnatural death creates bruises and leaves victims disillusioned, rejected, disjointed and traumatized. The shepherd cares for the broken-hearted, strengthens, and affirms the worth of the flock despite the circumstances. Gerkin makes it clear that the function of the pastor is not only to feel sympathetic towards his/her suffering flock, but also to take, an intimate interest in their suffering.

The imperial objective is to reduce or eliminate the anguish and pain caused by cultural traditions when the unnatural death occurs. The researcher is of the opinion that pastors' intimate interest in times of sorrow and need will assist the grieving family members feel much better more especially seeing that his/her pastor cares. As the pastor enters in the space of grieving souls, he/she does so in love and reconciliatory attitude. Pastors should display the epithets of the Lord Jesus Christ that they purport to represent.

This could be much appropriate during the period of unnatural death. With the above in mind, let us now connect the 5 stages of grief.

3.4.2 Reasons for Choosing Kubler-Ross's Model: The Five Stages of Grief

This research has opted for this model in order to help in answering the research problem statement, through the five stages of grief by Kubler-Ross and Kessler. The former was a Swiss-American psychiatrist who scribed a booked entitled 'On death and dying' in 1969.

This book was stimulated by her work with terminal ill patients. The research outcomes revealed that those who were terminally ill were going through these five stages of grief. These are denial (and isolation), anger, bargaining, depression and acceptance. According to Kubler-Ross, ''The sudden, unexpected death of a loved one is a most tragic experience. It is of utmost importance that we assist a bereaved family to avoid irreparable trauma and endless suffering. Too many people, not given help, either go through years of unresolved grief or require psychiatric help later,'' (1997:60). Her book assisted the medical fraternity on how to handle the terminal ill patients in a polite and most dignified way by being sensitive to their needs and emotions.

This pioneering of Kubler-Ross gave birth to the modern-day end-of-life care initiatives like hospices for the terminal ill. The latter was the follower of KublerRoss. He even witnessed her death on the 4th of August 2004. By the time of her death the two authors had started authoring the book on grieving stages entitled, 'On grief and grieving' which was published in 2005, 'post humously'.

It can be seen as a sequel to the first book written in 1969 because it uses the five stages that were experienced by the terminally ill as a basis for those who are grieving.

It is clear from both books that the underlying argument is that those who are dying and those who are grieving are both experiencing a loss. The dying people are experiencing a loss of health and the grieving are experiencing the loss of life. The common factor that is largely discussed in these books is loss, resulting to these stages seen as the stages of loss. It should also be vivid that these stages are not

just cut and dried or sequential. They are just simply tools that help to frame and identify the emotions that are experienced during loss.

Our grief is as individual as our lives. Kubler-Ross & Kessler say, ''it is therefore possible that not everyone grieving will go through all of the five stages at once and in the order, they have been presented. Some stages may not be experienced at all,'' (2014:7). The researcher is aware of the fact that grief and grieving may not necessarily follow any rigid pattern as alluded to by Elizabeth Kubler-Ross. It is important to note that their contribution remains vital in understanding the griever and interpreting the grieving process. The researcher will utilize these stages of grief as he enters into the space of grieving families, as they appear to be responses to everyday loss that people experience. They are of paramount value and assistance in dealing with trauma caused by the traditional beliefs to women and children during mourning of unnatural death in Xhosa traditional family.

3.5 Research Methodology

Weiner and Simpson define methodology as, ''a system of methods used in a particular field,'' (2001:529). According to J. Mouton, ''these methods are concerned with the following questions: How do we attain knowledge? How do we ensure that we reach our research goal?

In other words, this is the knowledge of how to do things or the total set of means that scientists employ their goal of valid knowledge,'' (1996:35-36). Leedy illustrates, "So much for method. Now what about the –ology? That, too, is Greek.

It means "the study of." Hence, methodology is merely the study of a particular method, or methods, for reaching a desired end. Research methodology is a continuing process. It is a continuum that is ever changing, ever developing…," (1993:137). The researcher concurs with the above scholars that a methodology is a way of performing a particular task following certain specified methods or principles. The researcher through the help of Gerkin and Kubler-Ross will move into qualitative approach to understand the grieving problems subsequent to unnatural death; deeper.

3.5.1 Qualitative

3.5.1.1 *Definition and Aim of Qualitative*

Prof John Bacon-Shone defines qualitative research as, ''An inquiry process of understanding based on a methodological tradition of inquiry that explores a problem, which enables construction of a complex, holistic picture, analyses words, reports, detailed views of informants and conducts the study in a natural setting,'' (2020:47).

Hancock, Ockleford and Windridge have this to say, ''Qualitative research is concerned with developing explanations of social phenomena. That is to say, its aim is to help us to understand the social world in which we live and why things are the way, they are. It is concerned with the social aspects of our world and seeks to answer questions about:

• Why people behave the way they do?

• How opinions and attitudes are formed?

• How people are affected by the events that go on around them?

- How and why cultures and practices have developed in the way they have?'' (2009:7). According to Rob Matthews, ''This approach to studying the social world evolved into what has become known as a qualitative approach to collecting and working with data and methods of data collection have been developed that enable social researchers to gather and work with data produced by the research participants themselves. Qualitative research methods are primarily concerned with stories and accounts including subjective understandings, feelings, opinions and beliefs," (2010:141-142). The researcher is in concord with the above scholars' definitions of qualitative research methodology especially Rob who puts it in simple terms that the main aim is to collect and analyze data. Otherwise, they all agree that we get information about what is happening through interrogation, reading and enquiry. Paul D. Leedy suggests, "The qualitative Research methodology might be considered as a "warm" approach to the central problem of research.

We consider it warm because in great part it is concerned with human beings: interpersonal relationships, personal values, meanings, beliefs, thoughts, and feelings," (1993:142).

In his research, the researcher will use the qualitative approach, in line with Blaxter in Yama, who states, ''Qualitative research is conducted with collecting and analyzing information in many forms, chiefly non-numeric, as possible, as it tends to focus on exploring in as much detail as possible, smaller numbers of instance or example which are seen as being interesting or illumination, and aims to achieve "depth" rather than "breadth," (2014:44).

The nature of a qualitative study should involve creating a small amount of psychological discomfort; participants should be informed about this ahead of the actual interview.

Leedy & Ormrod both advise, ''debriefing and counselling should take place immediately after their participation,'' (2005:54). The latter's view is so much appropriate as some questions may touch where it hurts, needing then a rapid intervention of the pastoral care-giver in bringing therapy, as the family members are still grieving the loss through unnatural death.

Qualitative research methods are concerned with garnering an in-depth understanding of a particular situation or study. The qualitative research method processes the situation, subculture, scene or set of social interaction. According to Denzin and Lincoln, qualitative research implies an emphasis on processes and the socially constructed nature of reality in terms of quality, intensity, and frequency.

The qualitative approach will be useful in this research as the researcher will interact with people who have directly and indirectly dealt with unnatural death and later draw conclusions about them. It is through this approach that the researcher will be able to journey with those who are troubled by the mourning processes of unnatural death in the Xhosa culture and be able to assist other pastoral caregivers to deal with those grieving unnatural death.

3.5.2 Data Collection Techniques

Different scholars view data differently hence, even data management is never the same. According to Renata Tesch (1990), ''Qualitative data is any evidence or material the researcher collects that is not articulated in numbers.

70

To assist in finding rich and adequate data, the researcher should ask the following questions to help assess data:

- Did I gather sufficient background data about the people, procedures and settings to be ready to recall, comprehend and describe the full range of the context of the study?

- Did I increase comprehensive accounts of a variety of participants' views and actions?

- Are the data disclosing what lies below the surface?

- Are the data enough to divulge deviations or changes over time?

- Did I improve on multiple views of the interviewee's series or choice of activities?

- Did I collect and group data that enable me to improve systematic categories?

- What kind of comparison can I create amongst data?

- How do these assessments produce, update and enlighten my concepts?''

These questions will assist the researcher in gathering data on the effects of unnatural death more especially on grieving women and children as well as caregivers. It is hoped that sufficient data can be gathered for the research data. To uncover what lies below the surface, the researcher will carefully and thoughtfully analyze data. The techniques of the interviews will be viewed next. A lot will depend on the number of participants the researcher will come to contact with.

3.5.2.1 Population

Given construes population in this way, "Population as concept in research methods refers to every individual who fits the criteria (broad or narrow) that the researcher has laid out for research participants,'' (2008:644). On the other hand, Bacon-Shore J. simple defines population as, '' the potential respondents of interest,'' (2020:37). Mouton discovered that, population includes, "Populations of individual human beings such as adults, schoolchildren, the aged in a certain area,'' (1998:134). Based on the above analysis, for this project the researcher's participants will be the parents and siblings who grieved through unnatural death, the clergy, congregants, the community leaders and elders who have dealt with such scenarios. These participants will be Xhosa speaking people living in the Eastern Cape Province in South Africa. They will be between the age of 18 and 80.

They will represent possible, different religions and denominations in order to survey distinctions among the local denominations and religions in dealing with unnatural death. The researcher chose this specific population because it will be convenient to the participants and to the purpose of the research as they are familiar with the phenomena. This will provide the researcher with much advantage in getting different views and the information from various and different categories as chosen by the researcher. There are different methods of collecting data. For the purpose of this study, the sample, population, interviews, digital recording and field notes will be used to collect and store the data.

3.5.2.2 Sample

Bacon-Shone has this to say about the sample," A sample is the respondents selected from population for study...," (2020:37). There is a view that all people are competent to describe their own lives and say how they understand them. As Breuer, Muckel and Dieris put it, "All individuals are basically able to reflect upon and talk about themselves, about their connections with their objective, social and spiritual-cultural environment, about their world-views and interpretations, their actions, their life stories and their social-historical links," (2018:76). In this study, the participants will involve people rich with information, like family members who grieved through unnatural death in a traditional and cultural family, clergy, congregants, community leaders and elders.

Elizabeth Henning reminds us, ''the important motivation is people who are prepared to travel on this journey towards additional knowledge regarding the topic,'' (2004:71).

However, Cropley A. J. believes and suggests, "A failure to sample adequately poses a serious threat both to internal as well as to external validity. Although it is important when reporting a qualitative study to make plain who provided the data in question, sampling matters are often given less prominence in qualitative reports. Nonetheless, constructing an appropriate "sample" is a matter of considerable importance in designing a qualitative study. In effect, qualitative researchers usually select people who they think are well placed to cast light on the particular issue that is of interest to the researcher. Knowledge of the object of study takes precedence over sampling theory," (2019:75). The researcher concurs

with the above scholars and in that respect, the researcher will sample people who are willing to participate.

3.5.2.3 Interviews

Matthew and Ross define interview as data collection method which usually:

- Facilitates direct communication between two people, either face to face or at a distance via telephone or the internet;

- Enables the interviewer to elicit information, feelings and opinions from the interviewee using questions and interactive dialogue (2010:219). In addition, David Annan is in concord with the former when he says, "The interview is unique because it involves the collection of data through direct verbal interaction (often face to face).

- The interview enables the researcher to follow up verbal leads and thus obtain more data and greater clarity.

- The interview situation also permits much greater depth than other methods of collecting data,'' (2019:57). The researcher agrees with above scholars who vividly articulate the importance of the interviews and how they should be conducted. The participants' vulnerability will be considered during this process. That the siblings and the parents are directly affected by the grief of unnatural death, face-to-face conversations will be necessary for them, in case they emotionally break up because of the interview process. For other participants depending on one's availability and the distance, telephonic or virtual conversations will be an option, following different methods of presenting interviews. Gibson and Brown have a broad definition of

74

structured, semistructured and unstructured interviews. They explain these definitions in the following ways:

- **Structured interviews:** Comprise of developing before the interviews specific questions that should be asked. Enquires are made by the researcher according to their research interest and knowledge of the topic. They advise that all questions must be clear and unambiguous. It would be advantageous to pilot the interviews before undertaking the research by asking colleagues to read them through. This is the one way of maximizing clarity.

- **Semi-structured interviews:** Unlike structured methods, researchers are more flexible in the way the interview schedule is used. The interview will be guided by the natural flow of the conversation.

- This way in certain instances may be more beneficial and favourable than forcing the interviewee to fit their ideas into the interviewer's pre-defined order of questions. The researcher also has the freedom to probe the participants for more information.

- **Unstructured interviews:** The term unstructured is misleading according to

- Brown and Dowling, (2009:72-73). They further bring this suggestion, ''investigations are always driven by some interests, even if it is to figure out how things work.

The impression that an interview might have no structure is something of a misnomer, for them, conducting an interview would be futile,'' (2009:87-89).

David Annan stresses that each type of interview has a different purpose as he says, ''Semi-structured interviews are essentially qualitative, phenomenologicaloriented data collection methods. They enable exploratory discussion that helps the researcher to understand the what and how, but also to grasp and explore the internal dynamics of the research topic,'' (2019:58). Based on the above facts from different scholars, the researcher will most certainly implement the structured methods in interviewing the participants. However, he will allow the semistructured interview. This method provides the researcher with structure and flexibility. Considering the nature and the sensitivity of the topic, 'grieving unnatural death' and some cultural aspects, moving from structure to flexibility when needed, would cause the conservation to flow with more ease and more data will be generated.

3.5.2.4 Questionnaire

Questionnaires are used in a wide range of social research situations and to find out about all sorts of social issues and phenomena. Matthew and Ross articulate, ''Although questionnaires are particularly useful for gathering factual data, for example, people's ages, genders, incomes, or use of services, they can also be used to gather people's opinions, ideas, attitudes, knowledge and experiences,'' (2010:203-204). According to them, ''A questionnaire is usually designed to collect a number of different types of data including:

- Facts – about people or events;

- Descriptions – people's descriptions about something that, for example, has happened to them;

- Knowledge – what people know about something?

- Opinions – what their opinion is about something they have experienced or know about;

- Attitudes/values – their attitudes towards other people, institutions, ideas and so on;

- Background information about the respondent which may be linked to the research topic,'' (2010:207).

Considering the sensitivity of the topic, the researcher aimed at face-face interviews. However, the 2020 pandemic forced him to include the questionnaire. The universe was ravaged by an air born coronavirus disease of 2019, which is abbreviated as COVID-19.

According to https//www.medscape.com, "Coronavirus disease 2019 (COVID-19) is defined as illness caused by a novel coronavirus now called severe acute respiratory syndrome coronavirus 2 (SARS-CoV-2; formerly called 2019-nCoV), which was first identified amid an outbreak of respiratory illness cases in Wuhan City, Hubei Province, China," (17/10/2021). In order to combat the spread of previously mentioned pandemic, the South African Government prohibited gatherings and people were forced to stay at home and only move for essential needs. Educational activities were amongst the activities that were forbidden. The researcher opted to use the questionnaire in order to gather information from sampled respondents

who might be scared to be engaged in face-to-face contact sessions. Adhering to the COVID-19 regulations and protocols the researcher will use both the telephonic and the self-completion interview questions that will be emailed and sent via text or WhatsApp messages to the participants.

3.5.2.5 *Digital Recorder*

During the process of the face-to-face and virtual interviews, data will be recorded by using a digital recorder. Blaxter, Hughes and Tight says, "Using a digital recorder the researcher is able to concentrate on the process of the interview and be able, for example, to give appropriate eye contact," (2006:172). The digital recorder will be used by the researcher to record the interviews conducted with the bereaved family members, congregants, community leaders, elders and the pastoral caregivers, as to help the researcher in the process of recapitulating and closing the gaps that might be found on field notes when reviewing and analyzing the data collected.

Matthews and Ross articulate, "the main advantage of using recording equipment is that you, as the researcher, are able to take away a recording of the event to work with. You are then able to work with the raw data as you begin the analysis process," (2010:224). The participants need to be informed about the process. Matthews and Ross further state, "Audio recording is acceptable to many but their permission to record must be given and there may be those who do not wish to be recorded," (2010:224).

3.5.2.6 Field Notes

Although most participant observers rely on their memories to record data, some researchers take notes in the field or use recording devices for data collection. Field notes are going to be taken and recorded as the semi-structured interviews are conducted. In this research, the field notes will be written in such a way as to allow the researcher to retrieve them easily. Here are some of the guidelines to consider:

1. *Start each set of notes as a separate file with a title page.*
   The title page should include, the date, time, and place of observation; the day and time the area for recording the notes.

2. *Use pseudonyms for the names of people and places.*
   This might be helpful in case the data falls in the wrong hands and jeopardize the people the researcher is studying or else the readers have a relationship with the people described in the researcher's notes.

3. *Make copies of your notes or electronic backups.*

   This is helpful in event where an accident like fire, theft, and hard drive crash happens or simple misplacing the data notes or data files; resulting to losing data forever. The researcher will type the information gathered, file the hard copies and save the data in his laptop and memory card.

3.5.2.7 Language

Kogler argues, ''thought is enclosed in language, every experience, and experience of object is obtained in language,'' (1996:25). Manson articulates this by saying,

''meanings and understandings are created in an interaction, which is effectively a co-production involving researchers and interviewees,'' (2009:109).

The above statements highlight to the researcher to be mindful and sensitive to the language that the respondents might be using as that language has a lot of impact and meaning to the information and knowledge gathered. The researcher has, therefore, a responsibility to gather correct data as much as possible from the interviewees to produce sound scholarly knowledge. South Africa has eleven official languages. The area of research is predominantly in isiXhosa, even though some will be able to express themselves in English.

In this research, English language will be helpful but if the respondent feels more comfortable in expressing herself or himself in IsiXhosa that will be permitted and the services of interpreter will accessed.

3.6 DATA ANALYSIS

Qualitative data describes details about people, actions, and events of social life of the participants.

The collected data is in the form of observational notes and open-ended interview scripts. According to D. Annan, "The analysis of subjective data gives the researcher an alternative arrangement of systems, which mirror the philosophical presumptions that support the objective and approach of qualitative research,'' (2019:82).

Neuman Lawrence rightfully says, "To analyze, we connect particular data to concepts, advance generalizations, and identify broad trends or themes. Analysis

allows us to improve understanding, expand theory, and advance knowledge,'' (2011:482). On the other hand, Robert K. Yin proposes five phases of qualitative data analysis,''

- **Compiling data into a formal database** – this requires careful and methodical organizing of the original data. At this stage, the field notes are being sorted and arranged accordingly. This is essential to researcher as an initial stage after the collection is completed. In this process, the researcher refines the notes from the scripts. As such, the notes are now put in order, ready to be utilized.

- **Disassembling the data in the database**-, it can involve formal coding procedures though it does not need to. The essence of this stage is the disintegrating of the data into fragments. The researcher will then be able to notice similar fragments in the process. It will make it easier to interpret.

- **Reassembling data**– is a less mechanical process and benefit from a researcher's insightfulness in seeing emerging patterns. After the disintegration of data, it shall be reassembled. Similar patterns be put together and they form themes.

- **Interpreting the reassembled data** – Now the data is being analyzed accordingly.

- **Concluding** – The researcher at this stage draws a conclusion from the entire study. The conclusion shall be related to the interpretation made and linked to all other phases of the data collection,'' (2011:176-177).

Based on what the above scholars' advices about data analysis, the researcher will use Yin's five phases of qualitative data analysis. The researcher is tempted to

believe that collecting data will remain tentative until the whole process of data collection is completed and the entire collected data on unnatural death bereavement processes is examined. The process of analyzing data will involve systematic arranging and integrating as well as examining the collected data.

3.7 Ethical Consideration

De Vos, *et al* state, ''ethics are set of principles that are suggested by an individual or a group. These principles serve as rules and behavioral expectations about the most correct conduct towards experimental subject or respondents, employees, sponsors and other researchers, assistants and students,'' (2013:114).

For approval purposes, this proposal was submitted to the relevant authorities before the study was approved. According to Matthews and Ross, "All social research has ethical implications and dilemmas. So, what we are doing when we think about ethics is looking at the social and moral values involved in undertaking social research and, in particular, asking ourselves how we should treat our participants," (2010:17).

They further quote McAuley (2003:95) saying, "The ethics of social research is about creating a mutual respectful, win-win relationship in which participants are pleased to respond candidly, valid results are obtained, and the community considers the conclusions constructive," (2010:71)

Codes of ethics have been developed by the university. These ethics are designed to regulate the relationship between the researcher, the participants and the

research field. The researcher subscribes to Cresswell's principle of good practice, who states,''

• The principle of informed consent shall be adhered to in this research. No person shall be involved in a research as a participant without knowing about it and giving permission to participate, and without being given a chance to decline.

- When the participant agrees, she/he will fill the consent letter. Other details pertaining the form are contained in the consent letter.
- Under no circumstances shall false information be given to the participants.
- rAvoid deception of any.
- Show respect for people,'' (2007:69).

On the other important and serious note Murphy and Dingwall, advise that researchers should avoid harming participants. Co-researchers values and decisions shall be respected and all people should be treated equally,'' (2001:339). This means that the participants are there to assist in finding the problem at hand. There is a need to treat them as co-researchers but to treat them with dignity. The names used in the research are pseudonyms to protect the identity of the coresearcher.

Oliver argues in this way, ''another advantage of anonymity is that it protects an individual who may be mentioned by research respondents. It would be unfair if individuals unconnected to the original research project were identified simply because they are included in the discussion by respondents, if the researcher considered that there was any risk of their being identified, it might be necessary to edit the data in such a way as to ensure anonymity,'' (2010:80). Flick also highlights, ''informed consent should be an obligation in every study, Confidentiality- how does the researcher take care that anonymity of the

83

interviewee is maintained throughout research process and in publication,'' (2007:83). This process should run through to the end of the research on unnatural death up until the study is completed.

It will be unethical for a participant to learn of his/her name and the connected story from someone else along the way in breach of confidentiality. Given L.M. says," Respect for confidentiality is an established principle in research ethics codes and professional codes of conduct. More broadly, in many cultures, confidentiality is also considered as fundamental to human dignity. Researchers have often given assurances of confidentiality to protect the privacy of research participants. This means that information shared with researchers will not be disclosed in a way that can publicly identify a participant or a source," (2008:111).

Best advises, "The research will follow the absolutist position,'' This is based upon the assumption that as social researchers we should be moral examples and only conduct research in a manner that is ethical…Disregarding the rights of the respondents leads to researchers to become cynical and treat people as research objects rather than human individuals with feelings," (2012:34).

Given L.M. emphasizes, ''among the more serious distinctions that qualitative researchers might fight troubling in ethics policies is the emphasis on individualism. Policies emphasize the importance of humans as organic entities – a legacy of their biomedical origins-rather than as social and cultural beings,'' (2008:282). At all stages, the rights of the participants will be respected and time spent will help in building confidentiality. Naturally, when people are convinced that they are protected, their participation will be vibrant, and they will even talk of the things never expected could come out of them.

3.8 Informed Consent

According to Matthews and Ross, "The basis of the informed consent is making sure that the people who are going to take part in the research understand what they are consenting to participate in....Make sure people understand what they are consenting to…A clear explanation and justification here will often encourage people to participate," (2010:73). It is for this reason that the consent letter will be read, translated and explained to those who are illiterate, in their mother language, which is Xhosa. That will help the respondents know what they are going to participate on. It will be made clear that the researcher as well, the co-researchers will not benefit any funds from this study and that they will not be compensated financially for taking part in the study.

3.9 Preliminary Conclusion

The chapter has dealt with the issue of outlining the route the researcher will be taking in the process of collecting and analyzing data about grieving unnatural death in a Xhosa culture.

The researcher's intention is to enter into the space of the one violated and troubled by death and cultural issues in the Xhosa setting. The researcher is aiming at divergent reasons; helping the family deal with the problem and secondly bringing the model that will help the pastoral care-givers who are struggling but not ignorant about this issue. This research therefore will assist in empowering them to deal with this issue not even to judge. The researcher will employ the theories of Gerkin and Kubler-Ross. Charles Gerkin's shepherding model enters into the space of the bereaved families.

More so, Gerkin is able to balance faith, culture, community and individual wellbeing. However, Gerkin is not able to go deeper into the lives of the people and deal with the trauma they experience to bring therapy, which is where KublerRoss's Five Overlapping Stages of Grief enter to deal with trauma and its depth, in order to bring therapy. Yes, Gerkin helps to enter into the space of pain and journey with them. However, he fails to enter into the stages of trauma and is not able to articulate the stages they are in. This is where Kubler-Ross fits well to buttress Gerkin.

The former is extremely helpful with these 5 stages of grief to move on and understand the pain and trauma of grieving unnatural that they go through in these stages.

Of course, it is good to work on some theories that are Western and all but the researcher is dealing with the Africans. The researcher saw it very much appropriate to opt for the qualitative method to investigate the topic in question. The researcher has chosen to use the qualitative for the very reasons that qualitative research method deals with people's experiences.

The qualitative method is very helpful, as it will help the researcher to go into the field to test through questions whether the experience of the same people in South Africa connects with the experience of the Western authors and if they do not, show the discrepancies where they miss. A research design has been formulated, highlighting the steps the researcher is intending to pursue in doing the research. These steps are to be utilized as guidelines not as rigid routes. Different forms of qualitative data collection and analysis methods are outlined and vividly explained.

The next chapter will deal with the topic of death rituals especially based in a Xhosa culture.

CHAPTER 4 XHOSA DEATH RITUALS

4.1 INTRODUCTION

This chapter succeeds the chapter that outlines how the research is going to be conducted. It is of great importance for the researcher to have an in-depth understanding of the Xhosa people and their culture. Therefore, the main objective behind this chapter is to understand an African paradigm about life, death, burial,

death rituals, rites and issues relating to the afterlife, subsequent to the unnatural death. The underlying assumption is that cultural beliefs, rituals and ceremonies prepare individuals for the eventuality of death and, in fact, bring healing to the survivors after the occurrence of death. Moreover, the necessity of the cultural therapeutic values such as proper preparation for burial, respect for the ancestors' values and communal consciousness, in particular will be highlighted; opening the account with the introduction of the tribe in question; the Xhosas.

4.2 Introduction to the Xhosa Nation

Historians have come up with different views on how the Xhosa Nation was founded and how it expanded to where it is today. The Xhosa also often called the "Red Blanket People" are of Nguni stock, like the Zulu. The name Xhosa is a generalized term for a diversity of proud clans, the Pondo, Bomvana, Thembu and the Xhosa Tribe itself. Red and orange of ochre were the traditional colors of the Xhosa, Thembu and Bomvana.

This is a typical characteristic colour of decoration used on dress, blankets and overall body. They have been called, "red blanketed" people or *amaqaba* because of this clay – *imbola*. The first group of early Nguni immigrants to migrate to South Africa consisted of the Xhosa, made up of the Gcaleka, Ngqika, Ndlambe and Dushane clans, the Thembu and Pondo. Peires J.B. explains, ''the Xhosa people today think of themselves as being the common descendants of a great hero named Xhosa who lived many hundreds of years ago. Some writers go so far to assert that Xhosa was the son of Mnguni and the brother of Zulu and Swazi,'' (1981:13). However, a second group of Nguni-speakers joined these tribes later. These were

88

the tribes that Shaka, the Zulu King drove out of the Zululand. Some returned to Zululand when peace was declared, but those who remained became known as the Mfengu and were assimilated into the Xhosa Nation.

The early immigrants formed the backbone of the Xhosa Nation and have good reason to be proud. Not only were they to become the second largest group of Black Africans in South Africa, but they were also the only ones that were never defeated or enslaved by any other tribe. Peires further states, ''the view that Xhosa is heterogeneous in origin, rather than a genetically defined 'tribe clearly distinct from its neighbours, and that it expanded and incorporated rather than migrated, has important implications with regard to the old problem of the western boundary of Xhosaland…all persons who accepted the rule of Tshawe thereby became Xhosa,'' (1981:19). They even repulsed the mighty Zulu chief, Shaka. The Xhosa live mainly in the Eastern Cape Province (the former Ciskei and Transkei Homelands). The Kei Great River marks as the boundary of what was once the southern border of the former Transkei.

The Mtamvuna River, also called the reaper of mouthfuls, (when if overflowed its banks), marks the border between KwaZulu-Natal and the Eastern Cape. South of this river lie the, rolling grass-covered down lands of the Eastern Cape.

During the 1820'2 and 30's southern Africa was torn apart by violent wars between the different indigenous peoples, the so-called Mfecane or Difeqane (The Crushing). Two Nguni chiefs started these wars, Zwide of the Ndwandwe kingdom in the North of the present –day Zululand (the area of KwaZulu-Natal lying north of the Tugela River) and Dingiswayo of the Mthethwa kingdom in the south. Refugees from the both armies became new Mfecane tribes, on the march and swept across

the country, crushing anyone who came in their path. Some scholars therefore believe that British settlers are the ones who named these groups. For example, Marks and Atmore as cited by Maylam have pointed out, ''the latter-day terms Nguni and Sotho are flags of convenience to describe the post-Mfecane situation and … their wide-ranging use is due to white intervention or invention, not least on the part of Bryant. In pre-Mfecane times, they were either group names of local or at least limited implication, or terms referring somewhat vaguely to foreign groups in general,'' (1986:20). The positive aftermath of these wars among many was the expansion of territories.

4.3 The Dynamics of Xhosa Expansion

The boundaries of Xhosaland expanded every generation with the departure of the sons of the reigning chiefs to found new chiefdoms of their own. Isichei explains, ''by the late eighteenth century the Xhosa had crossed the Great Fish River and occupied the Zuurveld.

Expansion was built into Xhosa socio-political structures- a chief's sons left their father's kraal, to which they could never return, to found settlements of their own,'' (1997:424). Peires further emphasizes, ''as we have seen, the political system of the Xhosa was feared towards indefinite expansion. Every chief had the right to his own territory,'' (1981**).** Among many well-known and prominent individuals in the 21st Century, the late Ex-President of the Republic of South Africa, Nelson Mandela, belongs to this ethnic group. South Africa is referred as the Rainbow Nation because of the multiple global nations that are the citizens of this country.

4.4 Xhosas' Interaction with the British Settlers & the Xhosa Downfall

In the wars against the British and colonial troops, two Xhosa chiefs, Sandile and Maqoma, merged as strong leaders. After both had been defeated, Xhosa resistance crumbled and by the early 1880s, the last of the Nguni chiefdoms had been brought under colonial rule. However, what really broke the Xhosa nation's resolve was a disaster that occurred in the mid-1850s. Isichei states, ''by the 1850s the Xhosa was impoverished, demoralized and dispossessed, much of their land alienated to white settlers or loyal Africans. In 1856, a girl called Nongqawuse was given a message. All the cattle should be killed, because those who had tended them were defiled by witchcraft. If that were done, the dead would return with great herds,'' (1997:425). She had a vision of the warriors of old rising up from the reeds surrounding a pool into which she was gazing. They had been purified of witchcraft.

They encouraged her to tell the Xhosa people to also purify themselves by killing all their cattle, destroying all their grain and not planting any crops. The action would also help to get rid of the White settlers, since the old warriors themselves would come to drive them away.

News of Nongqawuse's prophecy, spurred on by the preaching of her uncle Mhlakaza, spread among the people like wild fire. In the aftermath, approximately 20 000 people died of starvation while another 30 000 scattered among the white farmers in outlying areas where they sought work for food.

However, despite this disaster and the havoc it wrought on the Xhosa people, Xhosa culture has remained strong. Although their lifestyle has been adapted to the

Western traditions, the Xhosa retain many of their traditions, and much of their culture.

4.5 Brief Exposition of the Xhosa Culture

Each African people has its own cultural heritage. Some aspects of our cultures are similar over large areas of our continent, for instance the way of dealing with unnatural death is almost there in every African society. Every individual has a culture that he or she follows, and is changing all the time, whether slowly or rapidly. The word culture covers many things such as the way people live, behave, act, and their physical as well as intellectual achievements. Culture shows itself in art and literature, dance, music and drama, in the styles of building houses and of people's clothing, in social organizations and political systems, in religion, ethics, morals and philosophy; in the customs and rituals of the people in their values and laws, in their economic life as well. All these cultural expressions influence and shape the life of each individual in his society.

They turn the individual in his/her society and in turn, the individual makes a cultural contribution to his/her community through participating in its life and creative work. The importance of the individual depends largely on his/her service to the group and his/her personal achievements are secondary. Naturally, this leads to considerable inter-dependence within a family as a group. This is still to a large extent, the situation in present-day Xhosa communities in the villages where contact with Western Industrial World has not seriously disturbed the normal running of community life.

Stories, riddles, myths and legends are found in large numbers among Xhosa people. They have been handed down orally. They serve many purposes, for

instance, some entertain, others warn, some teach morals, others stimulate the imagination of listeners, some are told as a commentary on peoples' lives in a given period e.g., some myths explain how death came into the world.

Africans are highly fond of music; therefore, music, dance and singing are found in every African community; the Xhosa is no exception in this respect. In Xhosa social and cultural life, music forms an integral part of mourning and helps the individual and the group to come to terms with unnatural death.

4.6 The Social and Cultural Life

The earliest Xhosa homesteads consisted of a circular frame of poles and young trees bent and bound together in the shape of a beehive and covered from to bottom with grass. During the early 1820s, traditional construction methods changed and huts were built with circular walls of coated stakes interwoven with branches and having thatched conical roofs.

The individual huts that formed a homestead were usually built in semi-circle around maize in bottle-shaped pits. The pits were well plastered and the openings closed with stones to prevent the maize from being spoilt. Although the maize gave off a bad smell and tasted sour, it was a good stand-by when food was in short supply.

The Xhosa people enjoyed physical closeness and mothers carried their babies on their backs, close to the bodies, from the moment the baby was born. The Xhosa home was usually quite small and the family members lived in close proximity to each other. The Xhosa had a deep sense of community and would extend a helping

hand to anyone in need. The way in which food was cooked, on an open fire in a cast-iron pot, where everyone could come and help herself/himself, was indicative of their sharing nature, which became their belief system.

4.7 The Belief System

Beliefs seem to be an essential part of the religion among the Xhosa nation. Beliefs generally deal with religious ideas. The Xhosa people are traditionally ancestor worshippers but also believe in a creator who cares for them in the greater things in life and who protects them in extreme danger. The ancestral fathers, on the other hand, watch over the everyday lives of their descendants, their crops and their cattle. Among the Xhosa, old people are revered as spirits, and sacrificial offerings may actually be made to them while they are still alive.

The ancestral fathers also speak to their families in dreams. However, because not everyone is capable of interpreting these dreams, witchdoctors are called in to act as mediums. They are easily recognizable by their exotic regalia and they often wear white, a symbol of purity.

Death and burial are associated with many complex beliefs and rituals. Then men of the clan always lead the funeral procession and the women follow behind. In the case of the unnatural death, strict procedures are followed, for cleansing and protecting both the deceased and the survivors. These rites are intended to send off the departed peacefully, to maintain his links with the living and to ensure that normal life continues among the survivors.

Africans believe that ceremonies and rituals have cohesive, loving and bonding consequences on societies and this is actually true in the world of view. This is what

makes African culture and tradition so remarkable. Humpreys S.C. *et al* believes that African culture is an expressive culture and we give expression to life-changing experiences, be it sadness, joy or difficulties through the passage of performing rituals or ceremonies. During such ceremonial or ritualistic events, the community is invited to come and share with a particular in their either grief or happiness. (1982:1-45). This demonstrates the value and significance that African culture puts on community, hence our well-known term '*UBUNTU*' humanity.

4.8 The Xhosa Concept of *Ubuntu*

'Ubuntu' is a Xhosa concept for expressing humility. As African people, we believe that our humility is expressed within a community. We belong to each other therefore there is no person who does not belong. Mbiti expresses that in this way, "I am because you are, you are because I am," (1986:12). Belonging is the root and essence of being. Therefore, the whole system of African society and the ordering thereof (law) is based on this concept.

Dwane states, ''Xhosa believe that the human family consists of households, clans, tribes, nations, and their respective ancestries. Those who are in this life are governed by the overall injunction to preserve certain key values, which converge upon, and are subsumed in the concept of *Ubuntu*,'' (2017:107). Setiloane is swimming in the same pool with Mbiti and Dwane as he argues, ''in African societies everyone has someone, she/he belongs to who should reap the benefits of his/her life or take on the responsibilities which arise out of that life,'' (1996:10). The researcher agrees with what Setiloane is saying in the above quotation because in an African village or township where people have been allowed to settle without

disruption of forced removals, one finds that an air of a large family broods over the atmosphere. It is also noticed that everybody is related to another. This relationship, by blood, marriage or by mere association are emotionally seated and cherished dearly. This becomes evident when a need arises, like some tragedy (death) or some occasion for rejoicing (wedding). Mbiti adds on by saying, ''*Umntu Ngumntu Ngabantu*, literally meaning, a person is a person because of another person,'' (1986:37). In other words, no one is an island. That is why we find that in Africa every member of society is closely linked with the community.

This creates a chain, which binds each person horizontally to the other members of tribe and vertically to both the deceased and the coming generations.

The *Ubuntu* concept puts it so vivid that no African can exist alone. It is so sad that in our time and age, Africans no longer practice what they preach; instead, many Africans have adopted the Western culture of individualism.

This is evident in the way the Africans are living now, e.g., Africans used to share, in a Tswana idiom which says, *"Bana ba motho ba kgaogana tlhogo ya tsie."* Literally meaning, "Africans share no matter how big or small is the item that must be shared." This idiom is no longer functioning because nowadays we have people who are murdering others. Africans have adopted the Western idea of 'Everyone for her/himself but God for us all.' These Western concepts are changing African patterns of life. The more educated and civilized we become, the more we Africans lose our African roots of *Ubuntu*.

The researcher is of the view that the diversity of culture, in some rural and urban areas, has posed a challenge to the concept of *Ubuntu*. Mbiti states, ''*Ubuntu* means, "I am because you are, you are because I am," (1969:61). Other factors of

social integration, globalization and urbanization also make it difficult for some urban and rural people to understand the reasons and motives for *Ubuntu*. The challenge is for the community and other faiths leaders to engage in such dialogue on how to keep the balance between respect for personal space and *Ubuntu*. *Ubuntu* creates friendship and builds up trust between people, living and dead. Dwane emphasizes that the ancestral spirits whose lives impinge upon what goes on in this life, are the custodians of all those human values associated with *Ubuntu.*

When they are violated, a breach of fellowship occurs between the two worlds, and calamity sets in the ancestral spirits turn their backs on their descendants, and by so doing withdraw their protection, and block up the channels through God's blessings flow to man, (2017: 107&108).

Unnatural death may be the product of the lack of *Ubuntu* and the wrath of the ancestors. Xhosa traditionalists have a way of appeasing their ancestors to avoid calamities through some specific rites and rituals, which are performed.

4.9 The Rites and Rituals

Rituals are religious phenomena that permeate all religions and are the core of religious practices. A religion without rituals is no religion. Ritual practices, properly explained, reveal their inner workings. Rituals are so indispensable to human culture that the study of humanity cannot exclude them. Ritual is a symbolic human act to harmonize human activities with the transcendental powers as a form of invocation or appeasement for success. According to Charles Okonu (1992:147) as cited by Nyawose, "A ritual is defined as a stereotyped sequence of activities

involving gestures, words and objects performed in a sequestered place and designed to influence preternatural entities of forces on behalf of actor's goals and interests," (2000:8). Rituals in this case are the specific activities that punctuate the ceremonial rites at specific times and places purported to harmonize with or appease the transcendental powers for success in life. Rites are the totality of the stages in life usually classified as rites of passage. While rituals are rites, not everything in a rite can be classified as ritual.

In a traditional Xhosa society, rituals form part of the life of the people. They link them with their past, present and future. At the center of ritual is the ancestor worship without which nobody can survive because the ancestors keep surveillance over their living.

A consistent or departed who rejoin the life cycle as ancestral spirits. Rituals are a means of resisting change because on each occasion people will be forced to practice their own rituals and object to other rituals.

For example, if proper burial rites and funeral ceremonies are not met, it is believed that the dead person may become a wandering ghost, unable to live properly after death and therefore a danger to those who are still alive. It is also believed that giving the dead person a befitting burial rite helps to protect the living from sudden death. Funeral rituals are performed in order to separate, prevent and send off the deceased, with the hope that the dead person will not come back to his/her house and cause trouble to the survivors.

4.10 The Significance of Funeral Rituals

The ritual is associated with some form of a religious performance. Rites form the pivot of Xhosa behavior patterns. They control the society and the individuals because they are highly revered. In a Xhosa society, they are performed for the good of the person and the group. The main purpose of the rituals, which are related to bereavement through death, is to help the family members to deal with their loss and to engender life here and hereafter. Dames and Dames have this view, ''the rituals serve to help family work through the pain of grief and to adjust to an environment in which the deceased is missing. This depends to a large extend on the nature of the relationship and roles fulfilled by the deceased,'' (2009:43). Dames and Dames correctly point out, ''the goal of rituals is to emotionally relocate the deceased and move on with life,'' (2009:43).

Dames and Dames (cf. Worden 1991:16) stress, ''this does not imply mechanically withdrawing all emotional investment in the deceased or giving up on them, rather it can be seen as relocating or evolving a new relationship with the deceased that leaves no room for new relationships and growth,'' (2009:43).

In defining a ritual, Mbiti says, "A ritual is asset form of carrying out a religious action or ceremony. It is a means of communication something of religious significance, through word, symbol and action,'' (1993:131). Therefore, a ritual embodies a belief or beliefs.

Alluding to Mbiti's definition of ritual, Cook and Oltjenbruns, assert, ''a ritual involves specific behavior or an activity that gives a symbolic expression to certain feelings and thoughts, according to Mbiti, ''There is a wide variety of rituals; some concern the life of an individual from birth to death,'' (1991:119). Referring to death and funeral rituals as Mbiti states that death is sorrowful and it is important, the

99

researcher has learnt that there are many complex and even long rituals associated with death. Death according to the African culture does not end life but life continues in another realm. After physical death, a person continues to be alive in the memory of the people and it will bring calamity if they are not treated well during the funeral ceremony. Thus, people are so sensitive about how they treat a dead body and what they do during periods of bereavement. African communities strive to ensure that the ritual relating to death is performed appropriately. Funeral rituals are culturally determined and observed by family members and community members who are mourning with the bereaved.

Muchemwa expresses, ''explaining death is prevalent in African societies and they are informed by culture, particularly the strong beliefs in ancestor-hood and the after-life,'' (2003:31). Jupp and Rogers say, ''If the rituals are to be effective, though, those present must be activity involved,'' (1997:106). Kirisiwa underscores that people who participate in ritual regain their emotional balance and heal psychologically, compared to those who do not undergo the rituals, (2002:28). Kirisiwa's argument seems to be influenced by a cleaning ritual in his village. He explains, ''in that village a young man whose mother had committed suicide, suddenly became dumb and appeared mentally deranged. When the matter was investigated, it was revealed that his father blamed him partly for his mother's death due to his disobedience. The blame and the harsh words of his father made the young man to believe that his father had cursed him. A purification ritual was organized where the father with other village elders openly retracted the father's words perceived as a curse to the young man and prayed for healing. A week later,

the young man was psychologically and emotionally well again,'' (2002:28). Bowen affirms, ''the entire family including the children, when possible should participate in the funeral rituals. He argues that the extended family members and friends participate in funeral rituals,'' (1978:331). This is because funeral rituals can help bereaved people to cope with the loss. Bowen argues, ''He prefers a public funeral service as opposed to a private funeral service,'' (1978:331). Mugambi notes, ''In Africa, funeral ceremonies are community affairs, though they vary from one community to another,'' (1989:102). The above-cited scholars prove the importance of the death rituals.

They are explained as public, traditional and symbolic means of expressing beliefs thoughts and feelings about the death of the loved one.

They also allow for the embracing of faith and beliefs about life and death. That is why these rituals are so elaborated. The ceremonies as prescribed in the culture or religion sometimes last for days, weeks or months. For example, in some communities in South Africa, Eastern Cape in particular, in the African continent funerals last for 2 to 3 weeks because of the death rituals that need to performed for significant and divergent reasons.

4.11 The Death Rituals in Africa

Death and funeral rituals in Africa are deeply rooted in the cultural beliefs, traditions, and indigenous religions of the continent.

According to Macmillan Encyclopedia of Death and Dying, "Death rituals in Africa ensure that the deceased is properly put to rest so his spirit is at peace and he can

take his peace and he can take his place among the protective ancestors," (2002). They are guided by Africans' view of existence after death and the power and the role of the deceased ancestor. Rituals evolved through the infusion of Christianity, Islam and modern changes, but traditional themes survive in Africa. The Xhosa people believe in the life after death.

When one dies, whether through the unnatural or natural death, it is believed that he or she is not dead but has gone to *kwelemimoya* (the spiritual world). The belief helps to keep the relationship between the living and the dead alive, through these rituals. However, there is a fear that if these rituals and customs are not employed, the ancestors may visit them again another death may occur. It is due to that reason that the Xhosa people will do all what is possible to employ these rituals.

Elders as champions will make it a point that the family adheres to these rituals to protect the survivors and prepare the way for the deceased. With the Xhosa people there are a few outstanding rituals and customs that need mentioning when unnatural death occurs:

4.11.1 *Ukubopha* (to bandage)

As soon as the news about unnatural death is received, the family senior member would gather the senior neighbors and friends; men and women, to go and break the sad news, either in a roundabout manner, by prayer or explicitly.

Family members will congregate in the main hut. It is referred to as the *indlu enkulu* (Great Hut); a lounge in the modern era.

Immediately after the issue has been divulged, the short prayer is made and comforting words are shared *ukubopha* the family. God is asked to comfort the

grieving family and make them accept His will and the irreversibility of the situation. When the Xhosa people console one another, they say *sela amanzi uxole* (drink water and be consoled). After that, the chief mourner is allocated an area to sit and the room is cleared to open the space for those who will randomly and constantly come to comfort the bereaved family.

4.11.2 *Ukubika* (to announce, to inform, to bring bad news)

A message bearing the devastating news of the unexpected and unnatural death or departure of an individual from the physical world is referred as *umbiko* or *umphanga* (bereavement). To announce *umphanga* is one of the duties of the family elders.

The day on which the community hears of the *umbiko* or *umphanga* marks the beginning of grief in that particular homestead or amongst the relevant clan. *Umphanga* is sent to all members of the clan related by blood (*izihlobo*) because of marriage (*izalamane*). Death is often referred to metaphorically, in the following ways:

- ***Uswelekile*** – has become scarce
- ***Utshonile***/utshabile – has disappeared
- ***Akasekho*** – not present
- ***Usishiyile*** – has left us
- ***Uhambile*** – has gone

The above metaphors serve to communicate that the individual may have departed from the physical realm but his/her spirit will continue to remain among the living.

Mbiti also states, ''all these words show the belief that death is not a complete destruction of the individual; life goes on beyond the grave. Therefore, people combine their sorrow over death of someone with the belief that, that is not the end and that the departed continues to live in the hereafter,'' (1975:113).

4.11.3 *Ukukhapha* (A sendoff/ Accompany)

The custom of *ukukhapha* is also an important one in the life of the Xhosa people. When a member of the family dies, a sending off beast *(inkomo yokukhapha)* is slaughtered during either the day of the funeral or a day or two after, in order to honour his spirit as the body is laid to rest in his grave.

The Xhosa believe that at death, a person takes a journey to the dead. By slaughtering a cow, the members of the family, clan and the community symbolically accompany the spirit of the deceased to its journey. During the period of mourning after his death, there are certain restrictions pertaining to *hlonipha* such as removal of all shiny objects in the hurts, use of black tea or coffee only, use of *iinkobe* (boiled mealies), use of black mourning or navy mourning attire and black buttons by the entire family as a sign of respect and mourning. During the slaughtering of the *ukukhapha* beast, words of reverence such as these are uttered by the piercer.

Kuyintlonelo nembeko enkulu ukuba sihlabe wena Lastani ngenjongo yokuba sikhaphe umninimzi weli khaya, uVelile into kaZoyise. Emva kokuba ethe wafa ngengozi kwaye singalidelanga. Nantsi ke Mtshilibe, Mdumane, Bhangqo into esikukhapha ngayo sisithi ndlela-ntle. The above Xhosa saying literary means in

English,

(It is with deep respect that we have chosen to sacrifice you *Lastani* (the name of the beast) as a symbol of respect to accompany the head of this family, *Velile* Zoyise. After he has died accidentally and unexpectedly. Mtshilibe, Mdumane, Bhangqo, accept, with pleasure, this beast, which we are slaughtering to accompany you. Farewell to you).

4.11.4 *Ukusezwa Amanzi* (Drinking Water**)**

On the next morning after the funeral, a goat or sheep is slaughtered at the home of the deceased. This ceremony is called *ukusezwa amanzi* which means that we are giving you water to drink.

It is customary for Xhosa people to say *'sela amanzi uxole'* when something has happened which makes a person sorrowful or anxious. This means drink water and be consoled. This ceremony is chiefly done for the children of the family to console them and explain death to them and what it will mean to their daily life from then on. This also helps to console the women and the vulnerable males that did not take part in the burial rituals as the unnatural death traditions restrict them from participating for their welfare and wellness. To the traditional Xhosa people, the unnatural death is regarded as the curse that might take more if burial rites are followed accordingly. The family members are also counselled on how they are expected to behave and what their respective roles will be from then on.

4.11.5 *Ukubuyiswa* (Bringing back)

The custom of *ukubuyiswa* is a very important one; moreover, it is regarded as the most important single ceremony concerning the dead.

The spirit of the head of the family is invited back to its home so that he should keep an eye on his family and look after everything that might go wrong. Only the head of the family has this ceremony done; that is, only men can have *ukubuyiswa* ceremony.

After several years, the spirit of a dead family member is called back from the wandering in the forest. It is during this event that the name of the deceased is mentioned for the first time after his burial rite. Ndungane explains,'' after six months or more, another beast is slaughtered in honour of the same ancestor and a ritual is performed where his spirit is asked to come back to his homestead and look after the entire family, '' (1992: 56).

Krige also states, ''on this occasion the name of the deceased is included in the praise of the ancestors for he is specifically asked, when the meat is placed, at the *umsamo*, to come back to the homestead and look after his people,'' (1988:169). This occasion is marked by speeches of reverence and special *hlonipha* attire characterized by traditional garb worn by both men and women. The speeches are generally made by men only inside the cattle kraal where the blood of the slaughtered beast soaks the *umthonyama* (3/4) i.e., kraal manure. All women, old and young, have to abide by *hlonipha* rules on this day. Before the beast is pierced, the most senior member of the family says words of reverence such as these usually:

Velile tata wethu sonke kolu sapho lwakwaMiya, namhlanje sihlanganisene kweli khaya lakho ngeenjongo zokubuyisa wena Mja, Sibewu, Mal'ebomvu, Gcwanini.

106

Ngale nkabi yalapha ekhaya, uBhatom, luthi olu sapho lwakho buyela ekhaya uze kuba nathi phakathi kwalo, ulwaluse. Eli gazi lale nkabi, liphalazwa kulo mthonyama namhlanje lolu sapho lwakho ngenjongo yokuhlonipha nokwamkela wena Salakulandelwa. Sithi makube chosi kube hele kudede ubumnyama kuvele ukukhanya. (Translation provided below)

(Zizakele, father of us all in this Sikhutshwa family, today we have gathered in this home of yours with the aim of this home of yours with the aim of bringing you back home Mja, Sibewu, Mal'ebomvu, and Gcwanini. With this home beast named Bhatom, your family pleads with you to come back and be with them once more. The blood that is going to be spilt on this manure will symbolize their respect and welcome to you Salakulandelwa. Let there be peace and harmony, darkness should disappear and light should shine.)

4.11.6 *Ukuhlanjwa komzi* (Rinsing of the home)

According to Ndungane ukuhlanjwa komzi was a service meant to cleanse the home which was visited and plagued by misfortunes and bad luck caused by the neglect of ancestors, (1992: 52). During times of conflict, discord, bad luck, ill omen, stagnated progress and development and other disturbing signs of suffering experienced by members of the family; like unnatural death. A beast was slaughtered to invoke the sympathy and help of the ancestors who were subsequently invited to ameliorate this disturbing situation by sorting out all the above-mentioned problems and to rinse the home. Again, here conciliatory speeches were made in an atmosphere of humility and respect. The family head will express such words:

Njengoko ikhaya eli lakwaNyathi, ooBudede ooNogix'umbengo ligutyungelwe lilifu elimnyama, apho ukufa, izifo, indlala, imimoya emdaka namashwangusha ezenzela ukuthanda kolu sapho lwalapha ekhaya, ngale nkabi siyiwisayo apha ekhaya namhlanje sizama ukuwucoca lo mzi sigutyula konke okungendawo, sicela futhi namathamsanqa kwizinyanya zakwaNyathi ukuba zingasifulatheli, aisiyekele ngobubi nokungendawo. (Translation provided below)

(As the N*yathi, Budede and Nogix'umbengo* homestead is under a dark cloud because of the presence of death, diseases, poverty, evil spirits and bad luck which are roaming all over the place, with this beast which we are slaughtering today, we are trying to cleanse all that is evil and we are invoking the benevolence of the *Nyathi* ancestors, pleading with them not to give us their backs and allow such evil spirits to take control of the place).

4.11.7 *Ukukhuza* (Exclamation to shock)

In the older days, the chiefs' daughters were normally married out away from their village. When death occurred in their families, they were later given an opportunity to pay their last respect to their deceased relatives in a ceremony called *ukukhuza*. This term means an exclamation to shock. Since there was no fast transport and communication, it took them days to reach home and by that time, the funeral had already taken place. Since burial took place within 24 hours, there was usually a great sense of urgency involved when there was death. They normally arrived at sunset. At arrival, a goat or a sheep would be slaughtered for catering.

When the sun goes down the elders among the people who accompanied the bereaved daughter together with the elders of the family would go to the kraal to point (*ukukhomba*) the cow to be slaughtered the following day. This is done so that the selected beast is not allowed to leave the kraal the following morning. The Xhosa do not like slaughtering and eating a beast, which has already left the kraal. Such beast is believed to have "jumped over" bad magic or medicines used by witches or people during the night – *ukutsiba umkhondo.*

Before sunrise, the daughter and her entourage together with the elders of the home would go to the place where deceased is buried. The elder of her entourage then does the *ukukhuza*, which may take this form:

Ngelizwi elikhulu:

Silapha namhlanje kulo mzi wamaNqukhwe, ooMgabazóngafiyo. Sibuhlungu kakhulu kukushiywa kwethu nguMpendulo. Nimthatheleni uMpendulo kuthi? Ngubani ozakwenza ezi zinto ebezenenza kweli khaya nakwesi sixeko? Siyakugxotha oku kufa kweli khaya. Siyanicela ke ngoko zinyanya zeli khaya ukuba nisixolele ngoku. Sisize le ntombi yenu uNomalizo ukuze izibeka iltye njengoko engakhange abekho esingcwabeni. Momelezeni kule lahleko. (Translation provided below)

With a loud voice:

(We are here today to the home of the Nqukhwe, Mgabazóngafiyo clan. The so hurt by the death of Mpendulo. Why did you take him from us? Who is going to do his

deeds in this family and village? We are chasing away death from this family. We beg you our family ancestors, please pardon us. We brought your daughter Nomalizo, as she did not attend the funeral. Strengthen her in this loss).

Bishop Dwane notes three important aspects from the sacrifices in Xhosa tradition. He puts it in this way, "The firstly, is the means by which the spirits of the departed relatives are propitiated, if by that it is meant that they are implored to assume a more favorable disposition towards their descendants. The living depend upon them for their intercession, and overall ministry of protection from evil and harm. It is important for the reader to understand that the descendants therefore should be in a state of harmony with their ancestral spirits, through whom they receive blessings from the one who is the author and preserver of life.

Secondly, sacrifice has to do with the preservation of certain human values, considered by the community to be the fibers, which bind people together in the corporate life, without making their community a narrow and exclusive one.

Sacrifice in the Xhosa tradition is a way of affirming that communal life is a priority, and that the community of persons is incomplete without those who have gone on to the next life. The two worlds belong together. Life in this world and in the next comes from uDalibom.

Thirdly, sacrifice is a way of commemorating the spirits of the departed, and of giving them the recognition they deserve,'' (2017: 108-109). If these rituals are performed appropriately, Xhosa people have the conviction that the ancestors have accepted their act. If the intension was to exorcise unnatural death, they will free and safe from such catastrophic events.

4.12 The Acceptance of the Sacrifice by the Ancestors

As it has been mentioned above that, each sacrifice is performed with the flow of the animal's blood. Elloit clarifies it, ''the acceptance of the sacrifice by the ancestors is communicated through the crying of the animal or, *ukukhala* (crying), when it is tapped on the navel with a sacred spear,'' (1970:133). It is a misconception to think that the cry is a result of any pain experienced by the animal because this is done prior to any actual stabbing. Kuckertz argues, ''the bellowing of the animal is an essential element because the cry is the medium through which the praises spoken by the elder will be communicated to the agnatic ancestors,'' (1990:239).

Kuckertz is partly correct in identifying the connection between the bellowing of the animal and how it relates to the ancestors. However, the cry is a sign that ancestors have accepted the sacrifice rather than a medium for relaying, to the ancestors, the praises expressed by the elder.

If the *iNtlabi yekhaya* (a person responsible for slaughtering a sacrificial animal) is impure, or if the ritual is not done properly, there is the possibility that the animal might not bellow. The cry of the animal is the medium through which acceptance is conveyed to the living.

When the animal makes the cry, the following words are said: *icamagu livumile* (*icamagu* (to be explained below) has agreed), meaning that the ancestors have accepted the sacrifice and the aim of the sacrifice has been achieved. However, if the animal does not cry, amaXhosa say: *xa ingakhalanga iyayekwa,* which

translates as 'if it did not cry it is freed'. Sebe says, ''In the event of this happening, this means that the ancestors have not accepted the sacrifice and the animal has to be freed,'' (1982:47). Rejection could be due to the sacrifice not being carried out according to the wishes of the ancestors. It could still be due the failure to follow proper ritual procedures, or if responsibility for the killing of the animal is given to the wrong person. This signals a breakdown in communication between the two worlds and it is believed that there now exists the need for reconciliation between the living and the ancestors. Another form of ritual speech, *ngxola,* which means pardon, to plead, or to inquire, follows the rejection of the sacrificial ritual.

4.12.1 Camagu (To Bless, to Appease, to Forgive, to Praise, to Honour or Let it be so, Amen)

Camagu is an exclusively Xhosa term frequently used in all situations in which the ancestors are involved.

Camagu cannot be translated directly and should rather be understood as an utterance, appearing in all ritual speeches, which can be explained only in terms of the context in which it is used. The inherent complexity of *camagu* has resulted in scholars offering a number of different meanings and interpretations of the term. Pauw has this belief, "*Camagu* can be used as a noun *icamagu*,'' (1975:125).

Whereas Mcallister views *camagu* as "a verb *siyacamagusha* or as a form of exclamation, *camagu* which means, be appeased,'' (1997). *Camagu* is also used in the opening speech by the clan elder to command the full attention of his audience who recognize it as an utterance demanding respect. MacAllister shares, ''Most

scholars commonly associate *camagu* with a plea for forgiveness and define the term as meaning to appease or to be pardoned, '' (1988). Sebe has argued that *camagu* is used during rituals pertaining to birth, bringing back the deceased, accompanying the deceased and when offering a gift to an ancestor, (1982:44).

Sebe has further argued, "*Ukucamagusha*, to praise or to honour, is associated with all sacrifice performed for the ancestors and followed by the brewing of African beer and the killing of a beast,'' (1982:46). However, in this context *camagu* cannot be interpreted as meaning to appease, as there is no element of sickness involved but can rather be seen as a renewal of the relationship between the living and the deceased.

Within the process of *ukucamagusha, camagu* is used more frequently to accompany other forms of ritual speech. The cry of the animal is heard during the ritual of sacrifice, once the sacred spear has been passed through the hind legs and over the belly and the forelegs of an animal.

As mentioned earlier, the cry of the animal symbolizes acceptance from the spiritual world and, uttered in this context, *camagu* can be understood as an expression of joy. The cry of the beast is followed by the ululation of the female members of the clan, who joyously call upon all the ancestors. Everybody understands that on such an occasion *icamagu livumile,* that is, the sacrifice has been accepted.

The crying of the beast, as well as *camagu* by males in the kraal and ululating of the females, all serve to heighten the performance of the ritual. For example, within the ritual of bringing back the deceased, all these aspects would be interpreted as a sign that the deceased have returned and are protecting the living and, in this

113

context, *camagu* can be taken to mean let it be so, welcome back, thank you, I agree or we have heard.

Camagu is also used during rituals of reconciliation between the living and the spiritual world. In this context, *camagu* can be understood as meaning to appease or to appreciate. Another use of *camagu* can be noted in the responses from the audience who acknowledge that they agree with the speaker addressing both the living and the deceased. *Camagu* is already a complex term and although it has different meanings as it is always used to draw the attention of the ancestors.

In his discussion of *camagu,* Laubscher offers the following observation, ''In studying the various examples when *Camagu* is employed and the mental and emotional atmosphere, which accompanies it, seems to convey or call up much feelings as reverence, holiness, power that pardons or forgive, the unseen world of goodness is around one. When one looks at *Camagu*, the word carries the binding force in all. The ritual practices and it carries the ritual power,'' (1975:18-19). This word; *camagu* to the Xhosa people is all embracing and is recognized as a religious act and word, solemnly spoken and echoed by all.

4.13 The Right Burial

The right burial ensures that the ancestor does not remain to haunt and exert power over the living, but instead rests in peace and protects the family.

This belief comes from a common African view that life and death are on a continuum of existence, with death seen as just another state of being. In death,

114

the whole person still exists but now inhabits the spirit world he can be reincarnated into several people. If the deceased is not buried correctly or a person lived a life of dishonor, his ghost can remain as a part of the world of the living, wander around, and cause harm.

In addition, witches, sorcerers and the underserving may be denied a proper burial. In this way, they are denied the honor of being part of the community of ancestors. The body of the deceased is thoroughly prepared before burial as to ready for the journey which is about to be resumed by the deceased to the world of the living dead.

4.14 The Home Cleansing Rituals before Burial

After death, the corpse is washed, shaved of all hair, and then dressed. The eyes and mouth are closed to resemble sleep and rest.

The corpse is then laid out straight along the inside of the hut and a long sheet is hung from the roof or nailed on the wall to cover the immediate sight of the corpse. This straightening of the dead body is a modification, for previously the body was prepared in a squatting position, which was believed to resemble the position – the foetal position. In instances where witchcraft is suspected, certain medical practices are conducted to stop the power of the evil witch doctor.

Intsizi (a strong black powder) is used in various ways: some smear the corpse with the substance, whilst some even cut the body and insert the *intsizi* in the cut. *Intsizi* is also placed in the closed fist of the dead person as a weapon to protect him against the wizard. Again, there are those people who sprinkle the corpse with

115

goat's bile before putting it in the coffin. Some use *umthi* (traditional medicine) to repel evil spirits from entering the body, making it impossible for the wizards to turn the corpse into a Zombie – a person who is or appears to be lifeless, a supernatural spirit that reanimates a dead body. However, due to current social, political and economic changes some traditions have been changed to match the present situation.

4.15 The Modified Cleansing Rituals

For those people who die in hospitals, nurses and other hospital staff perform the first rituals at hospital.

The washing of the corpse is the responsibility of the one who is working that shift. The family starts to have access, or full control of the corpse after the body has been removed from the hospital mortuary in preparation for burial. Traditionally this type of job was specifically the responsibility of certain people and not just any person in any family: any deviation is therefore a modification. Mortuary people, in most cases are the ones who dress the corpse and then deliver the corpse to the family. For instance, during the early days of the funeral week, some members of the family, especially those of the same sex with the deceased, will take the deceased's clothing to the mortuary in order to dress the deceased.

They will take the deceased's clothing to the mortuary in order to dress the deceased in preparation for the funeral. This is usually done on Wednesdays or Thursdays, or on rare occasions on Friday, because the mortuaries are busy with deliveries on Fridays; scarcely have time to attend families on Fridays. Some families may take some *umthi* or their *iXhwele* (Herbalist) to the mortuary for cleansing because from the mortuary the corpse may not be washed again. On the

116

day the body is delivered home, the senior member of the family will visit the mortuary again in order to escort and lead the deceased back home. Some carry with them a small twig of *umphafa*, the twig that is associated with the connecting power between the deceased and the survivors. The twig is traditionally used on the day prior to integration day to invite the spirit of the dead person to integrate with other spirits of the other family members who are now ancestors. On the same night, a vigil or wake keeping will take place where families, friends, relatives and neighbors will gather in the homestead for a whole night service.

In such a ritual, there will be preaching, singing and speeches throughout the night. The out brake of the pandemic, COVID-19 and the regulations thereafter prohibited some of the rituals like the night vigils.

The South African Government performed some activities following the prescribed and enforced rules and regulations, with limited numbers and durations. In the early stages of the pandemic even viewing was prohibited, a challenge to the fact that families buried their own, as wrong deliveries were identified. H.P. KhosaNkatini and P. White agree, ''in spite of the importance of the African funeral rites, the missionary role of the church in mourning and burial of the dead in the African communities, the COVID-19 pandemic led protocols and restrictions placed a huge challenge on the African Religious and cultural practices. For centuries in Africa, rituals like the night vigil and viewing of the body have been norm and are regarded as a dignified way to bid farewell to the loved ones. These practices were however not permitted under the COVID-19 protocol. Scientific observations of the spread of COVID-19 pandemic shows that burial rituals and funerals are considered to be among super spreader of the deadly coronavirus," (HTS Teologiese

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Studies/Theological Studies). The prohibition of the viewing of the bodies during COVID-19 led to enormous strife between the funeral undertakers and the grieving families because the latter demanded to view their relative's bodies as the Xhosa people know the role the body in bereavement rituals. Some families demanded the coffins to be opened and the undertakers succumbed.

As it has been indicated above that the funerals were supper spreaders, there is a belief that the families that opened the coffins during the COVID-19, experienced more infections and deaths.

4.16 The Role of Bodies in Bereavement Rituals

More generally, the materiality of the body in bereavement rituals can be roughly theorized in terms of guidelines provided in cultural lore on how to deal with death. More narrowly, the configuration of the bodies of the deceased and bereaved while these rituals may have evolved. Perhaps changed over time, adherence to strict guidelines is the norm rather than the exception. Confirming the passing first of which concerns the role played by a body specifically identified as dead. This serves as confirmation that:

1. death has actually occurred,

2. Collective mourning,

3. Spiritual movement and

4. Avoiding misfortune.

J. Martin, C. Van Wijk, C. Hans-Arendse & L. Makhaba state, ''with respect to how the deceased passed, the following general guidelines apply:

- *Death from natural causes / illness*: The body is washed and prepared for burial.

- *Death through accidents*: The body is washed and prepared for burial. The ritual is performed at   a designated place outside the homestead. It is generally believed that this practice will prevent a recurrence of misfortune.

- *Death through suicide:* The body is washed and prepared for burial in view of act of taking one's own life bringing harm to one's body being perceived as unnatural, a specific ritual which symbolically admonishes the person may be performed on the body,'' (2013:47).

These rituals are the clear indication that death is not the final destination to the African traditionalists, as there is life after death.

4.17 Cleansing Rituals for an Unnatural Death Victim

In order that his /her ancestors may accept a person who has died violently, she needs first to be cleansed. In this instance, again *iXhwele* (Xhosa Traditional Healer) may exercise the act. Depending on the family, some perform these rituals sometime after burial, while other families conduct cleansing rituals before burial.

They also clean the wounds so that the deceased will come to the ancestral world with clean wounds so that they are happily accepted and welcomed by the ancestors. The process of the ritual solely depends on *iXhwele.* Some take two goats, if this is well after the burial, to the grave, and the *iXhwele* speaks to the elder family member, all the words that oratory should renounce to the spirit of the dead person. Like saying:

119

Nantsi ibhokhwe yakho. Usapho lukuhlamba loo manxeba kwelo chibi legazi ukuze wamkeleke koyihlomkhulu nakwizinyanya zakho. (Translation provided below)
(Here is your goat. The family is cleansing your wounds from the pool of blood in order that your ancestors and ancestors should accept you).

Thereafter, the goat's meat will be cooked outside the premises and shall be eaten there by people who are not family members. The second goat is taken to the grave and is sacrificed to the dead person, where an elderly person speaks; saying:

Nantsi ibhokhwe; ngoku siyakumema ukuba ujoyine izinyanya nosapho lwakho…

(Here is a goat; we now have to invite you to join the ancestors and your family…). Then the goat is led inside the hut where incense will be burnt and the same speech is repeated (as before) by the same person. Women who were previously not part of or involved in the rituals are now involved because everything is now done inside the homestead. The second goat is slaughtered and cooked inside the hut and the whole family will now enjoy the meat. All the meat must be cooked thoroughly: there should be no sign of running blood in the homestead during this ritual.

Makhaba *et al* (2009) as cited by J. Martin *et al* wrote and emphasized, ''the significance of *ukuvala umkhokha* (stopping the track of misfortune), a belief in the Nguni cultures. The belief in future misfortune is characterized by the certainty that when a member of the family or community dies in accidental circumstances, such as a motor vehicle accident, or other accidental deaths are likely to befall the family or community unless bereavement rituals are conducted and the spirit is heralded through to the ancestral plane,'' (2013: 51).

4.18 The Graves

Before the advent of Christianity and the so-called, western civilization, the Xhosa people did not have cemeteries run in the western style. They buried their dead in different places according to their statuses in the society. The majority of the common people were buried inside the home gardens or very near places of the residence or in clusters of graves, which hardly qualified as cemeteries. However, heads of the family who subsequently became the ancestors of their respective family units were buried on the gateposts of the kraal.

Since there were no commercial coffins used, a head of the family was wrapped in an animal skin and placed in a special chamber carved on the side of the grave. He would not necessarily lie prostrate, as is normally the case today but would be made to rest in a sitting position. Around him lay his tools such as an axe, spear, stick, hoe and other items such as containers and pots. Alongside these, would be seeds of various kinds such as mealies, pumpkins, beans, sorghum, different kinds of herbs, tobacco and matches. The idea was that when he reached the world beyond his grave, he would get up, go for his hunting spree, cook his prey and start on his agricultural activities as soon as possible without worrying those who had gone before him. All this was done to show the man the respect he deserved.

In some places, special plots were assigned for chiefs, while the paramount chiefs were buried in secluded and reserved places on the mountainsides. As times have advanced, the western style of using coffins and cemeteries was copied and as the aftermath, many areas in the Eastern Cape demarcated spots, which were regarded as graveyards.

They were not quite run like the urban cemeteries, which are generally cleaned, fenced, organized and have tombstones dominating the scenery.

When the Xhosa family was undergoing the crisis, senior members of that particular family unit paid respect on behalf of the family by visiting the grave with the aim of talking to the ancestor and appealing to him for help and guidance, as the belief is that those who are dead are still alive but in another realm.

4.19 The Xhosa Concept of Death and the Hereafter

This area of study is poorly documented. Much of what will be presented here comes from the studies of John Mbiti, which applies to Africans overall, not to a particular ethnic group. Even though the Africans believe that death came into the world at a very early date in the history of humankind, they also believe that every time a person dies this death is caused. Traditional religious forms are similar among all major ethnic groups. Its pattern is closely analogous to the social order, and its values clearly support kinship bonds and marriage ties. According to the Department of Foreign Affairs and Information, ''A man's salvation may, in fact, be closely related to his ability to marry successively and increase his number of children. By this means, he ensures the continuation of his own lineage as well as its systematic enlargement. After death, all those lineally related to him look up to him as a venerated ancestor. For these he is a link with the unseen world, to intervene on their behalf in times of need, in that life after death, the same considerations of kinship and seniority apply. The same social principles determine the relative status of ancestral spirits and define their jurisdiction.

In matters affecting only the local, extended household (consisting of a man, his wives, children, and junior dependents such as unmarried younger brothers) his deceased father or even grandfather, if well remembered, would be the spiritual force to which the head of the household would turn in times of adversity. In a larger region such as a neighborhood the senior man would appeal to the ancestral spirits designated by the kinship system as those to whom their descendants should dedicate ritual and sacrifice,'' (1984:94-95).

To many African people the dead people are not dead at all. Death is only a transitional state to a spiritual life free from material hindrances.

The deceased are at once dead and alive and because of their paradoxical nature, they are known as living-dead. Mbiti states that the living dead is a person who is physically dead but alive in the memory of those who knew him in life, as well as being alive in the world of the spirits. The living dead are still part of the extended family and as such, have a close relationship with the living.

Bae has this view, ''living dead then refers to persons who continue to live on in the spiritual realm (i.e. minus physical bodies). He continues to say that his idea of the immortality of the soul is one that occurs often in the Western and Eastern thinking, and is partly compatible with the Christian view of life after death. It is believed in the East Asia that the life after death parallels the life of the earth and the spirits still live in the same way we do and have the same needs,'' (2007: 27). Mbiti further states, ''as long as they are still remembered, these living-dead are still people and have not become things…,'' (1965: 25). During the prayers, the living pray by reciting the names of the ancestors.

Mbiti observes the living dead, in a sense, ''near to God that are ordinary people, since they can assemble before God or be sent by God, which is something that people do not experience, (1971: 137). The list reaches as far back as the names can be remembered, since there are no written documents. Therefore, through the chain of ancestors, their prayer reaches God.

4.20 The Ancestors

Traditionally Xhosa speaking people believed in the existence of ancestors.

Bae cites a recent definition of ancestors, as used by Bloch (1996:43) by stating, ''the term ancestor is used in anthropology to designate those forebears who are remembered, "(2007:25). These were the spirits of the dead members of the dead members of the lineage who were the focus of the religious activity in their daily lives. According to Hodgson, "The ancestors were thought to be present in and around the homestead, but were also believed to be living in a spirit world, either below the ground or water," (1982:26). Mbiti also observed, ''for some societies the departed remain in the neighbourhood, they are still part of the family,'' (1991:123). It is for that reason that the African label the deceased as the living dead and make sure that they bury them appropriately.

Ancestors are considered to be good models for human behavior. According to Beyers & Mphahlele, "Their acts of virtue are seen as good examples of proper life. By their way of living, they educate social behavior, "(HTS Vol. 65 No.1).

Bae further states, ''of course, ancestors need not be invoked by their names and remembered as individuals, they may be conceived of as part of a collective, but the important part is that they are remembered, ''(2007:25).

Among the Abaluyia children are often named after deceased relatives, ensuring that the relative is remembered and somehow survives through the child, (Keya 2007:54, cf. Wakala & LeMarquand 2001:355). Keya observes, ''the more important and morally upright the relatives were, the more the amount of children will be named after them. This privilege is thus not given to the outcast such as sorcerers and witches, one who dies by suicide, a murderer or a notorious thief, ''(2007:54).

Gehman talks about this group, saying, ''women, children, unimportant men, unmarried men, those who died without children, as well as young adults less than eighteen years of age, are not likely to become ancestors, ''(1999:12-13). On the other hand, Beyers & Mphahlele mention two conditions as identified by Sarpong (1996),''

- One must pass though all stages of life to attain adulthood, which is only considered to arrive once you have children and so has transmitted life,
- One must die a natural death. Death by accident, suicide, unclean disease or in childbirth is not considered a good death, ((HTS Vol. 65 No.1)).
- Added to this are the people who were not born properly: Dead or stillborn children, miscarriages and abortions are generally conceptually distinguished from ancestors,'' (Bae, 2007:26). Bae and Gehman are giving the motive behind the

125

prohibition of the women and children during the burial of the unnatural death victims; which is the root cause of this research. They also specify who should be regarded as the ancestors and their functions.

4.21 The Functions of the Ancestors

Ancestors are those from whom the living can derive some benefit and must be people of effect, means and importance or status. Bae has this view, ''this should be linked to the function and identity of ancestors,'' (2007:26).

The role of ancestors is closely linked to that of their identity. As being a living part of the community and is often the head or elder, they play a role as the representatives of the social law and tradition, and are construed to be indispensable to uphold the harmony and order within their society. Mbiti refers to the functions of ancestors as, ''guardians of family affairs, traditions, ethics and activities,'' (1989:85).

Bae reinforces the thought that this role allows them to be benefactors of the welfare to the obedient and the harmonious societies or wrath to those who create disharmony and imbalances. As seen in their identity, being linked to the Supreme Being, ancestors also play a role as intermediaries or mediators between God and their descendants.

4.22 The Relationship between the Living and the Dead

In order to understand the ritual drama, it is important to know the relationship between the living and the ancestors.

The ancestors are the superior powers of the Xhosas in that they control their welfare, health, fertility, good relationship, and climatic conditions like rainfall, drought and other weather conditions that may result in either destruction or survival of humankind.

The ancestors are the departed old members of the community. After the death of an old member of the family a ritual is performed which returns him/her to the home as an ancestor. The returned spirit or ancestor is now accorded greater respect.

The communication between the living and the spirits is not a direct one but is affected by symbolic action. The living family members enact what they desire from the ancestors. The ancestors protect their subjects as long as they observe all that is good according to tradition. It is believed that as soon as man's weakness dictates to him the ancestors withdraw their protection and some calamity befalls the community, whether it is disease, drought or some other disaster. As soon as there is a kind of social disequilibrium, a ritual is performed in order to normalize everything. The ritual is performed either to counteract a calamity that has befallen a community as result of its negligence towards vital issues that sustain a harmonious relationship between the living and departed, or to avert any possibility of such a calamity.

While other African people may have commemorative rituals that are observed at a particular time of the year, the Xhosa people have no commemorative rituals. Their rituals are occasioned by the needs of the moment. They are a form of supplication to the ancestors for definite things.

For instance, outbreak of disease, drought, feminine and other general social upheavals of a disturbing kind would necessitate the performance of a ritual.

4.23 The Preliminary Conclusion

A great deal has been written about the traditional religion of the Nguni, but the general impression persists that it was a mixture of curious customs and dangerous superstitions. Yet Xhosa religion was logical enough, given the assumption that the unseen world was active in this world and was an important causative influence.

The Xhosa take great care to perform the rituals and customs associated with death, to make sure that the dead are not offended in any way. There is also the fear that if these customs are not performed, the ancestors may visit them again and another death may occur.

Traditional bereavement rituals for indigenous Africans are diverse and varied across cultural and ethnic affiliation. A common thread underlying the performance of bereavement rituals is the role they play in the process of mourning itself. It has to be noted that several developmental changes have come to being. These changes have chiefly been in the areas of education, urbanization, economic improvement and subsequent change in standard of living and Western Religious practices. These changes have had a great effect on the traditional structure of the Xhosa people especially in the practices of the funeral rites. Today, many of the Xhosa-speaking people of South Africa are Christians, because of their early contact with European missionaries, leading to the abandonment of some rituals and customs.

However, their religion has become a unique blend of Christianity and traditional African beliefs. Thus, we see in traditional Xhosa life, the departed are not readily forgotten. Through rituals, dreams, visions, possession and names they are recalled and respected.

The departed are considered to be still alive and people show by the practices that they recognize their presence. The Xhosa celebrate life; they celebrate their religion through music, dance and drama. Through these rituals and customs people not only act their religion but communicate it to the younger generation. Rituals generate a sense of certainty and familiarity.

They provide continuity and unity among those who participate and promotes experience and observance of customs. For example, the members of a clan who drink from the same calabash of sour milk the day after the funeral are bound together into a unity and each one finds his own identity within the unity of the clan.

In traditional Xhosa, society the prolonged need for mourning is lessened by the belief that there is life, active involvement with present day activities by the deceased, in spirit form after death. At the same time there is a taboo attached to prolonged mourning since it may call upon the wrath of the ancestors who may get angry and come back to take yet another member of the family.

CHAPTER 5

DATA COLLECTION AND ANALYSIS

5.1 INTRODUCTION

This section will deal with responses from interviews and towards the end of the research will reflect and analyse the data as a way of finding closure. This chapter largely hinges on presenting the pragmatic findings of the results that were drawn from the qualitative investigations of unnatural death in a Xhosa traditional family. A qualitative analysis was undertaken using an in-depth interview in order to solicit the interviewee's attitudes, beliefs and expectations about the phenomenon under study. People to be interviewed are family members who have lost members through unnatural death, the congregations, communities and clergy who have dealt with such scenarios; see the appendix A, B and C for the questions to be asked. The objective of this chapter is to reveal and analyse the data that has been collected from different categories of individuals who have been directly and indirectly affected by unnatural death. Merriam says, ''the most common form of interview is the person-to-person encounter; where one person elicits or obtains information from another. In every form of qualitative research, some data, and occasionally all of the data are collected through interviews,'' (1998:69). Matthew and Ross further advise us saying, ''The researcher should use his/her interview guide to ensure that all the research questions have been covered, to remind you of prompts and probes, and as a reminder when the researcher's mind goes blank,'' (2010:231).

The researcher chose the qualitative approach for this research project because the information is written in the hearts of those who have experienced the unnatural death and their rituals.

It is only through these questions that the researcher will be able the information needed. The researcher will also bring into the study the responses of the participants who were interviewed. Out of their experiences, some interesting facts were observed. The total number of respondents is 18 individuals. However, their names remain anonymous due to the sensitive nature of the study. Each category has its set of questions, which were designed specifically for the category.

These will be specifically those who have fallen victims of this trauma through traditional burial rites of unnatural death. These interviews will assist the author and the reader to bring forward the extent of this injury or trauma in each individual, the immediate family, the community, and the church. The interviews will also help those concerned to open up with their long-kept frustrations, anxieties and grief caused by unnatural death. Hopefully, this will also be of great assistance to those who are grieving through unnatural death, to drift towards acceptance, finality and closure. To lock one's stress and frustrations in the closet may aggravate the effects of trauma in them. Whereas, talking with them and expressing one's feelings, may be therapeutic. Wimberly states, ''putting into words our shame prevents us from having to hold on to these feelings. It is only when feelings are not expressed that we swallow shame. Swallowing shame is what creates the internal problems in the first place,'' (1999: 56).

The researcher fully supports this notion that opening up to others about your inner troubles usually brings with it good results. It helps bring out one's feelings that

131

have been locked inside oneself. The longer one holds on his/her shame and do not divulge it, the deeper the stress/trauma entrenches into one's journey of morning.

5.2 Biographical information of the participants

Profiles of the participants (Clergy, congregants, parents, siblings, community leaders and elders) were summarized according to participants' pseudonyms, age, gender, educational level and category.

5.2.1 Demographic information of the interviewees

Number & Name	Age	Gender	Educational Level	Category
1. Nokuzola	56	Female	PhD.	Community
2. Mlawu	73	Male	Diploma	Community
3. Mbonza	66	Male	STD 5	Community
4. Gotyani	71	Male	STD 6	Elder
5. Khehle	72	Male	Diploma	Elder
6. Mxolisi	74	Male	Degree	Elder
7. Nomaphelo	59	Female	Honours	Clergy
8. Maswazi	68	Male	Masters	Clergy
9. Msingathi	67	Male	Degree	Clergy
10. Madoda	58	Male	Degree	Congregant
11. Skeyi	62	Male	Diploma	Congregant
12. Welile	57	Female	Honours	Congregant

13. Nobonga	38	Female	Matric	Sibling
14. Phumla	66	Female	Masters	Sibling
15. Nontle	49	Female	Diploma	Sibling
16. Mjoli	59	Male	Diploma	Parent
17. Nobusuku	57	Female	Honours	Parent
18. MaNtlotshana	56	Female	Masters	Parent

5.3 The Scope of the Study

The researcher's schedule was thwarted by the outbreak of the pandemic, COVID19, which even infected the researcher's supervisor. Some of the intended interviewees were scared of face-to-face interviews during the pick of the pandemic. The researcher had to be patient and wait for the decline of the spread, in order to proceed with the interviews. In order to achieve good and fruitful results within the period of work of the study, an empirical field research had to be done. According to Johan Mouton, ''Field research is that part of the research process that involves going into the field,'' (2001:98). He further explains, "The term 'fieldwork' as sometimes referring to the 'doing' stages of research, presumably to signify that you have left your study or the library and entered into the field, whether it is a laboratory, natural setting, archives or whatever is dictated by the research design,'' (2001:98).

The researcher concurs with the foresaid scholar when he states that the fieldwork needs one to go the field and that is what the researcher will do in order to investigate the pain that is caused by unnatural death to the women and children.

The researcher also tried to define the term 'African funeral rite' in the South African context, notable the Xhosa culture; bearing in mind the fact that the country is exposed to a radical period of cultural, economic and political change.

The researcher went to both rural and urban areas to discover the extent in which African culture influences families in the preparation and conducting of funerals for the unnatural death cause.

5.4 The Communication

The researcher telephoned all those to be interviewed in order to make appointments. The researcher explained over the telephone when making appointments, the purpose of the interview and each respondent was assured of confidentiality. After each conversation, a questionnaire and a letter of consent were sent to each and every respondent who was to be interviewed virtually or via emails or WhatsApp.

The researcher is able to speak IsiXhosa, which is a first dominant language in the area, and English as well, as the additional language. That made it possible for him to conduct the interviews in the language each interviewee preferred and felt comfortable to express himself or herself. It was so much interesting that the majority of the interviews were conducted in Xhosa Language.

One of the respondents pretended to be illiterate and complained about inability to read and understand the documents that were sent to him but what astonished the researcher is that he is the one-used strong and most difficult English words as the interview process progressed. Two community leaders, two congregants and two priests were interviewed telephonically because of different tangible reasons varying from proximity, COVID-19 fear and their tight schedules. The researcher emailed them the questionnaire and the consent letters to all of the interviewees and requested that at their most convenient periods for the interviews.

It was not the researcher's original plan to do telephone interviews but the forenamed reasons and the respondents' fluency toward the Xhosa traditions forced the researcher to opt for the route in gathering the data through the questionnaires. That followed a number of fruitless different attempts to meet them physically; especially the traditional leaders and elders.

5.5 The Data Collection Procedure

In each interview, the researcher started by explaining again the purpose of the interview and assured anonymity in the recording of their responses. The researcher felt that it was important to read the consent letter in order to comply with the research ethical requirements. The researcher did not take notes during the interview to let the conversation flow. Instead, the researcher recorded the conversations and then followed with notes writing immediately after each interview.

The researcher used his cellular phone to make the voice recording with the permission of the respondent, in order to catch-up the missed information afterwards. Mouton agrees, ''this discipline will help the researcher to keep track of his or her fieldwork as a form of quality control,'' (2001:197).

5.6 The Research Questions

When the proposal was submitted to the committee the research questions were written in the English but when the researcher was setting appointments with his respondents the majority of them preferred to express themselves in their mother tongue, which is Xhosa Language. The researcher had no choice but to translate the questions into Xhosa Language. Please refer to appendix A, B and C, the Xhosa Language translation is written in italics and put into brackets.

5.7 The Responses for the First Category

Three community leaders and three community elders were interviewed using the questions as prescribed in appendix A. The respondents represented different religions and denominations. In their order, respondents 1 and 2 are from the African Traditional Religion, respondents 3 and 4 are from the Methodist Church in South Africa, respondent 5 is from the Apostolic Evangelical Church in Zion and respondent 6 is from the Twelve Apostolic Church.

Here are their responses:

5.7.1 Questions for Community Leader (Nokuzola; African Traditional Religion)

1. **What is your position at home and how big is your family/community?** I am a paternal aunt (*udadobawo*) and the big sister (*uMafungwashe*), the one in whose name my brothers swear when angry. I occupy a spiritual position where I make some sacred necklaces (*iintambo*) for all my brothers' children, both boys and girls when they undergo initiation or puberty rites.

2. **Is your family/community firm, united and holding to the Xhosa culture?**

Depends on how you define culture. I will first explain my first response by using *Nangoli's* definition of culture where he defines culture as, ''A language or languages people speak, the way they behave, live, relate to one another, dress, worship their God, care for their own, marry for reproductive purposes, name or baptize their children, treat the elderly, bury their dead and generally the way that they carry on a way that distinguishes them from other peoples of the world,'' (1986:10). From the above definition, I would say that though some are converts to Christianity, some not; yes, my family is firm in holding Xhosa culture because they perform all the required rituals cited by Nangoli. But the community at large (that is the Mndende's extended family, because some claim to be born again Christians which teaches them to despise their identity, they are not holding their Xhosa culture but are ambassadors of the Jewish culture. These do not perform any ritual the proper way, like they would present (*ukusoka*) their male initiates (*amakrwala*) with the Judeo/Christian text (the Bible) which makes them confused as they become like bats that is neither Jews not Xhosa.

3. **How do you deal with those who refuse to abide by the set standards and norms?**

Beliefs and practices can never be forced. I just explain my standpoint and leave them alone to avoid conflict of doctrines and practices. However, as a paternal aunt who has spiritual responsibilities over some of their children I refuse to be dictated and be forced to be syncretic in my job. If they want to do it the Christian way, I simply excuse myself.

4. **Why according to your culture there are different regulations in mourning natural and unnatural deaths and what are the cultural implications if that is hindered?**

Again, here it depends on how one understands mourning. Mourning involves the period of respect by the whole family, which is in many forms like, not having any other ritual until the ritual of breaking this mourning period. Some families shave their heads immediately after the funeral and there must be no noise in this homestead so as to respect the journey travelled by the deceased who passed on of natural causes, a journey to the spiritual world of the who are with the Lord. From an African perspective, death does not mean the destruction of life; it is a transition stage before an individual can enter the world of ancestors. It marks the physical separation of the individual from this physical life and the joining of his/her soul with the spiritual world. Death does not only mark the transition to the spiritual world, but it also carries with it the obligation to look after the welfare of the living. It is an opening into another life – a continuation of the present one, so

this communication continues. Hence, I say mourning is an inclusive term meaning respect to the deceased and a respect that includes several forms of behaviour.

As death is described as a transition stage en-route to the world of the ancestors, the deceased person is mostly referred to metaphorically in some specific ways like 's/he has gone (*uhambile*), has disappeared (*utshonile/utshabile*), is no longer with us (*uhambile*), is absent (*akasekho*), or is somewhere (*usishiyile*)'. The above show the respect given to those who have joined the ancestors.

Coming to death because of unnatural causes, like *ingozi* (death by accident) which includes among other things, death by being struck by lightning, by any weapon like being stabbed, gun short, car accident, burnt; that is the person did not die because of sickness or old age, this is treated differently. It is believed that the body of the unnatural death victim cannot enter the home premises to avoid more deaths because it is recurring. More over before any ritual after the funeral, a ritual of *ukulahla ingozi* (to throw away accidental death) must be performed so that members of the family must die of natural causes.

The form of *ukuzila* (mourning) which is now gender-based in the form of attire is new in the Xhosa tradition. It was introduced during the introduction of Christianity and Western culture, hence today one finds widows wearing black dresses of in many colours including German prints.

The cultural implications if traditional rituals are not performed is believed that the deceased would reveal himself in dreams and visions or some form of punishment to the one who did not perform his responsibility. Because we are in a patriarchal society, one would find many males running away from their rituals with bad habits

and not behaving like family heads but become rapists or suffering from mental misbehaviour.

5. Do you find resistance within and outside the family/community during this time? If yes, how you react to that?

Yes, resistance always comes from Christian converts who are made to believe that God is Christian and the Bible is a Word of God.

A point of departure forgetting to that is simply based on Jewish culture from the Pentateuch, through Minor Prophets and Major Prophets to the New Testaments, nothing is African. As said earlier, no one can force them as they are in diaspora.

6. Why women and children are barred from the disposal of the mortal remains?

Yes, children are barred because of their age. However, with women it depends. It is the wife *owonga umyeni wakhe* (wife nursing her husband) and not vice versa. Women are only barred when the cause of death is unnatural. Because of the natural instinct of empathy in women, which is not there with males, women cannot stand facing a charred body for instance or someone involved in an accident where it is difficult even to identify. Women are saved from that bad experience.

7. Have you ever tried to enter into the world of pain to understand the pain and trauma that they went through during this time of grief?

In fact, it is women who enter into that world of pain and trauma; hence, nursing is a special competency of women. Besides nursing, it is women who always make sure that those who have lost a member of the family are not alone, are visited to

help ease the pain, to share the pain. Visiting and mourning are not a special gift of men.

8. How do you assist them out of the predicament and help them to find closure?

Closure in African spirituality is done in many ways like *ukubeka ilitye (*to lay a stone*), ukuyalwa* (to warn) plus *Ukuhlanjwa isimnyama* (cleansing), hence the following day after the funeral there is a sheep slaughtered in a process which is called *ukusezwa/phuza amanzi* (drinking water)*.*

9. According to your opinion, are these cultural norms and regulations in such times of mourning still relevant in this generation? If no or yes what are the challenges and what can be done to solve them?

Some of them are no longer performed by *amagqobhoka* (converts), but traditionalists do like shaving their heads, with a home smeared with mud as a public announcement to show someone has left that home). No noise in the homestead, no one is allowed even to beat a dog.

Nevertheless, today funerals among *amakholwa* (believers) are no longer respected; they blow whistles, *bakhonye* (the music expression), and jive claiming to be celebrating the life of the deceased. Children are no longer mourning for their deceased relatives; they drink liquor labelling it as 'after tears'. Death is a moneymaking scheme in the form of insurance policies.

10.What advice can you give to family/community elders who find themselves in the same situation in future?

People must respect death; it must be treated with dignity and not a celebratory process. Family members must mourn and allow members of the community and relatives *babathuthuzele* (comfort them).

They should avoid the way it is done now where children speak in their parents' funerals, and women in their husband's funeral or husband in his wife's funeral. Allow people *bakuthuthuzele bakubophe amanxeba* (comfort and bandage the wounds).

5.7.2 Questions for the Community Leader: (Mr Tyatyeka; African Traditional Religion)

1. What is your position at home and how big is your family/community?

I am leading my immediate family otherwise in my attire family I have many younger brothers. As I have alluded that, I have many elder brothers that is an indication of a big family.

2. Is your family/community firm, united and holding to the Xhosa culture?
My family subscribes to different religions like Christianity and African Traditional Religion. They are firm to their religions but still keep the family values of supporting one another.

3. How do you deal with those who refuse to abide by the set standards and norms?

We respect one's faith and keep the family bonds. No one is forced to follow a certain religion. However, we support one another as a family even if our religions differ.

4. **Why according to your culture there are different regulations in mourning natural and unnatural deaths and what cultural implications are there if they are hindered?**

Natural death and unnatural death in the Xhosa Culture are treated differently. There is an inherited belief that unnatural death is a result of the curse in the family and can be avoided. There are rituals that need to be performed in order to appeal to the ancestors and to protect the family from further unnatural deaths.

5. **Do you find resistance within and outside the family/community during this time? If yes, how you react to that?**

As I have mentioned above, in my family we respect one's beliefs. No one is deprived from what she/he believes to be a good practice. We don't hesitate to pour our opinions if we anticipate a danger in a particular situation.

6. **Why women and children are barred from the disposal of the mortal remains?**

Women and children are not allowed to attend the burial of the family member died through unnatural death due to many reasons. There is a belief that women and children are weak and vulnerable, so they have to be protected from any heart breaking and dangerous situations. It happens that at times the deceased sustained terrible wounds, scars, bruises and fractures may be the body is damaged beyond recognition. That last impression lasts, women and children are prohibited from viewing such bodies so that they keep the picture in mind of the unhurt physical

structure of their loved one. For example, my daughter who is a member of these so-called, born-again churches; the Apostolic Faith Mission, lost her son in a terrible accident.

His body was damaged from head to the toes, beyond recognition. My daughter and her husband coerced to see their child.

They were taken to the funeral parlour a day before the funeral on their demand. We tried to convince her not to go there because of the condition of their child's body, but in vain. I knew that what she would view would tear her heart into pieces as it completely differed from what she knew and expected. She couldn't endure what she saw, as a result, she ran away crying and the husband followed suit. She regretted the visit that resulted to her having a number of sessions with the psychologists and pastoral care-givers in order to deconstruct the pain of his death.

7. **Have you ever tried to enter into their world of pain to understand the pain and trauma that they went through during this time of grief?**

It is my belief that women in nature are not as strong as men; so are the children. There are scenes where women cannot survive psychologically and emotionally. For example, when I showed reluctance towards my daughter's interest to view her child's remains in order to find closure; taking from my reaction, I knew that the condition of her child's body was going to move her from bad to worse. In some cases, women and children are barred in order to protect their feelings. It would rather be good for them to keep the visual memories of their loved one before the accident.

8. **How do you assist them out of the predicament and help them to find closure?**

According to our culture, there are rituals that are followed for the burial of the unnatural death victim, like laying of stones. As women and children were prohibited from going to the graveyard during the burial time.

However, at an appropriate time, they will be taken to the grave; comforting words will be said and an animal will be slaughtered for cleansing. These rituals are an instrument for one to find closure and move on with life.

9. **According to your opinion, are these cultural norms and regulations in such times of mourning still relevant in this generation? If no or yes what are the challenges and what can be done to solve them?**

That I still hold on Xhosa traditions, they are still relevant to me and they will be forever and ever. I only blame the foreign religions that don't focus on promoting their religion but interfere with other religions.

10. **What advice can you give to family/community elders who find themselves in the same situation in future?**

The religion is there to unite people not to divide them; therefore, it is good to respect one's religion. In my family, we encourage the respect and tolerance towards one another's religion. Even when preparing for any family activity we encourage the family unity; we all contribute towards the preparations and emphasize the ministry of presence if time warrants.

5.7.3 Questions for the Community Leader

(Mr Nonjabe Mbonza; African Traditional Religion)

1. **What is your position at home and how big is your family/community?** I am the head of the family. It is not a big family in terms of numbers but big in terms of religious diversity.

2. **Is your family/community firm, united and holding to the Xhosa culture?** Christian religion has divided the family, as the family members affiliate into different denominations.

3. **How do you deal with those who refuse to abide by the set standards and norms?**

As families, we inherited tolerance from our predecessors. However, we give advices and education about the motive behind these rituals and the consequences of failing to perform them.

4. **Why according to your culture there are different regulations in mourning natural and unnatural deaths and what cultural implications if that is hindered?**

There is a belief that unnatural death is the death that can be avoided as it comes as a punishment for failing to do something right to the ancestors. The witches and wizards can also cause it. Certain cleansing and appealing rituals have to be performed.

5. **Do you find resistance within and outside the family/community during this time? If yes, how you react to that?**

As I mentioned before that there is diversity in my family. Some follow these cultural principles but some do not. There is nothing else we can do accept to support one in his/her belief, even if one decides after some time ready to perform what she/he didn't believe to be working.

6. **Why women and children are barred from the disposal of the mortal remains?**

That women, children and young men are believed to vulnerably, thus they are not allowed to participate in the burial of the unnatural death victim.

7. **Have you ever tried to enter into their world of pain to understand the pain and trauma that they went through during this time of grief?**

Yes, but that these rituals are performed to protect them; we find solace to the fact that this deprivation is not more than death. If then we nurse causing more trauma by diverting what is supposed to be done and do something else that is tantamount to doing nothing. When we perform these rituals, we explain each detail and step.

8. **How do you assist them out of the predicament and help them to find closure?**

We make it a point that we perfect our act because if these rituals are not performed accordingly ancestors haunt the family in the end. For example, my father died long time ago. He was stubbed to death in a men's social gathering at Gwedane Location (A nearby village). According to the ancient traditions and customs he was buried where he fell. After 50 years, he appeared twice to me

demanding that he wants to be taken home. As a result, I am in the process of exhuming his remains and rebury him.

9. **According to your opinion, are these cultural norms and regulations in such times of mourning still relevant in this generation? If no or yes what are the challenges and what can be done to solve them?**

Yes, they are because the living dead are still visiting us, demanding what they want.

10. **What advice can you give to family/community elders who find themselves in the same situation in future?**

What l am going to say is what we are advising the family members who are against these Xhosa rituals. We need to learn to tolerate one another. The Christian religion as it is the only one in my family and my community but with different denominations and different practices; its spread and influence is dwarfing the African religion. However, when tragedies attack the family and ancestors appear to them (those who are against) non-stop, they end up doing these rituals, secretly. My advice then is not to force anyone but to wait; because the ancestors have their own way of dictating terms if they need something or someone.

Let us now move to the interviews of the elders from different denominations.

5.7.4 Questions for Elder (Khehle; Methodist Church)

1. **What is your position at home and how big is your family/community?** I am only leading my immediate family. I am proud to say I am among the elders in the community and a member of the royal family.

2. **Is your family/community firm, united and holding to the Xhosa culture?** Just like other families and communities the Xhosa culture when it comes to unnatural death and its customs, is gradually losing grounds day by day.

People are diverting from the Xhosa burial traditions especially, participation of women and children, viewing and burial sites.

3. **How do you deal with those who refuse to abide by the set standards and norms?**

Families and communities still have those who were taught and those who observed from their fathers and grandfathers how those who succumbed to unnatural death are buried in the Xhosa culture but these principles are not enforced. No one is charged or excommunicated for not following them. For example, I lost four of my family members through unnatural death; my wife was stricken by the lightening, my brother, my son and my grandson were stubbed to death, in different years and scenes. That I believed it to be the curse and I followed all the family and community practices but with the last one, my grandson, I decided to bury him here at home. That he died during the time of COVID-19 I just followed the protocols as designed by the South African Government. Now I even have a feeling that I have abandoned my other loved ones; very soon, I think I will

rebury them here at home. These are some of the problems faced by some who do not perform Xhosa rituals.

4. **Why according to your culture there are different regulations in mourning natural and unnatural deaths and what cultural implications if that is hindered?**

It is said, these regulations are there to avoid further unnatural death incidents and to protect those are living. Judging from the incidents, I have mentioned above, that have not worked here at home. Because out six immediate family members I have buried, four of them died through unnatural cause.

5. **Do you find resistance within and outside the family/community during this time? If yes, how do you react to that?**

As I have mentioned before, people are dragged into the Xhosa culture. One's belief is the respected. Even if the family or the community had such expectation but they will bow to what the immediate family decides.

6. **Why women and children are barred from the disposal of the mortal remains?**

There was a belief that the evil spirit easily attacks women and children. That unnatural death is associated with curse and evil spirit, so women and children were protected to avoid further unexpected death.

7. **Have you ever tried to enter into their world of pain to understand the pain and trauma that they went through during this time of grief?**

Yes, that I am the preacher in the Methodist Church and my church has trained me to minister to the bereaved before death, during death and after death. I practise that even to my immediate family members. To me death is death whether you view or not. You only get comfort through your belief. To me life after death is the only reason, I feel strong after such great losses.

8. **How do you assist them out of the predicament and help them to find closure?**

I educate them about culture, death and life after death. They have to understand why something is done in this way, what is the motive behind and how then should they move on despite the feeling of deprivation.

9. **According to your opinion, are these cultural norms and regulations in such times of mourning still relevant in this generation? If no what are the challenges and what can be done to solve them?**

The level of my Christian faith has resulted in me viewing things differently hence I decided otherwise about my grandson; burying him at home like those who died naturally. The spread of other religions is detrimental to the African culture and unnatural death. The other cultures have one blanket for death.

10. **What advice can you give to family/community elders who find themselves in the same situation in future?**

I have grown up to believe that people must all be given dignified send offs whether they died naturally or unnaturally because death is death and no one should be prohibited not unless he/she is punished for what he/she has done or is saved from something else.

5.7.5 Questions for the Elders (Mr Majeke Mxolisi; Apostolic Evangelical Church in Zion)

1. **What is your position at home and how big is your family/community?**

Following the death of my elder brother in 2020 who succumbed to the COVID-19, I unexpectedly became the head of the family. My family is too big and scattered around Zimbane Administrative Area and in some villages in the neighbouring administrative areas.

2. **Is your family/community firm, united and holding to the Xhosa culture?**

Yes, even though some have other beliefs, which the family respect.

3. **How do you deal with those who refuse to abide by the set standards and norms?**

No one is forced to follow these principles but the deceased claim them. Just a resent scenario, a young man of 32 years was stubbed to death. The body was delivered from the funeral parlour to his home via the place when he was murdered. A mistake happened where my elder brother only talked to the body of the deceased without caring *umphafa* (buffalo thorn). As a result, the deceased appeared to some family members complaining that his soul is still there where he was stubbed and wants to be taken home. The family had to perform that ritual last year.

4. **Why according to your culture there are different regulations in mourning natural and unnatural deaths and what cultural implications if that is hindered?**

The reality is that we inherited these beliefs from our fathers and there are no written documents about these rituals. We only know that the unnatural death is treated separately from the natural death. The former has number of rituals to be followed. According to my experience, there are a number of complaints from the dead to the living because of unnatural death. Those who didn't view the body take time to heal from the pains of losing the loved ones. The complaints of neglect, abandonment and not properly buried, come from the spirits of those who died through unnatural death.

5. **Do you find resistance within and outside the family/community during this time? If yes, how you react to that?**

As I have mentioned above, we respect one's religion and culture. We don't enforce the Xhosa traditions but do advise how things are supposed to be done according to the Xhosa culture. If the family decides against the Xhosa culture, we follow the one thinks is the best for him/her.

6. **Why women and children are barred from the disposal of the mortal remains?**

That unnatural death is believed to be resulting from curse and punishment. Women, children and young men are barred in order to protect them from further unnatural death. Even the men who participate are strengthened through the use of traditional medicine.

7. **Have you ever tried to enter into their world of pain to understand the pain and trauma that they went through during this time of grief?**

Yes, it is also my belief that viewing the body heals those who are grieving. As a head of the family and as well a pastoral caregiver, I give myself enough time to get

into the space of those who are grieving the unnatural death. One might think that many who participate in the burial find closure through viewing; that is not the case. In the funeral above only two family men were allowed to view the body before the body left the parlour because of the condition of the body. They only viewed for the identification of the body, to make sure that it belongs to the family. They were also traumatised and needed counselling like those who thought viewing would have brought therapy.

Not seeing the coffin and the grave swallowing it, delays registering the reality because in one's mind there are only mental images of the deceased, living.

8. **How do you assist them out of the predicament and help them to find closure?**

Talking to them before and after the funeral, individually and as a group, giving all details about death and proceedings may bring comfort to them.

9. **According to your opinion, are these cultural norms and regulations in such times of mourning still relevant in this generation? If no what are the challenges and what can be done to solve them?**

I have not believed to the Xhosa rituals but things that have occurred in my paternal and maternal families made to think otherwise. The spread of other religions has shadowed the Xhosa religion but the living dead fight for their rights and torment those are living through dreams.

10. **What advice can you give to family/community elders who find themselves in the same situation in future?**

I would advise that the families must not be forced to adhere to Xhosa traditions if they are against their beliefs, rather educate them about the consequences and cite the things that have happened in the past as to open their minds about what to expect in future.

5.7.6 Questions for the Elders (Mr Nyathela Gotyani; Twelve Apostolic Church)

1. **What is your position at home and how big is your family/community?** By birth, I was in the middle but that now I am the eldest among surviving in my generation. Due to that reason, I am leading the family. It is not a big family.

2. **Is your family/community firm, united and holding to the Xhosa culture?** My family as well as my community is gradually losing the grip on these Xhosa traditions, may be because of the death of those who had firm belief to them. Another fact can be the spread of other religions within the community. We do have some who still practise these Xhosa traditions, even though in the decrease or decline. Some affiliate to both religions.

3. **How do you deal with those who refuse to abide by the set standards and norms?**

No one is forced to do what the Xhosa culture prescribes if he/she does not subscribe to that. For example, if the parents or nevertheless even if the elders have another interest, they will succumb to the wish of the closer member to the deceased. The children want to bury theirs who died unnaturally where those who died naturally are buried; that has to be granted.

4. **Why according to your culture there are different regulations in mourning natural and unnatural deaths and what cultural implications if that is hindered?**

There is a belief that unnatural death hits the family because of the anger of the ancestors or the practise sorcery. If not handled with care and not chased away, this curse can take more members of the family. So, family should hasten to bury the deceased. Women and children should not view the body of the deceased, for many reasons.

The body of the deceased is still dangerous to the women and children who are believed to be weak and vulnerable. If sorcery might be the reason, still that body can infect more, causing further unnatural death and curse in the family.

5. **Do you find resistance within and outside the family/community during this time? If yes, how you react to that?**

People in our days are treating unnatural death differently as compared to the traditional people. For example, the majority of the families have ceased burying their family members in the designated area for the unnatural victims. In the past, they would be taken from the parlour straight to the graveyard but now like those of natural death, they enter their homes and are viewed by all those who are interested.

6. **Why women and children are barred from the disposal of the mortal remains?**

Women and children are believed to be weak from sorcery. So, they can easily be affected by the death. The family wants to avoid that through these rituals. In

addition, women are believed to be good in practising witchcraft; therefore, they can cause unnatural death. May be a traditional doctor has been approached to work the body of the deceased for various reasons; to return the curse or to resuscitate the deceased. It was due to those reasons that they are barred from viewing the body.

7. **Have you ever tried to enter into their world of pain to understand the pain and trauma that they went through during this time of grief?**

Oh yes, it is painful for those who do not witness their loved ones' bodies being buried in their graves. I assume it takes time for them to find closer.

8. **How do you assist them out of the predicament and help them to find closure?**

As an elder and an apostle, I make sure that I do the after care; defining death and the afterlife.

9. **According to your opinion, are these cultural norms and regulations in such times of mourning still relevant in this generation? If no what are the challenges and what can be done to solve them?**

As I have mentioned above that these Xhosa, traditions are gradually phasing out because those who held firm to those customs are gone and their remnants are shadowed or absorbed by the Christian religion and culture. Another worse situation is that the Xhosa culture is an orally spread and extended culture, there are no written documents, if I am wrong, they are scarce. Hence, customs and rituals are fading away; the new generation is being absorbed within the Western culture.

10. What advice can you give to family/community elders who find themselves in the same situation in future?

Just in my case, I am leading the family and the church, as I am the member of the Twelve Apostolic Church. I think as leaders, in the event of the unnatural death, it is good to follow one's interest. I might be a family leader but there are those who are much closer to the deceased, their wish should be a command. Yes, I can explain the family principles and practices concerning unnatural death but let them decide the order of services.

Mr Nyathela was the last respondent. In this category, the researcher interviewed 6 respondents, three family and three community elders, respectively. Their inputs were analysed by the researcher as follows:

5.8 Analysis for the first category

The researcher analysed the responses of the leaders and elders, and the following topics emerged the dogmatism and the African Traditional Religion versus the Christian Religion.

5.8.1 The Dogmatism

In this category, the researcher interviewed the elders and the community leaders. They also portrayed the sense of dogmatism. Interviewees were struggling with the issue of being Xhosas and Christians at the same time. However, those who belong to the African traditional religion proved to be firm in their religion and their

practices. They indirectly put blame on the Christian religion for infiltrating and polluting their religion. A question was posed to the respondents in the first category:

Do you find resistance within and outside the family/community during this time? If yes, how you react to that?

Respondent 1 answered, *"Yes, resistance always comes from Christian converts who are made to believe that God is Christian and the Bible is a* Word *of God and a* point *of departure forgetting that is simply based on Jewish culture from the Pentateuch, through Minor Prophets and Major Prophets to the New Testaments, nothing is African. As said earlier, no one can force them as they are in diaspora"* (5.7.1)*.* The conflict between Xhosa rituals and Christian religion became an obstacle that affected their grief.

5.8.2 The African Traditional Religion versus the Christian Religion

Mbiti articulates, ''African Religion is very pragmatic and realistic. It is applied to a situation as the need arises,'' (1975:14). Before the advent of any Religion, African Traditional Religion has been on ground and is as old as the continent of Africa. It grows with the continent and the soil of the continent. It is not an imported religion; it has been and will probably ever be with Africans. Olson says, ''Ancestor reverence is directly rooted in the social structure of a society and embedded into the kinship, domestic and descent relations and institutions,'' (2011:24). The process of interviews proves that this religion is practiced in all parts of Africa irrespective of the dominant foreign influences found in northern and southern parts of Africa.

Therefore, in spite of other religions such as Islam and Christianity, Xhosa communities have those families who still hold firm to the high cultural and moral standards of African Religion when dealing with unnatural death.

Mbiti states, ''Religions in African societies is written not on paper but in people's hearts, minds, oral history, rituals and religious personages like priests, rainmakers, officiating elders and even kings. Everybody is a religious carrier. Therefore, we have to study not only the beliefs concerning God and the spirits, but also the religious journey of the individual from birth to after physical death; and to study also the persons responsible for formal rituals and ceremonies. What people do is motivated by what they believe, and what they believe springs from what they do and experience. So then, the belief and action in African traditional society cannot be separated: they belong to a single whole,'' (1990:3).

Bishop Dwane in his dialogue between Christianity and African religious tradition concludes in this way, "Traditional religion is found to be a matter of relationship between persons, communities, the living and the departed, and in the final analysis, between the human community and *Dalibom*- the giver and sustainer of life,'' (2017:106-107).

The researcher then moved to the second category of the clergy and lay persons.

5.9 Responses for the Second Category

Three clergy and three congregation members were interviewed using the questions as prescribed in Appendix B. The respondents represented different Christian denominations. In their order, respondent 7 represents Apostolic Faith

Mission, respondent 8 represents American Methodist Episcopal Church in South Africa, respondent 9 represents St John's Apostolic Faith Mission, respondent 10 represents Jehovah's Witnesses, respondent 11 represents Anglican Church in Southern Africa and respondent 12 represents Zionist Christian Church. Here are the responses of the clergy members:

5.9.1 Questions for Clergy (Bishop Mgoduka; Faith Mission)

1. **For how long have you been in this ministry?**

This is my 17th year of unbroken service.

2. **What is your vital role during the time of bereavement?**

Visiting the bereaved family, supporting them according to their needs where I can, giving them burial and after care services.

3. **How do you deal with the issue of congregants succumbing to African Religion and culture yet being Christians?**

I render teachings illustrating the consequences of serving two masters, where I allow congregants to ask questions thereafter. Then I clarify my stance in as far as when do I not partake. Then I let the family to decide what to do when they are faced with making the choice concerning the case in question.

4. **Have you ever dealt with the family grieving through abnormal or unnatural death? Can you narrate the major challenges from getting into their world of pain?**

Yes. The major challenge was to report the incident after I had been told. The young man was a breadwinner and was stubbed to death in the town where he was working away from his hometown. The news weakened me severely and I

succumbed to the challenge of disbelief. Another challenge I knew that I was going to face was uniting the family. I knew the family had different religious affiliations. The deceased young man and his mother were the only family members worshiping with us. The father was staunch member of Xhosa traditional religion. I just anticipated a tug of war between the parents. I had to guide them towards reaching consensus in that they should avoid fighting that would elongate and aggravate grief and moreover to respect their son's soul and beliefs. Amicably so, they allowed us, the church to bury him according to our regulations.

5. Did you manage to soothe all of them on not? If not, why?

Not all of them were satisfied but some did just a compromise. The reason was clear that some members of the family believed in the superstitious result of breaking their traditional beliefs.

6. Are your church services structuring the same for both the natural and unnatural deaths? If no, why?

Yes, because I explain my stance to every member of the congregation. Therefore, when death occurs everyone knows what to do and what to say.

7. Is your church support system strong enough to help the pastoral caregivers deal effectively with the unnatural death survivors?

Not really but it is above 50% if I were to calculate it in percentage.

8. Are there any amendments you think can be done to the current liturgy of your church regarding the unnatural death?

Yes. In that, every member should be dealt with and drilled in terms of accepting the outcomes of the families when dealing with the issues of unnatural death.

Besides, the members should explain their stance before any kind of death occurrence.

9. **Considering the cultural and religious clashes that prevail during the time of grief, when do you think, the pastoral caregivers should begin to give therapy to the survivors? Should it be before or after the funeral?**

It should be both before and after the funeral.

10. **What advice can you give to pastoral caregivers who find themselves in the same predicament in future?**

Teaching should be rendered far before death happens in preparation of the congregations so that during the occurrence there is a less burden than it would be if it were not prevented.

5.9.2 Questions for Clergy (Bishop Myathaza; AME)

1. **For how long have you been in this ministry?**

I have been in this ministry for 25 years now.

2. **What is your vital role during the time of bereavement?**

During the time of bereavement, I am committed in counselling the bereaved, conducting funeral service.

3. **How do you deal with the issue of congregants succumbing to African Religion and culture yet being Christians?**

I give them their own time to do family (African traditional rituals) rituals separately from church (Christian rituals) rituals. For example, if they want to bury the dead

163

with a blanket I let them do that. My church does not prohibit families to do their rituals. Even though we are Christians, we don't cease to be Africans.

4. Have you ever dealt with the family grieving through abnormal or unnatural death? Can you narrate the major challenges from getting into their world of pain?

Yes. It was a suicide case and the bereaved could not understand why women, including his wife were excluded. The family was divided and it was very difficult for me to bring pastoral care. This division was the major challenge and was caused by:

● Two clashing religions in the same family, African Traditional Religion and Christianity. In Christianity, burial rituals are the same whether you die naturally or accidentally.

● The generation gap: Most of the traditions and beliefs have been established and adhered to long ago. As time goes on their original meaning has been "diluted" or even changed. For example, the original significance of not bringing a sudden death corpse home was that since this death occurred during the time of war it was believed that if the corpse is brought home and seen by women the warriors would be weak in the battle. The second reason was that since the man died of *umkhonto* (spear) which together with the warriors was strengthened by traditional medicine, the medicine would not work. There is a logic explanation behind this belief- there was no time to bury the dead during war. Men quickly buried the dead man where he has fallen. This belief was later extended to all the people who died with accident including those who died underground in gold mines, car accident,

gunshot etc. and with the availability of mortuaries and time to bury the original meaning and logic is lost. How can one be denied of the funeral of ones loved one?

● The impact to the bereaved. This practice does not bring any healing to the bereaved. The bereaved, especially the widow, is not given the chance to participate in the preparations for her husband's funeral, she is not given chance to see his husband's body and the worst part is that she doesn't even know his husband's grave. This leaves her, her daughters and other close female relatives and friends in mourning for life.

This made it difficult to bring therapy because the bereaved believed that the first step to healing is to see the deceased and have closure.

5. **Did you manage to soothe all of them on not? If not, why?**

No. Some struggled with the question of the suffering of the righteous, asking if why God allows good people to lose their loved ones, unnaturally. This is the question I am unable to answer myself and I only depend on one's faith; how deep it is. In cases like those, I just allow God to comfort His people in His own time and way.

6. **Are your church services structuring the same for both the natural and unnatural deaths? If no, why?**

Yes

7. **Is your church support system strong enough to help the pastoral caregivers deal effectively with the unnatural death survivors?**

No

8. **Are there any amendments you think can be done to the current liturgy of your church regarding the unnatural death?**

Yes. There should be liturgy on how to conduct a service of the introduction of the death notice.

In our church, we call it "*Ukwamkela umphanga*" (receiving notice of bereavement). This should be a special service for sudden death cases only.

9. **Considering the cultural and religious clashes that prevail during the time of grief, when do you think, the Pastoral Caregivers should begin to give therapy to the survivors? Should it be before or after the funeral?** Therapy should begin on the time of receiving death notice, during the funeral service and at least 3 months after the funeral. Depending on the healing progress, this 3-month period may be extended if the healing is slow to some members of the family. In all, the therapy must continue until the bereaved family members can stand up on their own. This therapy may go concurrently with the cultural rituals but the pastor must stick to Christian forms of therapy. For example if according to the culture of a widow she is supposed to wear mourning clothes, usually black, for 12 months the pastor must not prohibit the widow from singing or engaging in other church activities because she is in mourning the clothes.

10. **What advice can you give to pastoral caregivers who find themselves in the same predicament in future?**

The first step is to understand the culture of the bereaved. This will assist the pastor to distinguish between Christianity and the cultural practices of the people

concerned. Sometimes, some cultural practices and African beliefs are not necessarily anti-Christ and may be let done if they assist in healing.

For example, in Mpondo culture the bereaved widow is not allowed to stand up when speaking to people, is prohibited from going out unnecessarily, is expected to be at home and make traditional baskets and mats until the mourning period, usually one year, is over. Not all these traditional beliefs clash with Christianity.

As a pastor you should allow them and you should visit the widow at home instead of forcing her to come to church.

5.9.3 Questions for a Clergy (Rev Msingathi; St Johns' Apostolic Faith Mission)

1. For how long have you been in this ministry?

I have been in this church since the age 7, *mandivele ndithi ndiqabukele kuyo* (let me just say I grew up here); now I am 61 years old.

2. What is your vital role during the time of bereavement?

I perform all the duties that are vested upon me as a priest. I visit the bereaved family to comfort them, to give guidance and counsel regarding the morning process and funeral arrangements.

3. How do you deal with the issue of congregants succumbing to African Religion and culture yet being Christians?

That is what we are as the St John's Apostolic Faith Mission. Our Christian values are mostly associated with African culture except *ubungungoma* (divine healing). We perform these death rituals for cleansing in both natural and unnatural deaths.

4. Have you ever dealt with the family grieving through abnormal or unnatural death? Can you narrate the major challenges from getting into their world of pain?

Yes, and in many occasions. Premature death is always a problem because it is always unexpected. Some people take time to accept it.

5. Did you manage to soothe all of them or not? If not, why?

This is really a process. I would say I have managed to pull some grieving family members from this pool of misery but some are still languishing deep in grief. This is a process one has to endure through a caring ministry.

6. Are your church services structuring the same for both the natural and unnatural deaths? If not, why?

To be frank, we don't have our own liturgy; we use the Methodist Book. The service for both natural and unnatural is the same.

7. Is your church support system strong enough to help the pastoral caregivers deal effectively with the unnatural death survivors?

That I have mentioned before that our Christianity is associated with African Culture. We are the Christians but we have not ceased to be Africans. Our church trains her pastoral caregivers on how to deal with unnatural death and rituals related to it, whether it is a natural death or unnatural death.

8. Are there any amendments you think can be done to the current liturgy of your church regarding the unnatural death?

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Even though it is unfair to critique what do we not design. To me I think it would be appropriate to separate these services as the African culture treats them differently so that the liturgy bridges the gaps that are there in order to comfort all the grieving family members. Even though it is not there in the Methodist Liturgy that we use, there are rituals that we conduct after the funeral service of the unnatural death in order to help the deceased to be accepted in the world of the dead. We use holy water and say some prayers for cleansing; following what the Bible says in Numbers 19 about rituals.

9. **Considering the cultural and religious clashes that prevail during the time of grief, when do you think, the Pastoral Caregivers should begin to give therapy to the survivors? Should it be before or after the funeral?**

It should be before and after the funeral. It is healing process with some stages. In my church, there are rituals that are followed after an unnatural death, to reclaim the spirit of the departed in the church and at his/her home.

10. **What advice can you give to pastoral caregivers who find themselves in the same predicament in future?**

I think it is important to follow the guidelines of one's denomination and respect the family beliefs. The funeral is a family matter hence I suggest it should be respected.

Let us now move to the responses of the lay members from different congregations. Here are their responses:

5.9.4 Questions for the Congregant (Mr Skeyi; Jehovah's Witnesses)

1. For how long have you been in this ministry?

I have been the member of this denomination for 25 years now.

2. What is your vital role during the time of bereavement?

The teaching of my denomination is to follow Jesus Christ. My main duty during bereavement is to comfort the family, the ministry Jesus performed to Lazarus's family as recorded in John 11. To prepare for the funeral, this will follow the model of the manner in which Jesus was buried.

3. How do you deal with the issue of congregants succumbing to African Religion and culture yet being Christians?

I am not going to talk about other denominations but only mine. My denomination is very strict on her members. Once one is baptized, he/she is bound to cling on the rules and regulations of the denominations that are centred in Christ. One is baptized because he/she publicly accepted the doctrine of the denomination and denounced any other doctrine. Therefore if one transgresses she/he will be excommunicated if she/he wishes to be re-instated, certain processes are followed through the church leadership.

4. Have you ever dealt with the family grieving through abnormal or unnatural death? Can you narrate the major challenges from getting into their world of pain?

In our denomination, death is death whether natural or unnatural, we bury our people just the same. Remember Jesus himself died an unnatural death and was buried following the same procedure for burying the dead. I can say people understand the principles of Jehovah's Witnesses. Even if someone in the family

170

tries to persuade us to follow his/her tradition; we don't succumb, rather we withdraw from the funeral and allow the family to officiate. We are known to be firm in our culture; I would say that this might be reason why we don't experience challenges. We conduct our services from the day we receive the news about the death until burial and after care without hassles.

5. Did you manage to soothe all of them on not? If not, why?

Yes, death is painful, even Jesus after he received the news of Lazarus's death, he grieved. Nevertheless, fortunately, our church teaches about death in the gatherings of the congregations in the Kingdom Halls. In addition, our magazines are not silent about death and the life after death. It is therefore easy to comfort people who know what death means and what follows death.

6. Are your church services structuring the same for both the natural and unnatural deaths? If no, why?

As I have indicated above, our church outline doesn't categorize but death is death, whether natural or unnatural; one funeral procedure is followed.

7. Is your church support system strong enough to help the pastoral caregivers deal effectively with the unnatural death survivors?

Oh yes, it is. Our church is good in teaching. When I joined this denomination, I could not read confidently and fluently; I could not quote bible verses relevantly according to the situation. Now I am so profound because the church leaders have nurtured me well. Our church has various departments that are there to equip the

congregants to grow spiritually as disciples and to be able to make others disciples. Through the bible, we are able to deal with any situation resulting from unnatural death because the Bible is clear about death.

8. **Are there any amendments you think can be done to the current liturgy of your church regarding the unnatural death?**

No, I don't see anything to be amended because this is what Jehovah wants us to know and do.

9. **Considering the cultural and religious clashes that prevail during the time of grief, when do you think the Pastoral Caregivers should begin to give therapy to the survivors? Should it be before or after the funeral?** Basing my view from what I have learnt from my denomination, pastoral caregivers should teach about death before death occurs. People must be oriented about death. Death is part of us. Death is not the end but the beginning of the waiting period. In the graves one waits for resurrection. This should be the norm before death, during death and after death.

10. **What advice can you give to pastoral caregivers who find themselves in the same predicament in future?**

One should stick to what the bible teaches us because it is the Word of God. Pastoral caregivers must avoid pleasing the interests of the family members and challenging the wrath of God. It is always advisable to respect one's belief. I would therefore suggest that people should be allowed to do what will comfort them. If the child is mine, I must be allowed to arrange his/her burial as I wish, not what the family or the leader of the family wishes because one will follow his/her tradition.

Members must be encouraged to make their last wishes known in writing, to avoid unfortunate situations.

5.9.5 The questions for a congregant (Mr Chola Madoda; Anglican Church)

1. For how long have you been in this ministry?

I have been serving as a Lay-mister for 10 years now.

2. What is your vital role during the time of bereavement?

My vital role is to comfort and soothe the bereaved, to give hope and to shift the bereaved from the pain of death to the promised future glory. I am also responsible for helping them face death, accept the reality, stop denial and anger. It is also my responsibility to assist them face the reality and open doors for funeral arrangements to avoid making arrangements without consulting.

3. How do you deal with the issue of congregants succumbing to African Religion and culture yet being Christians?

My view is that the Xhosa traditional customs and the traditions are not assisting, even though people follow them they continue to die. I therefore encourage the congregants to view the body of their loved one, unless the body is beyond recognition. These things have no bases even if you interrogate those who follow them you will never receive concrete reasons. I believe that the closure is on viewing.

4. Have you ever dealt with the family grieving through abnormal or unnatural death? Can you narrate the major challenges from getting into their world of pain?

Yes, you would notice the challenge of vivid signs of denial, hurt and lack of hope. Someone even asked such as whether where has been God, why did He allow this to happen. Such questions, give you the clue of what is the hurry and mind of this person.

5. Did you manage to soothe all of them or not? If not, why?

One cannot uprightly say yes or no because sometimes there is no feedback. Yes, some come to give thanks or the pastoral care giver meets them after the funeral. However, what I have learnt is to always give joy even in the mist of misery.

6. Are your church services structuring the same for both the natural and unnatural deaths? If no, why?

Yes

7. Is your church support system strong enough to help the pastoral caregivers deal effectively with the unnatural death survivors?

(The church is only dealing with death in general). Yes, the church has a strong liturgy, depending on the execution by the caregiver. The caregivers come from different backgrounds. The church has no specific and special training in dealing with grief, but only in conducting services

8. **Are there any amendments you think can be done to the current liturgy of your church regarding the unnatural death?**

No, our liturgy does not put any adjective to death, death is death. Therefore, the way the liturgy is good; only the capacitation of the caregivers is needed.

9. **Considering the cultural and religious clashes that prevail during the time of grief, when do you think, the Pastoral Caregivers should begin to give therapy to the survivors? Should it be before or after the funeral?** The answer is both. It is critical to have time with them for the first three days after the incident (death). Those days are hectic, because the grieving family members are in anger and denial. Whatever is said is received with a deaf ear. It is good to follow them even after the funeral; not to forget the children.

10. **What advice can you give to pastoral caregivers who find themselves in the same predicament in future?**

Because these things do happen, it is advisable that one educates his/her congregants about the unnatural death and the burial ways.

There is no simple way of dealing with trauma. Some cases are not the same therefore; you need to treat each case as it comes; but sticking to the church regulations.

5.9.6 Questions for a Congregant (Mr Welile; Zionist Christian Church)

1. **For how long have you been in this ministry?**

This is my 18th year.

2.   What is your vital role during the time of bereavement?

I am responsible for comforting the bereaved and conducting funeral services.

3.   How do you deal with the issue of congregants succumbing to African Religion and culture yet being Christians?

By being tolerant and let them do their African rituals but preach the Good News to them so that they may see the light. I will do that taking into consideration the fact that there may be elders who are the non-believers in the family.

4.   Have you ever dealt with the family grieving through abnormal or unnatural death? Can you narrate the major challenges from getting into their world of pain?

Yes. It was a suicide case where a 23-year-old girl poisoned herself.

The family was caught in disbelief and confused, as there was no suicide incident causing them to look. I would say that the family was grieving in an abnormal way and it was difficult to get through because:

- The mother was highly spiritual and did not show any sign of grief, which made it very difficult to get to her in terms of trying to comfort her.
- The father was always in tears and full of disbelief.
- The problem is that though the parents are both Christian they differ in levels of faith and the ways to deal with death.

5.   Did you manage to soothe all of them or not? If not, why?

Yes, though it was not an easy task. At a later stage, I could see that the father has accepted as he called for the traditional ritual called "*uchitho*

zila" (stripping off the mourning garments). He could now relay stories about his daughter but the mother did not attend because of her faith.

6. **Are your church services structuring the same for both the natural and unnatural deaths? If no, why?**

Yes

7. **Is your church support system strong enough to help the pastoral caregivers deal effectively with the unnatural death survivors?** No. My Church is in an urban area where you find that the congregants are coming from various places for work. The majority face problems when they go and bury their loved ones in their traditional home villages.

8. **Are there any amendments you think can be done to the current liturgy of your church regarding the unnatural death?**

No, because there is no special service for unnatural service, yet there is a need. I hope the liturgy that our church is busy drafting will accommodate the unnatural death.

9. **Considering the cultural and religious clashes that prevail during the time of grief, when do you think, the Pastoral Caregivers should begin to give therapy to the survivors? Should it be before or after the funeral?** Therapy should be given before and after the funeral. Cell leaders, caregivers, family members and relatives closer to that family should make sure that they visit the bereaved family. The Church should tolerate the cultural believers at this time but the teaching should be on going.

10. What advice can you give to pastoral caregivers who find themselves in the same predicament in future?

My suggestion is that we must learn that we cannot change people during the time of bereavement. At this time, one must be tolerant of each other. The teaching must be always done at Church and cell gatherings so that people may slowly understand Christianity.

Mr. Welile was the last respondent in this category. The researcher interviewed 6 respondents in this category, 2 bishops, a priest and three lay members of the church. Their inputs were analysed by the researcher.

5.10 The Analysis for the Second Category

The researcher analysed the responses of the clergy and laity, and the following topic emerged the syncretism.

5.10.1 The Syncretism

Numerous sources defining syncretism are available; here are a few of the typical definitions:

https://www.merriam-webster.com/dicitionery/syncretism: (10/09/2022)

1. The combination of different forms of belief or practice

2.   The fusion of two or more originally different inflectional forms

http://www.encyclopedia.com/philosophy-and-religion/bible/biblegeneral/syncretism/; (10/09/22)

Syncretism – the process whereby two or more independent cultural systems or elements thereof, conjoin to form a new and distinct system – is among the most important factors in the evolution of culture in general, but especially in the history of religion. Indeed, all of the so-called world religions, that is, Christianity, Judaism, Islam, Hinduism, Buddhism, and Confucianism, are to a fair extent syncretistic. However, the process occurs whenever previously independent belief systems come into sustained contact, no matter what their respective levels of sophistication may be.

Peel J. D.Y. says, "A superficial view of what happens when a large number of people forsake their former religion for a new one is that some of the old beliefs become mixed with the new,'' (2009:121).

According to Mbiti, "Another major problem facing Christianity in Africa is the large number of Church divisions, denominations, groups and sects. Many of these were imported from abroad.

Many more were started by African Christians themselves, partly because they did not wish to remain indefinitely under the domination of foreign missionaries, partly because of personal wishes for power, partly because of wanting to make Christianity reflect African culture and problems, and for various other reasons,'' (1975:75). Makhubu further states, ''Most of the African Independent Churches honour and respect ancestors. This is something that is deeply rooted in African people. There are those who mix Christian religion with ancestor worship… their

syncretic worship uses the ancestors as intermediaries to convey prayers and requests to God instead of Christ or angels,'' (1988:60). I concur with all the above interpretations about syncretism. The stories narrated in chapter one, which are the background of this research, resulted from the contamination of religions. However, these congregants joined the Christian religion and they did not relinquish the practices of the African traditional religion. In the process of mourning unnatural death, they found themselves having to honour the traditions and the customs of two different religions. The researcher's analysis of the findings proved that syncretism is mostly found in African Independent Churches (AIC), which were founded because of resentment over missionary and colonial control. These churches try to reclaim some of their traditional beliefs and practices, which had been rejected by missionaries. The following question was posed to the member of the St John's Apostolic Faith Mission (5.8.3) and AME (5.8.2); falling under the AIC: **How do you deal with the issue of congregants succumbing to African Religion and culture yet being Christians?** The response proves that these denominations are practising and encouraging syncretism. Respondent 5.8.3 answered, "*That is what we are as the St John's Apostolic Faith Mission. Our Christian values are mostly associated with African culture except ubungoma (divine healing). We perform these death rituals for cleansing in both natural and unnatural deaths*".

Respondent 5.8.2 answered, *"I give them their own time to do family (African traditional rituals) rituals separately from church (Christian rituals) rituals. For example, if they want to bury the dead with a blanket, I let them do that. My church*

180

does not prohibit families to do their rituals. Even though we are Christians we don't cease to be Africans".

This proves that there are denominations that blend the African Traditions and Christian Traditions. Peel argues, "These churches, created by, for the most part, laymen who broke away from the Anglicans, Methodists and Baptists, were stimulated by disgust at the wave of restricting paternalism which passed through the missions in the 1890's. But the real motive of the founders was the conviction that the churches were still exotic institutions, and would remain so until, led by Africans, they purged themselves of their adventitious were few; but in organization, in evangelistic and pastoral methods…they changed the aspect of Christianity considerably…" (2009:123-124). Doctrinal Diversity of denominations might be the root cause of the friction among the family members during the mourning period of unnatural death. The story narrated in chapter 1, which is the main reason behind this research; emanates from different religious and traditional ways of dealing with unnatural death.

Now let us move to the interviews of the third category.

5.11 Responses for the Third Category

Three siblings and three parents who have dealt with the pain of losing a loved one through unnatural death were interviewed using the questions as prescribed in appendix C. The respondents represented different Christian denominations.

In their order, respondent 13 is from the Methodist Church, respondent 14 is from the Apostolic Faith Mission, respondent 15 is from the Assemblies of God,

respondents 16 and 17 are from the Church of England and respondent 18 is from the Full Gospel Church of God in South Africa.

Let us start with the interviews of the siblings. Here are questions and their responses:

5.11.1 Questions for the sibling (Ms Mqunyana Nobonga; Methodist Church)

1. **When did the incident occur?**

It occurred in 2014.

2. **What was your relationship with the diseased and how did you feel when you received the news?**

He is my sibling, as I am the first-born of the 9 children of Maphiko Mqunyana, Anele (the deceased) is the 6th born.

3. **What aggravated the grief and making it very hard to accept the loss?** Yhooo (exclaiming) there is a lot. The fact is that Anele was my pillar of strength. As we are the orphans, he was the one who was so responsible and trying to make the ends meet.

He had great plans in building our home and assisting our siblings financially in their studies. The messages he sent to her fiancée before he committed suicide, are still haunting me. The hope that we had on the days that we couldn't get in touch with him, as his phone was ringing even though not answered. The worse scenario was receiving the sad news that his body was found hanging in the neighbouring home in my village, Mambalwini in the Eastern Cape whereas we knew him to be in the Gauteng Province; about 950km away.

It pained me to the core that Anele could not divulge to me what troubled him, that together with his fiancée hid to me their differences until this tragedy happened, because the latter only informed us when Anele got missing and that he was not answering her calls and text messages. This brought me back the pain of losing my parents. That my family is so traditional and there are rituals performed for unnatural death burial; because of that, I was not allowed to view his body; until now, I don't even know his grave.

4. **In your opinion what could have been done differently to ease the pain and predicament?**

I can find closure if I can know what led to him committing suicide. I think may be viewing his body could have brought therapy in my grief and closure as well. Now I don't have the image of Anele resting peacefully in his coffin, as it was the case with my parents. The worst part is that I don't even know where his grave is; at least it would be better if I were given an opportunity to go and lay the stone. This is retarding my healing process as I really struggle in finding closure. I find myself in anger and denial. (*Crying*) I think I need counselling. I don't have his image as a dead person.

5. **What role did the church and the community play, if any?**

Yes, the church and community only visited us before the funeral but after that nothing.

6. **How are you feeling now?**

I am really in pains. Many things happened after the death of my brother. His death divided us as the siblings and as the extended family because some of my siblings accused some family members of bewitching Anele. As a result, my uncle's family

didn't attend the funeral and the rituals the family performed. I feel sad that ever since he passed on, he never appeared in my dreams.

7. What can be done for you to finally have closure?

May be if I can see the grave where his remains are laid, I can be relieved. I even want to know the reason/s that led to him taking his own life. That he was so close to me and always sharing his wishes, problems and successes with me; I fail to understand why he didn't share his challenges with me as I think I could have consoled him and avoided this catastrophe.

8. What is your belief in life after death?

I do believe that there is life after death; that is what comforts me.

9. What advice can you give to those who find themselves in the same predicament in future?

I don't think I have an appropriate or proper advice as I am still battling with the loss. Many things come into my mind. For example, sometimes I find myself blaming the death of my parents thinking that things could have been done differently if they were the part of the preparations for the burial of my brother; things could have favoured us (females).

We wanted to bury our brother next to our parents but that was in vain, the pain is aggravated by the fact that we female siblings don't even know his grave; making it hard to get closure. However, I think that now I had a chance to talk with my family elders and speak out my frustration things would have never remained the same. I believe that sharing your pain is therapeutic.

I also believe that enduring the traditional beliefs that we cannot change and explain is good for one to have chance to move on after the loss through unnatural death.

10. What advice can you give to those who preside over these cultural beliefs when unnatural death hits the family?

I think the family elders must consider the fact that some homes do not have parents for example mine. Therefore is good to explain each detail of the proceedings to those who are directly affected to guard against the perception that things go this way because we have no parents. The elders should also be sympathetic and passionate to the grieving family members and have a way of comforting those who are excluded by the rituals in the process of dealing with unnatural death.

5.11.2 Questions for the sibling (Mrs. Pumla Myeko; Apostolic Faith Mission)

1. When did the incident occur?

It occurred on October 2021.

2. What was your relationship with the diseased and how did you feel when you received the news?

He was my brother. His death emotionally bruised and perturbed because we were very close.

3. What aggravated the grief and making it very hard to accept the loss?

The adherence of the hospital to COVID-19 regulations barred us from

visiting him before he was operated. We feel that he died not at peace with us; feeling that we have abandoned him.

4. **In your opinion what could have been done differently to ease the pain and predicament?**

Even though I am not the health, expect my view is that if the operation in the throats was not done, I have the feeling that he would still be alive. I think I still need counselling as I have not yet accepted the loss.

5. **What role did the church and the community play, if any?**

They visited the family repeatedly, before and after the funeral. They comforted us with words and prayers. Some even shared their experiences of unexpectedly losing loved ones in the hands of the health practitioners.

6. **How are you feeling now?**

Days are different. Oh, yes, I am feeling better now, even though sometimes I feel as if this thing has just happened now.

7. **What can be done for you to finally have closure?**

As have indicated above, I think I need counselling because the pain is still there though not as at the beginning.

8. **What is your belief on life after death?**

I believe there is life after death. Those who died in the Lord will inherit everlasting life.

9. **What advice can you give to those who find themselves in the same predicament in future?**

People should be allowed to see their loved ones during their end times so that they give up.

10. What advice can you give to those who preside over these cultural beliefs when unnatural death hits the family?

The only remedy is unity in diversity. The family should discuss the way they should accompany their loved ones and that to be in the mind of every family member before the natural or unnatural death occurrence.

5.11.3 Questions for the Sibling (Ms. Gama Nontle, Assemblies of God)

1. When did the incident occur?

It happened on December 2020.

2. What was your relationship with the diseased and how did you feel when you received the news?

My relationship with the deceased was that we were siblings (my brother).

3. What aggravated the grief and making it very hard to accept the loss? My grief was aggravated or intensified by the fact that I never expected things to happen at such a very high speed. I didn't even have an opportunity to talk to him; most of all is that he died in backsliding.

4. In your opinion what could have been done differently to ease the pain and predicament?

In my opinion if I had a chance to preach Christ to him, at least to be sure he went to heaven. Secondly, if I had known that he would quickly die so fast my heart would

be prepared better though still even that would be difficult because I was very far from home.

5. What role did the church and the community play, if any?

The church prayed and sent support messages. Some even wanted to visit my sister-in-law and children; attended the funeral as well though in few numbers, as the COVID-19 laws couldn't allow big funerals.

6. How are you feeling now?

I am feeling far better than when it actually happened.

7. What can be done for you to finally have closure?

Continuous prayer for complete healing, I suppose. Of which I must say it is gradually taking place as time goes.

8. What is your belief on life after death?

Oh yes, I believe that there is life after death. There is eternal life for those died believing in Jesus Christ and eternal fire of hell, fire of punishment for those who didn't believe in him.

9. What advice can you give to those who find themselves in the same predicament in future?

I think they should be encouraged to sessions for prayers, counselling for understanding and acceptance. Grievers should be encouraged to talk about their feelings subsequent to unnatural death grief for better healing.

10. What advice can you give to those who preside over these cultural beliefs when unnatural death hits the family?

I have no advice to them besides that they need to repent and believe the Gospel about Jesus Christ to receive eternal life and escape eternal judgement and believe the Word of God according to Eccl 9:5-9 says that those who have died have no knowledge, remembrance and no love after death.

Let us now move to the interviews of the parents who lost their children through unnatural death.

5.11.4 Questions for a parent (Mr. Nomatiti Mjoli; Church of England)

1. **When did the incident occur?**

This happened in the year 2000.

2. **What was your relationship with the deceased and how did you feel when you received the news?**

He was my son and my last-born. It was as if I was dreaming. That l was in denial I didn't even believe what was said to me through my wife's cell phone. My wife who was the first recipient of the devastating news; also, in her shock she handed the phone to me.

We had to travel about 80 km from home to the school where my only two sons were schooling, in a fearful and silent journey. I only captured the mood when seeing my son's body covered with a white cloth; lying dead and cold.

3. **What aggravated the grief and making it very hard to accept the loss?**

As the story was narrated, about how the incident happened and how the eldest son was caught trying to throw himself in the pool in order to save his drowning

189

brother. I imagined the worse scenario, where my only sons were both drowned and dead.

4. In your opinion what could have been done differently to ease the pain and predicament?

In the first two days of the incident, I just needed my child back or a clear explanation from my son (whom I regarded as the guardian of deceased) and the hostel staff why did they allow my son to go to the pool and die.

5. What role did the church and the community play; if any?

I was overwhelmed by the support I received from both the church and my community from the day the received the sad news to the days after the funeral. The time we rushed to the scene, the community and the church members accompanied us. By that time, my wife was a regular and full member of the church; who often attended the church services. I was only attending only on Good Fridays. Judging from the way the church frequently visited and comforted us, I took a decision to join and support the church so that I also encourage those who are grieving. Because of my eagerness to serve, I was recruited to join the Men's Guild in 2001 and later joined the preachers in the following year.

6. How are you feeling now?

I feel stronger day by day. That now my mind is in the right frame and I have accepted the loss. However, I blame myself for my utterances; worse to my surviving son whom I blamed and accused for not protecting his brother.

I had a feeling that he could have stopped him. What pains me is that I have never apologized to him.

7. What can be done for you to finally have closure?

That l have spoken about this and wife is listening; I think I need to find time and apologize to my son and his siblings too. I have not been able to chart to anyone about my late son. I feel very free now, as if a heavy load has been removed from me.

8. What is your belief in life after death?

I believe that there is life after death. I have a number of testimonies to support my belief. My paternal uncle died 5 years before my birth. He was stabbed to death, and according to my culture, he was buried on the same day where he fell. His wife had very young children. That she thought there was witchcraft in the death of her husband, she decided to return to her home with children. Her home is under Ntabankulu Municipal District, which is 250km away from my village. In 1998, he appeared to me in a dream complaining that we have neglected him and his children; we don't even invite them in our ceremonies. When I narrated this dream to my mother, she informed me that a month ago, my sister told her about the same dream and same description of a man appeared to me. My mother confidently declared that, that was our uncle. The challenged was that no one knew the name of the village in Ntabankulu.

The family members decided that a ritual has to be done before their complaining uncle may cause those misfortunes and disasters. As soon as the ritual was performed to apologize to him and appeal for his assistance in searching for his children, some testimonies followed.

A year later, a certain woman who attended the funeral in my village approached my mother telling her about our family in Ntabankulu. We hastened to follow the

191

track; we arranged the transport and went there with some family members. In such a big and densely populated village but without anyone assisting the driver, as no one in the crew knew the destination, when the driver felt to enquire about this family from an average person, believe me, the driver had pulled the vehicle next to the gate of our destination as if he knew. The man then accompanied us to the family hut. The family members were all converged, as if they knew that we were coming. They had prepared *umqombothi* (Xhosa Beer). We enjoyed ourselves and we explained the motive behind the visit. That is how the family unity started.

Another incident occurred. I again dreamt of him (uncle) complaining that he was not buried properly and he wants to be buried next to his family members. His eldest son visited me and shared this common dream. Unfortunately, no one in the family was there when he was buried. We only got inkling from a community member who was present when he was buried. We went to the area with the police and funeral undertakers, but there was no sign of a grave as the area was as flat as a table. Until an old man inquired about the dog, he has been following its tricks. The dog was mine. The old man said that the dog is showing where the grave is. Indeed, we started digging.

Eventually we exhumed the remains of my uncle and buried him in the family graveyard. The very same night he appeared to me in my dreams thanking me for joining him with his family.

9. **What advice can you give to those who find themselves in the same predicament in future?**

Losing a child is a very painful experience. I don't have an experience of losing a child in a natural way; yes, I lost my parents, siblings, nephews, and nieces but I

guess unnatural is much devastating. However, a grief is grief, but one has to avoid elongating grief without seeking professional help.

10.What advice can you give to those who preside over these cultural beliefs when unnatural death hits the family?

It's not my motto to judge anyone. My father taught me to take decisions that I think will be appropriate for my family and me and respect others' views too. The experience I got from my uncle's scenarios equipped me in many ways. When my son passed away, the reburial of my uncle made me to stand my ground and bury my son as someone who has died naturally. I took this decision fully aware that in my family and my community the unnatural death is treated differently. As the unnatural death cases are not taken to the family hut or room, are buried separately and not viewed by women and children; the story was completely different when l buried my son. We took him from the mortuary to the family hut, all those who wanted to view him were allowed to do so and he was buried in the family graveyard, which is in yard of my homestead. I then advise that one must be allowed to do what he/she believes is right for his/her family.

5.11.5 Questions for a parent (Mr Nomatiti Nobusuku; Church of England)

1. **When did the incident occur?**

The incident occurred on the 12th of November 2000.

2. **What was your relationship with the diseased and how did you feel when you received the news?**

He was my son and I was very hurt; I felt that if I had followed the feeling I had, of visiting my son that morning; that could have not happened. I assume that he could not have gone for swimming and drowned.

3. **What aggravated the grief and making it very hard to accept the loss?** The fact that he died away from home, especially at school because it was difficult during holidays to accept that he won't come back home because he was no more.

4. **In your opinion what could have been done differently to ease the pain and predicament?**

I don't blame anyone for what happened because no adult saw them when they went out of the hostel for swimming.

5. **What role did the church and the community play, if any?**

The church as well as members of the community came and tried to comfort us for what happened. However, I feel they could have done more because they were not there when I needed them most. You cannot believe that I attended the worship services of Indaba zoSindiso, (a Christian movement formed by the late St Elizabeth Paul. Their worship is characterized by singing and dancing to choruses for a long time, praying and giving testimonies. In the process, they sweat a lot). I got enough chance to cry out without anyone noticing or disturbing me. That was very much therapeutic to me.

6. **How are you feeling now?**

It is real that time heals. I have given up with the understanding that he will never come back to us, but we are just waiting for our turn to depart. However, I can't stop thinking about him.

7. What can be done for you to finally have closure?

Prayer is the only tool that is helping me now. It is through it that I will completely heal.

8. What is your belief in life after death?

Yes, I do believe in life after death and hope that I will see my son when Jesus comes back for the second time.

9. What advice can you give to those who find themselves in the same predicament in future?

I would advise them to pray because through God, we get comfort, but professional counselling is also needed.

10. What advice can you give to those who preside over these cultural beliefs when unnatural death hits the family?

Families should be tolerant to each other during the time of grief. I would advise that people should been given time to talk about their grief and wishes, because not all the women and children have husbands and fathers who will fight for them. They should be made to understand why the family is conducting the funeral in this particular way, differing from that one. I am told that I were given the chance to view the remains of my son but to tell you the truth I don't remember anything because I was overwhelmed by grief.

Some of the incidents and utterances are shared by my husband that now we able to talk about the death of our son.

5.11.6 Questions for a Parent (MaNtlotshane; Full Gospel Church of God in South Africa)

1. **When did the incident occur?**

The incident happened on the 23rd of November 2019, at 7pm.

2. **What was your relationship with the diseased and how did you feel when you received the news?**

Yamkela was my son and my last-born.

3. **What aggravated the grief and making it very hard to accept the loss?**

First, I am a believer and a born-again child of God. My church, the Full Gospel Church of Christ in South Africa teaches clearly about death and afterlife, so that we grieve with hope of resurrection. Nevertheless, I felt very bad when my son committed suicide by hanging himself. The incident followed my short conversation with him, where I tried to reprimand and reproach him from the conduct and the habit that was not pleasing his father and me. He was so receptive and remorseful as it was clear that my intention was to rehabilitate not to condemn him. I was so devastated when I received the news of his passing away. I never expected a shocking incident. I even blamed myself for reprimanding him, thinking that this incident could have not happened.

4. In your opinion what could have been done differently to ease the pain and predicament?

Nothing else I needed during the first week of the sad news but only to reverse the news; to say it was someone else but not my son. I needed him back in life. If one could raise my son that would bring joy to my heart and soul.

5. What role did the church and the community play, if any?

People of my church, the community and other denominations visited my family to comfort us.

Some even reminded me about their tragic and catastrophic incidents that they endured and through the mercies of God, they are here and strong.

Some even left their families to come and stay with us, during that difficult time. Some made calls and some sent text messages; trying to ease the pain of losing my son through unnatural death.

6. How are you feeling now?

As I indicated from the beginning that I am a born-again child of God; when I first received the unexpected news I succumbed to anger and denial. That really challenged my thinking capacity.

Through the words and prayers from the people who visited my family, I gradually regained my consciousness and my faith. His funeral service also was another therapy. That we have taken his body to where it belongs, I am at peace now just waiting for the reunion in the eternal home as the bible says, "Most assuredly, I say to you, he who hears My word and believes in Him who sent Me has everlasting

life, and shall not come into judgment, but has passed from death to life,'' (John 5:24).

7. What can be done for you to finally have closure?

I am at peace as I have said. However, I have a feeling of inquisitiveness, just to know what really troubled him, leading him to the decision to take his own life. May be if he had left a note that would please my heart and not to blame myself.

8. What is your belief on life after death?

I believe that there is life after death as the Bible teaches us. When one dies as it is written in Genesis 3:19, '' the body returns back to earth,'' NIV.

That is why in our denomination we don't bother about viewing the mortal remains; our focus is on burial. It's only the soul that will resurrect into eternal life, 1 Cor 15:42-44.

9. What advice can you give to those who find themselves in the same predicament in future?

Death is just a law. It is something that is bound to happen whether in a natural way or unnaturally. The scripture is the only source that I would recommend as it teaches a lot about death and afterlife. It further illustrates what to do when one is grieving and to whom shall we put our trust.

10. What advice can you give to those who preside over these cultural beliefs when unnatural death hits the family?

I would advise that those responsible from providing counsel should use the bible because it is full of encouraging words appropriate for grieving and grievers. People

should be vividly educated about death, which came to us as a punishment because of the wrath of God after the fall of human beings as it is written in Genesis Chapter 3.

Mrs Kilili was the last interviewee in this category. Having interviewed 6 respondents, the researcher analyzed their responses and the following issues came out of their feelings and experiences.

5.12 The Analysis for the Third Category

The researcher analyzed the responses of the third category and the topics that are going to be discussed below, emerged. Here are the topics: the pastoral care and counselling, the bible: a good Source for counselling and the prohibitions imposed on the bereaved family members.

5.12.1 The Pastoral Care and Counselling

The researcher has found out that the clergy persons are generally struggling as pastoral caregivers in dealing with the fumes of unnatural death, in the Xhosa traditional families and in general. Clinebell and McKeever state that it is clear, therefore, that pastors need to develop the sensitivity and skills required to give significant help in relatively brief contacts. However, even though most of their counselling is short term, it is erroneous to assume that they need relatively little training, (2011:112). The response of the respondents in the third category when inquired about the impact of the church and the community during grief of unnatural death proves that the help given is inadequate. For example, the following question was asked:

199

What role did the church and the community play, if any?

Respondent Nobusuku said, ''*the church as well as members of the community came and tried to comfort us for what happened.*

However, I feel they could have done more because they were not there when I needed them most. You cannot believe that I attended the worship services of Indaba zoSindiso, (a Christian movement formed by the late St Elizabeth Paul. Their worship is characterized by singing and dancing to choruses for a long time, praying and giving testimonies. In the process, they sweat a lot). I got enough chance to cry out without anyone noticing me. That was very much therapeutic to me,'' (5.11.5). This gives an alarm to the caregivers to consider the post funeral visits and other care-giving programmes.

5.12.2 The Bible: A good Source for Counselling

The Gospel of St John 10:10 says, "…I have come that they may have life, and have it to the fullest,'' (NIV). This suggests that Jesus came to liberate people and bring them into wholeness. The church should therefore endeavour to accomplish the mission of Jesus, that of nurturing and empowering life in fullness by restoring good relationships and comforting those the traditionalist breaks whose hearts. Counselling without showing love and sympathy is nothing and meaningless. However, when the leaders of the church with love and understanding of someone's feelings and experiences do the counselling. It can yield positive results to the victimized people. This activity mainly involves an outreach ministry, where the church ministers will go out and help people through Word of God that is the

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Bible. According to Howard, "Pastoral care and counselling involve the utilization by persons in ministry of one-to-one or small group relationships to enable healing empowerment and growth to take place within individuals and their relationships,'' (2012:7).

This therefore suggests that a congregation has the responsibility of bringing healing and growth in all areas of human wholeness. For *example,* respondent MaNtlotshane was asked the following question: **How are you feeling now?**

She answered, "*Through the words and prayers from the people who visited my family, I gradually regained my consciousness and my faith. His funeral service also was another therapy. That we have taken his body to where it belongs, I am at peace now just waiting for the reunion in the eternal home as the bible says, 'Most assuredly, I say to you, he who hears My word and believes in Him who sent Me has everlasting life, and shall not come into judgment, but has passed from death to life', (John 5:24),*'' (5.11.6). Another question asked to this category was: **What role did the church and the community play, if any?** Respondent Pumla answered, "*They visited the family time and again, before and after the funeral. They comforted us with words and prayers. Some even shared their experiences of unexpectedly losing loved ones in the hands of the health practitioners,*'' (5.11.2). These responses prove that some church are doing very well in caring for the members during difficult times. That is main aim and commission of the church.

5.12.3 The Prohibitions Imposed on the Bereaved Family Members

The results so far suggest that unnatural death is associated with taboos, darkness, wrath and sorcery.

Thus, the prohibition of women and children from viewing the body and attending the burial service. It is held that women and children are weak and vulnerable, to view the damaged body. They rather keep the image of the original body. For example, the following question was asked to the first category:

Why women and children are barred from the disposal of the mortal remains?
Respondent Dr Mndende answered," *Children are barred because of their age. However, with women, it depends. It is the wife owonga umyeni wakhe (wife nursing her husband) and not vice versa. Women are only barred when the cause of death is unnatural. Because of the natural instinct of empathy in women (inimba), which is not there with males, women cannot stand facing a charred body for instance or someone involved in an accident where it is difficult even to identify. Women are saved from that bad experience.* Whilst the researcher was busy with the process of analyzing the research findings, it happened that he was invited by his neighbouring priest to accompany the family that had lost a son in a terrible accident to the Department of Health Forensic Pathology Services; a place where the post-mortem examination is performed.

When the family was invited to get inside the chapel, the mother of child refused, saying, ''*I don't want this image in my mind; I want to keep the original one, the Qhawe I know; my son.*" That rekindled following scenario, as the researcher interviewed respondent Tyatyeka:

Why women and children are barred from the disposal of the mortal remains?

He responded,"…*There is a belief that women and children are weak and vulnerable, so have to be protected from any heart breaking and dangerous situations. It happens that at times the deceased sustained terrible wounds, scars, bruises and fractures may be the body is damaged beyond recognition. …that last impression lasts, women and children are prohibited from viewing such bodies so that they keep the picture in mind of the unhurt physical structure of their loved one.*

For example, my daughter who is a member of these so-called, saved churches; the Apostolic Faith Mission, lost her son in a terrible accident. His body was damaged from head to the toes, beyond recognition. My daughter and her husband coerced to see their child. They were taken to the funeral parlour a day before the funeral on their demand. We tried to convince her not to go there because of the condition of their child's body, but in vain. I knew that what she would view would tear her heart into pieces as it completely differed from what she knew and expected. She couldn't endure what she saw, as a result, she ran away crying and the husband followed suit. She regretted the visit that resulted to her having a number of sessions with the psychologists and pastoral care-givers in order to deconstruct,'' (5.7.2). These cultural prohibitions when dealing with unnatural death leave women and children emotional bruised and damaged.

They really take time to recover from grief. For example, the following question was asked to respondent Nobonga in the third category: **In your opinion what could have been done differently to ease the pain and predicament?**

She said, *''I can find closure if I can know what led to him committing suicide. I think may be viewing his body could have brought therapy in my grief and closure as well.*

Now I don't have the image of Anele resting peacefully in his coffin, as it was the case with my parents. The worst part is that I don't even know where his grave is; at least it would be better if I were given an opportunity to go and lay the stone. This is retarding my healing process as I really struggle in finding closure. I find myself in anger and denial. (Crying) I think I need counselling. I don't have his image as a dead person,'' (5.11.1).

Clinebell and MacKeever understand the respondent's feeling for being prohibited to view the body of the loved one. They believe that when the bodies are not found or are terribly mutilated (so that the casket is left closed) or when the body is cremated immediately after death, recovery may be protracted because the grieving persons are not able to accept the reality of the loss by dealing with the image of the dead person's body. Since our own identity and that of others are integrally related to body image, having an opportunity to deal with feelings about the body is often necessary for the grief wound to heal as fully as possible, (2011:185). If the family is experiencing continuous strange variances emanating from the burial discords of unnatural death, the church must find fresh ways of meeting the needs of the troubled persons for the renewal of family bonds through counselling. According to Howard, "Counselling is an instrument of continuing renewal through reconciliation, helping to heal our estrangement from ourselves and our families, from other church members, from those outside the church and from an enlivening, growing relationship with God,'' (2012:9). Clinebell and MacKeever advise that caregivers also need to be aware of numerous societal factors today that often cause recovery from crises and grief to be very difficult, protracted, or blocked, (2011:185). A thorough training and capacitation of

204

pastoral caregivers is of great importance in order to assist them to be able to deal with grieving family members.

5.13 Analysis of Interviews

The researcher has come up with these findings after interviewing different categories of people who experienced losing the loved ones through unnatural death in a Xhosa traditional family.

It became clear and understandable that unnatural death is traumatic. It is intriguing to the researcher the manner in which the different people react to unnatural death. It has become abundantly vivid that different people respond differently to different situations. On the very same vein, it has been established that different people may react differently in the very same situation. Nevertheless, it has also been established that people can have similar reaction to similar situations, for example, they all feel guilty and thought they could have prevented death. The issue of shame caused by culture and family rituals affected those in deep hurt. They felt isolated and rejected especially those who did not even throw stones or soil on or into their loved ones' graves.

5.14 Preliminary Conclusion

The aim of the study has been to explore the effects of trauma that befall family members who have lost the love ones through unnatural death. The exercise is conducted in order to understand through dialogue with the family, church and community members who have directly and indirectly dealt with unnatural death.

The main aim is to investigate the anguish, pain and turmoil that they go through; especially the women and children who are prohibited by the Xhosa traditional rituals. In addition, to pastorally endeavour to soothe whatever pain they may inhibit. The data collected was transcribed and scrutinized.

Three sets of questions were used to interview people from three different areas, six respondents in each category. Data has revealed that the practise of different contrasting religions is main course of family fumes during the burial of the family member who has died through unnatural death.

Another vivid issue is the danger of the oral tradition, which is not recorded leaving its adherents not grounded because they lack knowledge. The next chapter is dealing with healing methodology.

CHAPTER 6

DEVELOPING THE HEALING METHOD

6.1 INTRODUCTION

The interviews and the analysis of findings conducted in the previous chapter indicate that the church is not doing enough in pastorally caring for people and getting into their world of pain; for them to get closure and healing. Some churches have no after care; the funeral service is the last ritual. It is vivid that devastation and brokenness have become part of life to the grieving family members who are prohibited by the traditional rites; worse after the funeral. The research has identified that our communities are affected in pain, trauma, turmoil, suffering and tension, subsequent to families subscribing to different religions. This chapter therefore is so appropriate to the aim and objectives of this research, as detailed in chapter 1, and will be undertaken to present a pastoral approach strategy that the

church may use to respond to the care of the women and children who are traumatized and grieved by unnatural death in a Xhosa culture.

This chapter then aims at presenting a pastoral intervention strategy in situations of traumatic care. The suggested pastoral intervention is based on findings from the study in relation to chapter three and five. The strategy is intended to be utilized by the church, particularly the clergy, lay-ministers and other un-ordained caregivers trained for the church ministry. The strategy of caring should be used before, during and after the burial of the victims of unnatural death.

This chapter is on the healing methodology that is being proposed for helping families on how should they mourn a loss despite the challenges in the process of burial. This will ensure that the women and children who are prohibited by unnatural death rituals are cushioned in a best way by the church. The foremost objective was to find a pastoral care model that will assist in therapeutically journeying with grieving families due to the observance of cultural rites in mourning and burial processes for the unnatural death. In order to address this practice, which causes women and children to be vulnerable; in order to create a model for healing, the researcher has opted to explore and employ Kubler-Ross's five stages of grief and the shepherding model by Gerkin. As the preamble to the therapy, it is vital to remind the reader that the researcher is dealing with the trauma as the aftermath of unnatural death and the mourning rituals.

6.2 The Trauma

Trauma is part of human life. South Africans have and continue to experience some form of trauma. Some of this trauma is attributable to crime, which can be experienced in extremely violent ways. Burchfield R.W. describes trauma in this way, "A morbid condition of the body produced by a wound or injury, an emotional shock,'' (1975: 938). When contributing to the subject of trauma, Mitchell writes this about trauma, "Trauma is a term used freely for physical injury caused by some external force or for physical injury caused by some extreme emotional assault,'' (1983: 814). According to these explanations, trauma is an emotion not just an emotion but an emotional shock. A traumatized person is, therefore, in a state of shock, an excited state of mind.

Mitchell attested to the explanation given by the dictionary that trauma is caused by an extreme emotional pressure from outside oneself. According to the researcher to be traumatized is to be in a state of emotional shock. It is a state of semi-paralysis when the mental faculties do not perform appropriately, as they are expected to do so. The mind is perturbed and when that happens, it follows that the body machinery does not function properly. Trauma happens because of external factors to the body or assault. The external factors or assault can be either physical or psychological. As this research is about the psychological trauma, the emphasis will, therefore, be on psychological factors. In the case of this research, it is a trauma experienced by women and children because of unnatural death and burial rituals, thereafter. The reader needs to bear in mind that any kind of death is traumatic whether natural or unnatural. The death of someone, whoever it may be, is a traumatic occurrence. When this 'assault' enters the human body, it causes

an emotional havoc. The impact may not only affect those who know the person, but also those who see and experience the act.

6.3 Dealing with Unnatural Death and Mourning Rituals

Kubler-Ross will assist us understand what unnatural death does when it visits a traditional family. She captures the advancement of science and how people want to deal with the issue of death. She says, ''the more we are making advancements in science, the more we seem to fear and deny the reality of death,'' (1974:7).

Elisabeth Kubler-Ross expresses similar sentiments, ''When you think of a funeral and the preparation preceding it, what images come to mind – a body artificially made – up to look natural? Hypocritical and meaningless services? Impersonal and uncaring persons? These are some of the typical responses, which most people have to make around funerals. In addition, all that surrounds them. A funeral should be a time to say your last goodbye, to begin to work through your grief, to make death real through actively participating in the preparation and final service, to begin living again and growing through your experience,'' (1975:81). Kubler-Ross has given us the insight into what happens at the point of death and thereafter. For more than twenty years, she has been researching the path of death and dying in terminally ill patients. She is widely acclaimed and acknowledged, especially for the work she did with children. She says, ''In our bereavement, we spent different lengths of time working through each step and express each stage more or less intensely,'' (1969:35). She eventually came up with five famous stages of grief; namely, denial, anger, bargaining, depression and acceptance. These grieving stages may be of paramount importance to the caregivers in their journey of

210

therapeutically journeying with family members who are grieving subsequent to burial rituals. In their traumatic situation, generally they will all go through these stages even though they are not sequential.

6.3.1 The Denial

The Dictionary Unit for South African English defines denial as, ''the refusal to acknowledge an acceptable truth or emotion, used as a defense mechanism,'' (2009:310).

According to Biermann, "The first stage is denial in which the bereaved is unable or unwilling to accept the loss. The bereaved considers denial and shock as normal reactions to loss as long as they are not prolonged. Kubler-Ross has this to say about denial, "I emphasize this strongly since I regard it as a healthy way of dealing with the uncomfortable and painful situation with which some of the people have to live for a long period. Denial functions as a buffer after unexpected shocking news it allows the person to collect himself and, with time, mobilize other less radical defenses,'' (1974:39). Kubler-Ross and Kessler further state, ''for a person who has lost a loved one, however, the denial is more symbolic than literal. When we are in denial, we may respond at first by being paralyzed with shock or blanketed with numbness. The denial is still not denial of the actual death, even though someone may be saying, "I can't believe he's dead." The person is actually saying that, at first, because it is too much for his or her psyche. The denial often comes in the form of our questioning our reality: Is this true? Did it really happen? Are they really gone? In this stage, the world becomes meaningless and overwhelming. Life makes no sense. You begin to question the how and why,'' (2014:9-10). This is where the

activity of viewing and throwing soil or flowers in the grave is helpful; in order to confirm and affirm that really the loved one has departed.

This process helps the grievers to face the reality. However, the prohibition of women and children to participate in the burial rituals may aggravate the situation, which is a huge challenge to acceptance, healing and closure. Some get therapy from viewing and standing at the graveside. For example, respondent Nobonga says, "*I can find closure if I can know what led to him committing suicide.*

I think may be viewing his body could have brought therapy in my grief and closure as well.

Now I don't have the image of Anele resting peacefully in his coffin, as it was the case with my parents. The worst part is that I don't even know where his grave is; at least it would be better if I were given an opportunity to go and lay the stone. This is retarding my healing process as I really struggle in finding closure. I find myself in anger and denial. (Crying) I think I need counselling. I don't have his image as a dead person,'' (5.11.1).

Once one is denied, an opportunity to fulfill his/her wishes that automatically turns into bad news, thus he/she gradually developed a negative attitude. According Kubler-Ross and Kessler, ''As a bereaved person comes out of denial, she or he experiences anger as she or he recognizes that she or he does not have control over the loss. Feelings of abandonment may also occur,'' (2005:15). Kubler-Ross also puts this in this way, "When the first stage of denial cannot be maintained any longer, it is replaced by feelings of anger, rage, envy, and resentment,'' (2014:49). Mr. Tyatyeka's daughter mentioned in chapter five (5.7.2), was told everything about the condition of the body of her son as a motive behind the prohibition.

Nevertheless, she suppressed her mind and forced to go and view the body of her son, which she could not endure as the body was damaged beyond recognition. Unfortunately, she was in a state where she could see that she has no authority over the protocols of the traditional rituals. When she comes out of denial as she recognizes that she does not have control over the situation can be emotional up set and be angry with herself, people around, family elders who are the champions of the traditional rituals and the deceased who left her in pain. There are some defense mechanisms that the person uses, and it is normal to react this way.

As the pastoral caregiver it is significant to talk and educate people about death, death rituals and the deceased, both in a Christian and traditional perspective. This is where the pastoral caregivers must realize the importance of respecting the person's need for denial. The researcher has a conviction that forgiveness is the remedy in any death related pain and trouble.

6.3.2 The Anger

The Dictionary Unit for South African English defines anger as, ''a strong feeling of annoyance, displeasure, or hostility,'' (2009:40). Kubler-Ross has already explained that when the first stage of denial cannot be maintained any longer, it is replaced by feelings of anger, rage, envy, and resentment. According to her, "In contrast to the stage of denial, this stage of anger is very difficult to cope with from the point of view of family and staff. The reason for this is the fact that this anger is displaced in all directions and projected onto the environment at times almost at random,'' (2014:50). Harmon-Jones E & C in the book edited by Barrett, Lewis and HavillandJones add this about anger, ''However, anger may also be associated with

213

negative intra- and interpersonal consequences, including child maltreatment and violence,'' (2016). The researcher also believes that anger has no limits and it is propelled by the internal feelings containing a number of rhetorical questions. According to Kubler-Ross, ''the logical question becomes why me?'' (1974:50). In an attempt for find answers, this is where the person becomes angry and irritable more often.

This anger can extend not only to one's friends, religious institutions, loved one who died, unnatural death, rituals, and to self but even to God.

At this stage, it is too difficult for the pastoral caregivers to provide the necessary support, as the bereaved may not want to listen. However; the caring method should prevail despite the grieving member's emotional behavior; the therapists must allow themselves to be objects of anger. The researcher concurs with KublerRoss when she says, "The problem here is that few people place themselves in the patient's position and in order to know where this anger might come from,'' (1974:51). In order to address this situation more effectively the person's anger should be taken personally, as she may not be angry with the caregiver. In short, as the researcher has alluded prior the anger may be misdirected or misplaced. Those who prohibited her, may be a person who didn't protect and sympathize with her, a person who was not around whom she thinks could have defended or listened to her plea differently, and may be one who is different now that her loved one has died might not be there but one before her should pay the price. Listening to her frustrations rather taking offence may mean a lot at this stage; it is also a therapy. Perhaps; anger is a necessary stage of the healing process. The more one begins to feel it, the more it will begin to dissipate and the more one will heal. Anger means

one is progressing, that he/she is allowing all those feelings that were simply too much before to come to the surface. It is important to feel the anger without judging it, without attempting to find meaning in it. Anger is strength and it can be an anchor, giving temporary structure to the nothingness of loss and prohibitions.

At first grief feels like being lost at sea; no connection to anything. However, with time, the grievers gradually move out the stage through the aid of the caregivers.

They may also experience feelings of guilt; which is anger turning inward on oneself. For example, if one could change things that didn't go according to his/her will during process of the mourning rituals, he/she would change them. However, that things have already happened, unfortunately one discovers that he/she cannot. Anger affirms that one can feel, that one did love, one has lost, one has been troubled and one has been marginalized. The more anger one allows, the more feelings he/she will find underneath. Anger is the immediate emotion. As one deals with it, one will find other feelings hidden and start negotiating the way out. The researcher still believes that the best medicine still is forgiveness even in this stage of anger. If there are no results in this stage of anger, the bereaved can proceed to the third stage, which is bargaining.

6.3.3 The Bargaining

The Dictionary Unit for South African English defines bargaining as, ''an agreement between two or more people as to what each will do for the other,'' (2009:88). Kubler-Ross views bargaining in this way, "If we have been unable to face the sad facts in the first period and have been angry at people and God in the second phase,

215

maybe we can succeed in entering into some sort of an agreement which may postpone the inevitable happening: 'If God has decided to take us from this earth and did not respond to my angry pleas, he may be more favorable if I ask nicely','' (2014:79). On a positive note, bargaining helps the grieving to have a momentary relief of adjusting their psyche to keep suffering at a distance.

In this way, bargaining takes place in the mind by trying to explain the things that could have been done differently or better to the delight of the bereaved.

The bargain struck is not one that could actually be kept, but it assists in bringing more control by identifying what could have or should have been done to handle the situation more effectively. If a person is religious or spiritual, the bargaining may actually take place with a higher power or the ancestors, where he/she would seek for their intervention in their problem with the family elders and traditional rituals that are preventing them from viewing the body.

According to Kubler-Ross, ''Most bargains are made with God and are usually kept as secrete or mentioned between lives or in a chaplain's office,'' (1974:84). Biermann further puts it in this way, "Once the bereaved recognize that they do not have control over the loss, they begin to bargain for the return of the loved one. This phase involves promises of better or improved behavior in exchange of better behaviour," (2005:15). In the process of expressing his/her pleas, he/she promises some rewards should the request be granted. For example a religious person will pledge to commit his/her life or resources to God's ministry or mission should God be able to intervene and change the mind of the elders in order to let her/him view the body of his/her loved one. May be the bereaved may bargain for the return of the deceased with promises such as, to be faithful, to repent, to give to the needy

216

etc. The bargaining process helps the bereaved to accept the situation on an emotional and psychological level. In this stage, the bereaved appears willing to concede the outcomes and is busy re-arranging his/her life, but attempts to do so by clinging to the threads of hope. The pastoral caregivers have a duty of intensifying the bereaved person's hope needs through spiritual exercises such as prayers, meditation and bible studies in order to draw him/her out of grief and make life meaningful despite the challenges of burial rituals when dealing with unnatural death.

If this stage is not negotiated adequately; no bargain is successfully reached, the bereaved quickly move to the dark cloud, the 4th stage of grief that is depression. According to Biermann, ''When the bereaved realizes that the bargaining stage doesn't yield results hoped for, she or he goes through a next phase which is the period of depression and despair,'' (2005:15). In order to avoid much turmoil, the researcher concludes that forgiveness is the best solution. The bereaved family members should be advised to forgive all the processes.

6.3.4 The Depression

The Dictionary Unit for South African English defines depression as the severe despondency and dejection, especially when long-lasting, (2009:312). Biermann states, ''in the depression phase, the bereaved releases the inevitability of the loss and their helplessness to change the situation. During this period the bereaved may cry, withdraw from other relationships, and or experience sleep changes,'' (2005:15). According to Clum, ''When you feel out of control, depression generally follows. When you are in depression, you often cannot sleep or eat, further

lowering your resistance to stress,'' (1990:38). The research has proven that the loss of a loved one places one in a very depressing situation. It's important to understand that this depression is not a sign of mental illness but a sign of acceptance coupled with emotional attachment; a normal and appropriate response to trauma subsequent to great loss. During this process, it is normal to withdraw from life and to be left in a fog or intense sadness and wondering. In the depression stage, the bereaved may cry, withdraw from the social relationships and have other disorders related to loss.

The pastoral caregivers must ensure that the spiritual and the emotional support is provided to the family during this difficult time to make sure that the grievers are not alone. Kubler-Ross says, ''Social worker, physician or chaplain may discuss the patient's concerns with the husband in order to obtain his help in supporting the patient's self-esteem. Social workers and chaplains can be of great help during this time in assisting in the reorganization of a household, especially when children or lonely old people are involved for whom eventual placement has to be considered,'' (2014:84). She further classifies, "…during which the patient has much to share and requires many verbal interactions and often active interventions on the part of people in many disciplines, "(2014:85). During these home visits, the caregivers should not only focus on singing, praying and sharing of the word; but also, there should be a provision in the program for discussions, in order to warrant the bereaved an opportunity to express themselves. According to Kubler-Ross, ''we are always impressed by how quickly a patient's depression is lifted when these vital issues are taken care of,'' (2014:84). For example, the interview of Nobusuku (5.11.5) is a good example of a woman who was deeply depressed and felt unable

to deal with the loss of her son because there was no after care and there seemed to be no help forthcoming, hence, she attended the gatherings of Indaba zoSindiso just to console and soothe herself. It is therefore strongly encouraged that churches should prioritize the aftercare and encourage the grievers to face the pain to be able to move toward to acceptance. According to Kubler-Ross, ''If he is allowed to express his sorrow he will find a final acceptance much easier, and he will be grateful to those who can sit with him during this stage of depression without telling him not to be sad,'' (2014:85). Pastoral caregivers should in this intervention process emphasize forgiveness so that the grievers avoid the severe depression.

6.3.5 The Acceptance

Biermann states, ''the last phase is when the bereaved enters a stage of accepting the loss. It is at this stage whereby the bereaved begin to plan about the future,'' (2005:15). According to Kubler-Ross, ''acceptance should not be mistaken for a happy stage. It is almost void of feelings. It is as if the pain had gone, the struggle is over, and there comes a time for 'the final rest before the long journey' as one patient phrased it,'' (2014:110). This is the period where one comes to terms with the reality, despite all the barriers and circumstances in the burial processes. Kubler-Ross and Kessler say, ''this stage is about accepting the reality that our loved one is physically gone and recognizing that this new reality is the permanent reality…We must try to live now in a world where our loved one is missing…We start the process of reintegration, trying to put back the pieces that have been ripped away,'' (2014:25). They further state, ''acceptance is a process that we experience, not a final stage with an end point,'' (2014:27). For example

respondent Mjoli says, *'' I feel stronger day by day. That now my mind is in the right frame and I have accepted the loss. However, I blame myself for my utterances; worse to my surviving son whom I blamed and accused for not protecting his brother. I had a feeling that he could have stopped him. What pains me is that I have never apologized to him,''* (5.11.4).

This is where one starts, sadly and regrettable to admit the loss, even if the circumstances and processes of death and burial may not be fully understood.

The process of healing starts taking roof from this moment in grief where one realizes that although it may be the time for their loved one to die; moreover it is not yet time for them to die but to heal. For unfulfilled wills, wishes and expectation during burial ritual process, the grieving family members should let bygones be bygones in order for healing to take place; forgiveness is so vital in this stage. According to Kubler-Ross, "this is also the time during which the family needs usually more help understanding, and support…," (2014:110). At this point, the support system is important since the person may just appreciate to be surrounded by people, even if they are on mute mode. The church should make sure that the pastoral caregivers play their role. They have clear healing programs to reach out to those grieving family members and awareness programs to prepare other church members for future purposes; which are the key role of pastoral care.

According to the researcher in order to be able to accept the turmoil, predicaments and disappoints that surfaced and prevailed during the process of the burial of unnatural death's victim, the grieving family members should consider the five stages of grief as the remedy. The researcher has further added forgiveness, as explained below, to Kurbler's grieving stages as the healing method.

220

6.4 The Importance of Forgiveness in Healing

The action word forgive is one of the key words in the Lord's Prayer as Christ taught his disciples. Matthew writes, "and forgive us our debts as we also have forgiven our debtors,'' (NIV, Mat 6:12).

Forgiveness is paramount in emotional healing and physical health of the grieving individual. Without forgiveness, we stall the process of moving forward. The choice to forgive, releases the offense to God to do with what He wills whereas unforgiveness is where bitterness and resentment grow. Apostle Paul puts it this way, "let all bitterness, wrath, anger, clamor, and slander be put away from you, along with malice. Be kind to one another, tenderhearted, forgiving one another, as God forgave you,'' (Ephesians 4:31-32). According to Tyatya, ''we cannot be in a right standing with God when we hold on to past pain, anger, hate, resentment and other emotions that deny the favour of God in our lives,'' (2022:43).

When grievers are tending to bitterness and resentment, they cannot attend to the processing and healing of the heart. Another important aspect of forgiveness is freedom from the past. It is time grieving family members unshackle themselves from the offense or hurt someone else caused. When they do not release the offense to God, they carry it around, allowing it to drain them of the energy to live presently. However, releasing the offense, paves the way to live freely in the present. According to Osteen, ''forgiveness is a choice, but it is not an option,'' (2004:163). Jesus puts it this way, "if you forgive others their trespasses, your heavenly Father will forgive you but if you do not forgive others their trespasses, neither will your father forgive your trespasses,'' (Matthew 6:14-15). This means

that grievers need not grudge anyone. In order to have the peace of mind they need to forgive in all circumstances, even if they find themselves being victims of cultural differences; forgiveness is a remedy otherwise they face the negative consequences of un-forgiveness.

6.5 The Danger of Un-forgiveness

According to Osteen, ''in other words, if we have bitterness on the inside, it's going to end up contaminating everything that comes out of us. It will contaminate our personalities and our attitudes, as well as how we treat other people,'' (2004:154). He further says, "When we hold on to un-forgiveness and we live with grudges in our hearts, all we're doing is building walls of separation. We think we're protecting ourselves, but we're not. We are simply shutting other people out of our lives. We become isolated, alone, warped and imprisoned by our own bitterness," (2004:161). This therefore means un-forgiveness affects health in a big way. It can cause poor sleep and fatigue. The burden of hanging onto an old wound can also result in anxiety and depression.

The grieving family members should be aware of the fact that holding firm to the past resentment, having grudges toward some family members who prohibited them during the unnatural death burial rituals may result to un-forgiveness, which seems to be an obstacle to therapy and a pastoral care challenge as well.

6.6 The Role of the Pastoral Care

It is the work of the pastoral care to journey with the families during their time of disorientation and misery until they move into new orientation and praxis. Nevertheless, in this process there is a great temptation to try to fix the pain of the grieving people when they go through disorientation. However, it is not the work of pastoral care to fix the problem. Pastoral care should ensure the presence of the caregivers during this time of turmoil and disorientation until the people could experience a new orientation and praxis.

Gerkin reminds us in chapter three that a pastoral theologian, must conduct a survey on pastoral history in order to care for troubled souls. He traced pastoral care from the Old Testament through to the twentieth century. He articulates, "Pastoral care as we know it today did not spring forth out of shallow soil of recent experience. Rather, it has a long history… the history of that care like a family genealogy, reaches back as far as the collective memory of the Christian community can be extended,'' (1997:23). He further clarifies, "the source of pastoral care is the bible. It teaches us that God cared for people and communities that worshiped him – the one God," (1997:25). On the other hand, Wimberly defines pastoral care in this way, '' pastoral care is the response of the pastor to the emotional, interpersonal and spiritual needs of persons in curses," (1991: vii). The researcher is also tempted to believe that the aforementioned articulations are of great importance when employed in order to shape the way pastors should care for the women, children and other troubled souls during process of grieving unnatural death in a traditional family.

The pastoral caregivers should use the bible as the main source in this journey with the troubled souls. In order to achieve this Gerkin proposes a pastoral practice. This

practice recognizes the pastor as playing the role of the shepherding God's people in order to give care to them. The shepherd is well and accurately described in the Gospel of St John chapter 10:14-18. Another image of the shepherd, in Psalm 23 depicts God as the Shepherd.

Among the functions or roles from the shepherding model that were employed are:

- Pastor as a shepherd,

- Pastor as a prophet, and

- Pastor as ritualistic leader.

Gitari on the other hand, shares in depth thoughts about shepherding, saying, ''the good shepherd will be able to find the straying, to rescue the lost, to feed and tend the whole flock, giving particular attention to the weak and ailing members,'' (2005:13). When the pastors as shepherds follow this process after burial, they will help families to continue with the process of grieving.

6.6.1 The Pastor as a Shepherd

According to Gerkin, ''the shepherding motif originated as a metaphor for the role of the king during the monarchical period of Israelite history,'' (1997:27). In pastoral care, the shepherd is very significant, as he/she is the one who leads the flock. The approach of this caring leader who is a shepherd is the key to victory over pain and suffering. In order to care for the women and children who are prohibited by cultural traditions during their bereavement, Gerkin, when using the metaphor of the shepherd, says, ''in the more recent times the shepherd metaphor has been

widely appropriated as a grounded metaphor for a care-giving pastor,'' (1997:27). The shepherd should nurture and support the bereaved family through the relevant scriptures for them to have life. Jesus, the Good Shepherd says, "The thief has come only to steal and kill and destroy; I have come that they may have life and have it to the full," (John 10:10). He further states, ''I am the good shepherd, I know my sheep and my sheep know me,'' (John 10:14).

In the ordination of the Anglican Church's priests, the bishop charges the candidates, saying, ''following the Good Shepherd, you will care for the sick, bring back those who have strayed, guide his people through this life, and prepare them for death and the life to come, that they may be saved through Christ ever,'' (ACSA 1989:588). Thus, the pastoral caregivers are modeling Christ; therefore, it is so much imperative that they sacrifice everything for the souls that are troubled by the unnatural death and the cultural practices.

Pastors should look after them until they are strong enough to stand firmly for themselves and do away with the turmoil and pain of not burying and viewing the bodies of their loved ones because of cultural prohibitions. The story of respondent Nobusuku should be a lesson to the caregivers, as she says, *"The church as well as members of the community came and tried to comfort us for what happened. However, I feel they could have done more because they were not there when I needed them most. You cannot believe that I attended the worship services of Indaba zoSindiso, (a Christian movement formed by the late St Elizabeth Paul. Their worship is characterized by singing and dancing to choruses for a long time, praying and giving testimonies. In the process, they sweat a lot). I got enough chance to cry out without anyone noticing or disturbing me. That was very much therapeutic to*

me,'' (5.11.5). Churches should consider the significance of the aftercare as it transpired from the interviews that the church is flawing and inadequate on aftercare, whereas this is the time the care is needed most.

The researcher is once more reminded of the duties or functions of an ordained deacon, in the Anglican Church.

In ordination service of the deacons, the Anglican Bishop will charge the candidates by saying, "My brothers and sisters, every Christian is called to follow Jesus Christ, serving God the Father, through the power of the Holy Spirit. God now calls you to a special ministry of humble service. In the name of Jesus Christ, you are to serve all people and to seek out particularly the poor, the weak, the sick and the lonely,'' (ACSA 1989:583).

Wimberly says, ''Caring is a ministry of the church and cannot be understood apart from the ecclesiology or theology of the church…The unfolding story of God's rule and reign is characterized by God's ongoing activity to bring all dimensions of the world under God's leadership and story for the purposes of liberation, healing and wholeness. This result is personal transformation,'' (1991:19). Gerkin argues, ''the success of human healing is depending on Divine intervention,'' (1997:87). Lartey further states, "a pastoral caregiver needs skills in both comforting and challenging people to encourage growth,'' (2003:78). The ministry of the deacon does not cease, it is there to serve those who are in need. As priory indicated, the church therefore has a duty to ensure that there are clear programs for the aftercare ministry.

6.6.2 The Pastor as a prophet

The thorough study of the work of Charles Gerkin rekindles the way the Israel ancient community pastorally took care of the three classes of leadership. These classes were the priests, the prophets and the wise guides. The prophets were God's servants who cared for God's flock.

The prophetic dimension must therefore be complemented by pastoral concern for sheer enormity of human suffering. The church is an essential tool in the building of God's Kingdom on earth. Due to this prophetic mission the church cannot lose interest in what is happening in the lives of the people; especially the brokenhearted. The mission of Christ is directed toward the poor, in the first place, and the Kingdom of God would bring 'shalom' to the troubled souls and reverse their lugubrious situation. But Gerkin would argue, "the image of a wise and caring pastor should be placed alongside the prophetic and priestly pastoral care practice rather than be ranked according to their importance," (1997:27). The researcher is in the same pool with Gerkin, believing that putting the models of being a priest, prophet and wise care, along each other, would bring about holistic care to the people who need care in this research. The researcher further believed that the ranking of these pastoral care models might lead the pastor in identifying with one over the other. This could not help the pastor to deal holistically with the problems that the grieving people are facing subsequent to ritualistic funerals.

6.6.3 Pastor as Ritualistic Leader

Gerkin noted that even though we may not take everything of ritualistic tradition from our Christian ancestors, we have learnt from them that the ritualistic pastoral care practices are important. He says, "There is something of the sacramental,

227

liturgical, ritualistic expressions of care by the community of Christian believers to be learnt from the church of the Middle Ages," (1997:82).

These expressions of care, which we have learnt from Christian ancestors, may be administered by both or either the pastoral leadership and the Christian village. The liturgical, ritualistic and sacramental expressions of care may include the ordinations, Eucharist, the administration of baptism, the unction, commendation of mortal remains, burials, commemorations, unveiling of tombstones and death anniversaries. Some death related rituals might involve the participation of people from various religions who have come to comfort the grieving family. Concerning the rituals Mwiti says, "in Africa, many local communities normally gather after the announcement of death to comfort the bereaved persons to express the deepest human emotions that cannot be expressed through another form,'' (1999:12). The pastoral caregivers need to be cognizant about these emotional reactions in order to be able to bring the appropriate necessary therapy for the restoration and guidance of the soul. This is done to free the souls from the bondages of ritual prohibition grief subsequent to unnatural death. Pastoral caregivers should also consider adding in their post burial therapy visiting families on the date their loved succumbed to unnatural death. There should be a special designed service for healing the survivors and commendation of the departed soul.

6.7 The Psychotherapy

Phares cited Wolberg (1967) defining the term in this way, "Psychotherapy is a form of treatment for problems of an emotional nature in which a trained person deliberately establishes a professional relationship with a patient with the object of removing, modifying or retarding existing symptoms, of mediating disturbing

patterns of behavior, and promoting positive personality growth and development,''(1997:294).

Sommers-Flanagan, J. & R. quoted Anna O. an early psychoanalytic patient of Breuer who referred to the treatment she received as, "the talking cure.'' According to them, ''this is an elegant and albeit vague description of psychotherapy," (2015:7). This is a person-to-person interrogative and conversation session between the therapist and the client with the intention to help the grieving family members find cure and closure after being prohibited form burial rituals.

Psychotherapy aims to improve an individual's well-being and mental health. It helps to resolve or mitigate troublesome behaviors, beliefs, compulsions, or emotions and to improve family relations broken by unnatural death ritual prohibitions and conflicts.

According to Phares, "during this interaction the healer seeks to relieve the sufferer's distress and disability through symbolic communications, primarily words but also sometimes bodily activities. Psychotherapy also often includes helping the patient to accept and endure suffering as an inevitable aspect of life that can be used as an opportunity for personal growth,'' (1997:294). Pastoral caregivers should facilitate such programs for women and children who find themselves in great pain during the grief of unnatural death. If the situation is beyond their strength and capacity, they may even refer them to mental health professionals such as psychologists, clinical social workers, professional counselors, marriage and family therapists and psychiatrists.

Phares emphasizes the importance of these therapies as he writes, ''For example, a frequently cited meta-analytic review of over 475 psychotherapy outcome studies

229

reported that the average person receiving psychological treatment is functioning better than 80% of those not receiving treatment,'' (1997:294-295).

He further says, "Some have stated that psychotherapy without anger, anxiety, or tears is no psychotherapy at all.

Psychotherapy is an emotional experience, ''Therefore the release of emotions or catharsis as it is sometimes termed is a vital part of most psychotherapies," (1997:298). This reveals the significance of paying individual attention to the grievers in order to draw them out of the predicament and for them to find closure and move on with life.

Pastoral caregivers should sacrifice their resources; especially the time, for the sake of those who are in predicament in order to heal their emotional wounds.

6.8 The Bibliotherapy

Bibliotherapy can be used with clients of any age, especially women and children who are struggling with loss and grief. According to Robinson, ''Bibliotherapy is a technique that purposefully uses books in a creative and therapeutic way…,'' (2012:306). Bibliotherapy is used as a recreational therapy intervention. These books contain stories that can serve to normalize experiences, and establish similarities and differences to the women or child's own situation or trauma during the period of mourning unnatural death in a traditional family. Books can assist women and children in healing and developing effective coping skills after they experience turmoil due to prohibitions in burial rituals.

According to Robinson, ''In therapy, I often find that children engage well with stories and identify with characters to the extent they report no longer feeling alone in their loss,'' (2012:306). Through the discussion of storybook characters, women and children are able to integrate concepts of dying and find personal meaning in their grief, increasing their understanding of self in relation to other practices and the world.

According to Robinson, ''in therapy, books also help children to distance usefully from their experiences of loss, which facilitates construal from alternative perspectives and fosters therapeutic change in a developmentally appropriate way. *Would you change anything in it? If so, what would you change?* Children are invited to discuss particular themes that emerge from reading a story, using questions such as *"In your own words, tell me about the story. How would you like the story to have ended*?'' Such questions help children to re-story their life so that they are able to anticipate a more hopeful future,'' (2012:306).

The exploratory approach to conversations between the women or the child and the therapist makes bibliotherapy a collaborative, interactive technique. This technique may not be appropriate or may need to be adapted for those clients with complex bereavement, or difficulties with concentration, reading or verbal reasoning. Nevertheless, it is the duty of the pastoral caregivers to discern the relevant time for this therapy; recommend relevant books, scriptures and other literature dealing with bereavement in the Xhosa culture.

6.9 The Process of Bereavement in the Xhosa Culture

The Xhosa people are part of the Southern Nguni group and are mainly based in the Eastern Cape Province of the Republic of South Africa.

They are divided into several subgroups that are distinct but related. These subgroups are Bhaca, Bomvana, Mfengu, Mpondo, Mpondomise and Xesibe. The majority of the Xhosa people live in the Eastern Cape, followed by Western Cape, Gauteng, Free State, KwaZulu-Natal, North West, Mpumalanga, Northern Cape and Limpopo Provinces.

The Xhosa people speak IsiXhosa, which is the second most common language spoken in South Africa after IsiZulu, (<http://.www.geometry.net/detail/basic 15/05/2021).

Bereavement in the Xhosa culture can be understood in the Xhosa saying that "*Umntu ngumntu ngabantu*" which translates to – a person is a person because of others; a concept developed by Mbiti from English idiom, no man is an island.

One cannot journey alone without others. This implies that relationships rather than individuality define the self.

The bereaved is expected to behave in the expected way than the way she or he feels. Manyedi argues, ''the communal nature that exist in the black culture sometimes becomes disadvantageous to the bereaved as the community has expectations that the bereaved must do for instance undergo a particular process when bereaved,'' (2003:69). Somhlaba and Wait also put it in this way, ''In the traditional Xhosa culture the bereaved is expected in the first twelve months of mourning to conform to cultural norms set for bereavement,'' (2008:354). The strain is that men are relieved from this kind of bereavement.

This creates an emotional strain to the bereaved women and children because even if she/he does not feel like observing a certain process, one has no choice but to observe it to be accepted as part of the community.

Somhlaba *et al* further contend by saying, ''while support may be intended to help the bereaved ease their pain and suffering, the providers of support often unwittingly overburden the grieving family with heavy demands and direct interference into the private family matters,'' (2008:344). All families form part of the broader community around them. As part thereof, each family has an obligation, whether like it or not, to cultural standards and norms of that particular community.

Unnatural death is perceived as a bad omen in the Xhosa culture, to the extent of being contagious. Edward Wimberley says of culture," Culture activates shame as much as families and peers do. Each culture has riddles for predicting, controlling and responding to experiences. These rules carry with them systems of evaluating people and are powerful forces of social control," (1999:67). The Xhosa culture has a strong belief in the life after death. Soga says, "Death to the Xhosa people does not mean extinction. The soul lives on, continuity of the family is preserved, and the spirits of the departed have direct communication with the leaving: the living minister to the wants of those who have gone before," (1931:20). This explanation is the background in which bereavement in the traditional Xhosa culture should be understood, that a deceased is not regarded as dead but continues to live on, albeit in another realm.

In the Xhosa culture, the bonds between the living and the deceased are not supposed to be severed but to be maintained.

In addition, in the Xhosa culture death marks the beginning of a new phase of family membership, thus understanding of the relationship of the traditional Xhosa with their ancestors is important in the understanding of their worldview. The dead acquire the status of being called ancestors. Nel defines the ancestors in this way, ''those elders, living or dead – of the family, clan and tribe – with whom there is a significant attachment,'' (2007:12). This therefore means that in the African worldview the relationship between the living and the dead is perpetual. The Xhosas perform the following rituals in order to maintain the deceased. When a member of the family dies, *umkhapho* (to accompany) ritual is performed in order to accompany (*ukukhapha*) the deceased to the land of the ancestors. Van Heeden says, "The purpose of this ritual is to help facilitate the movement beyond so that the departed may be able to come back later and to keep the bonds between the deceased person and the bereaved alive,'' (2005:7). The research has proved that the Xhosa traditional people have a strong belief on life after death. They value the death rituals as to them they are meaningful to both the survivors and the living dead. They make it a point that no stage is missed.

Umkhapho is followed by *umbuyiso* (bringing back). The purpose of this ritual is to bring back home the spirit of the deceased. According to Van Heeden, ''this ritual is usually done after a year, the deceased has passed on,'' (2005:8). The contributions of the respondents who had an experience of an encounter with the deceased directly and indirectly, highlighted that the deceased are still in life. Even though this is not scientifically proven, the incidents as narrated by the respondents command the tolerance and the respect of all the religions due to their individual mysteries and myths. The responses and the stories of respondent 5.7.5 (Mxolisi)

and 5.11.5 (Mjoli) clarify and encourage the observance of these rituals because even if they may be neglected or done haphazardly now but the living dead will demand them in a certain.

Mxolisi says, "*no one is forced to follow these principles but the deceased claim them. Just a resent scenario, a young man of 32 years was stubbed to death. The body was delivered from the funeral parlor to his home via the place when he was murdered. A mistake happened where my elder brother only talked to the body of the deceased without caring umphafa (buffalo thorn). As a result, the deceased appeared to some family members complaining that his soul is still there and wants to be taken home. The family had to perform that ritual last year.*"

On the other hand, Mjoli puts it in this way, "*I believe that there is life after death. I have a number of testimonies to support my belief. My paternal uncle died 5 years before my birth. He was stabbed to death, and according to my culture, he was buried on the same day where he fell. His wife had very young children. That she thought there was witchcraft in the death of her husband, she decided to return to her home with children. Her home is under Ntabankulu Municipal District, which is 250km away from my village. In 1998, he appeared to me in a dream complaining that we have neglected him and his children; we don't even invite them in our ceremonies. When I narrated this dream to my mother, she informed me that a month ago, my sister told her about the same dream and same description of a man appeared to me. My mother confidently declared that, that was our uncle.*

The challenged was that no one knew the name of the village in Ntabankulu. The family members decided that a ritual has to be done before their complaining uncle may cause those misfortunes and disasters. As soon as the ritual was performed to

apologize to him and appeal for his assistance in searching for his children, some testimonies followed.

A year later, a certain woman who attended the funeral in my village approached my mother telling her about our family in Ntabankulu. We hastened to follow the track; we arranged the transport and went there with some family members. The person in such a big and densely populated village but without anyone assisting the driver, as no one in the crew knew the destination, when the driver felt to enquire about this family from an average person, believe me; the driver had pulled the vehicle next to the gate of our destination as if he knew. The man then accompanied us to the family hut. The family members were all converged, as if they knew that we were coming. They had prepared umqombothi (Xhosa Beer). We enjoyed ourselves and we explained the motive behind the visit. That is how the family unity started,'' (5.11.4).

The above scenarios might be used as a revelation to the family members who feel segregated and neglected during the burial of the loved ones who succumbed to unnatural death. It is crystal clear here that everyone is buried according to the rites of his/her own religion or beliefs failing on which if one doesn't belong to any the elders' influence may influence the proceedings . If the rituals prohibit someone, the one affected should grieve knowing that all what is done is performed for the benefit of both the survivors and the deceased. If viewing and throwing soil in the grave during burial were the only means of finding closure, therefore the bereaved should explore more alternatives as exposed in this research and research what other cultures do.

6.10 The Bereavement and the Cultural Diversity

According to Bougere, "cultural diversity refers to the differences between people based on a shared ideology and valued set of beliefs, norms, customs and meanings evidenced in a way of life," (2008:81). Selepe and Edward's argument is, "before modern technology and professional funeral services existed, grief was more shared and more public whereby rituals would be performed in their process of bereavement," (2008:1). The researcher concurs with the above scholars. It is real that the colonization and civilization corrupted the African culture. Families in our days find themselves subscribing in different cultures with contrasting set of norms and standards. There is evidence that when family members come from two different cultures there is a strong potential for misrepresentation and poor communication. Overall, this implies that any bereaved person from any cultural group can experience the bereavement process discussed above.

At the same time cultural traditions, beliefs and values do make a difference in how people outwardly express their grief and how they try to cope with it. Waliggo has this suggestion, "to provide cultural sensitive care, health care professionals must possess an understanding of cultural practices and how they affect the overall grief experience of the client," (2006:236). As already mentioned above, bereavement takes place within the context of families and communities and is played out through interaction. Specific bereavement practices vary depending on the cultural diversity of the person.

237

According to Waliggo, ''failure to follow through with certain traditional practices or rituals after death of a person can have a devastating impact on the family of the deceased and can result in an experience of unresolved loss and lack of closure,'' (2006:237). The scenarios narrated by the research respondent in chapter 5, prove what is said by Waliggo to be correct. It is through that note that the researcher appeals to the grieving family members; women and children who are forbidden to participate in these rituals, to endure these regulations, as they are there not to hurt but to protect them and assist the deceased. For them to be able to find closure they should not cling on the cultural rituals that segregate and devastate them but should learn to understand the situation and move on; with the aid of the pastoral caregivers. The researcher advises this fully aware of the fact that people freely subscribe to different religions and the Constitution of The Republic of South Africa provides that as a right with freedom.

According to the SACRRF, ''These include the right to gather to observe religious beliefs, freedom of expression regarding religion, the right of citizens to make choices according to their convictions, the right to change their faith, the right to be educated in their religion, the right to educate their children in accordance with their philosophical and religious convictions and the right to refuse to perform certain duties or assist in activities that violate their religious beliefs,'' (en.m.wikipedia.org: 10/09/2022). On the other hand, Safonte-Stumolo and Dunn say, "One of the greatest obstacles to successful grieving is the assumption made by clinicians that, because the same family members have lost the same individual, they will grieve or experience the loss the same way. In reality dissimilar

238

experiences seem to be the norm in the families let alone in the same cultural groups, '' (2000:334).

The above opinions may not always work in the Xhosa culture not everything is democratic; thus, some practices are inherited from the ancestors. Yes, we live in a democratic country where the individual's rights are respected and protected. However, families have their own structures and protocols that need honor.

Some families are putting the family activities first before the individual; in that way the individual's personal concerns might not be entertained if they class with their culture. It is the researcher's opinion that the families should try to unite even if there is diversity. The families should take a leaf from respondent Tyatyeka who says about his family, "*We respect one's faith and keep the family bonds. No one is forced to follow a certain religion. However, we support one another as a family even if our religions differ. As I have mentioned above, in my family we respect one's beliefs. No one is deprived from what she/he believes to be a good practice. We don't hesitate to pour our opinions if we anticipate a danger in a particular situation.*

He further says, "*The religion is there to unite people not to divide them; therefore, it is good to respect one's religion. In my family, we encourage the respect and tolerance towards one another's religion. Even when preparing for any family activity we encourage the family unity; we all contribute towards the preparations and emphasize the ministry of presence if time warrants*,'' (5.7.3).

The researcher believes that home should be the first point of therapy. That therefore demands that things should be done unanimously, in sympathy and

empathy by the family members, where each step to be taken is clarified and detailed so that no one is in the dark.

If that can be the case, no one can be left in turmoil during the unnatural death rituals because everyone could be well orientated.

6.11 The Preliminary Conclusion

The research proved death painful and sorrowful, as some participants have not yet found closure and some families have still unresolved issues subsequent to unnatural death protocols. However, the theologians from the Western and the African views all agree that death is not a complete destruction of life. Life goes beyond the grave. Hence Mbiti referred to the dead as the living dead; thus he says, ''the living-dead are bilingual, they speak the language of men with whom they lived until recently, and they speak the language of the spirits and of God.

They are still part of their families; they know and still find interest in the lives of their families. The living-dead are the best intermediaries between man and God,'' (1970:83). Hick explains death by saying, "Death is our way to God, for those who die are thought of as having 'gone to God', 'are among saints', 'are among the angels,'' (1976:207). The researcher agrees with Mbiti and Hick because this proves that life goes on beyond the grave. Therefore, people combine their sorrow over the death of someone with the hope of reunion emanating from the belief that, death is not the end and that the departed continue to live in the hereafter. That explains a reason why African traditional families are so sensitive of what is done when there is death in the family.

This chapter therefore helps to arm the pastoral care givers to be able to bring therapy to those who are bruised by the rituals of unnatural death and to provide awareness to other family members for future purposes.

This further helps both Christians and Africans to understand death and its impact on human beings. The church should consider the capacitation of the church ministers, both laity and clergy to be able to deal with social, psychological, interpersonal and spiritual problems in order to be able to pull out those who are languishing in the pool of trouble, subsequent to them unexpected loss of their loved ones and prohibitions of cultural practices. This research has proved that sudden death's protocols leave families with a great deal of unfinished business; dealing with this is complex for everyone. The world has seen that ideas on grief have developed over recent years, with greater understanding that there is work involved.

It seems more likely that, unless people are empowered to deal with them, the pain of the past remains like an unexploded bomb primed to go off when some new experience hooks into the hidden past. Therapists must recognize this phenomenon if they are not to be puzzled by some instances of apparently inexplicable anger and sadness. The pastoral caregivers as shepherds and therapists should strive to bring healing to the troubled souls. They should lead them to the green pastures. They should play a reconciliatory function to those families that were divided by the rituals during the mourning of unnatural death. They should intervene being fully aware of the grieving stages and able to turn those who are fully labeled with grudge into forgiveness in order to have the peace of mind. The researcher is also of the view that people cannot only talk

about traditional African funeral rites and rituals without mentioning cultural diversity in an area like Eastern Cape, in Republic of South Africa; the researcher's province . Even with funeral rituals, bereaved families copy others and cannot explain why they are doing it.

There is not only radical change in the processes of cultural, social and political changes but also there are religious factors that affect traditional African funeral rites and rituals. For example in the ancient times those who died in an unnatural way were buried where they fell on the same day because there were no mortuaries. There was no involvement of the state, no funeral schemes, no social organizations etc., but things now are no longer the same because of the social, religious, political, economic and cultural changes that have occurred the recent centuries. The researcher is adamant that forgiveness should be the constant stage in this fitful life, in order to cure the broken soul. The caregivers as the shepherds should prescribe the best therapy and refer their flock to other therapists so that they get complete from the turmoil caused by prohibition on rituals during the mourning of unnatural death.

The researcher wishes to conclude with the comforting words of the Provincial Speaker of the Eastern Cape Parliament, Mr. Mlibo Qhoboshiyane, when the Education Portfolio Committee visited the Mbangatha family as mentioned in chapter 5 and 7 during the sudden death of their son Qhawe. He comforted the family under this theme, ''In the midst of imitation there is something real,'' 25/07/2022. He made an analogy about the children who would role play the family setting, dressing accordingly, involving lot of creativity but when time to go home arrives, they put on their own garments, cease to role play and go back their original

positions. He concluded his well-presented analogy, which the researcher has summarized above by stating that the truth is that the life of limitation has a short life full of tribulations, troubles and trauma but the real home is awaiting, full of perpetual joy and happiness.

The fact is that, even though the grieving family members may be troubled and bruised by the cultural traditional rites, they must still have the hope of the eternal life that the pastoral caregivers are preparing them for.

The next chapter; also the closing one, will be dealing with the limitations, the findings, the recommendations, the conclusion and the recommendations for further research projects.

CHAPTER 7

FINDINGS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

7.1 INTRODUCTION

This is a closing chapter, following the chapter that dealt with healing methodology. As mentioned in the previous chapter, this chapter is going to engage on the limitations, findings, conclusions as well recommendations for further research projects. The researcher conducted the interviews with the aid of semi-structured questions that guided responses and enabled them to provide in-depth information. The seven themes that sprang up from the findings of the research that was conducted about the turmoil that is caused by the religions to children and women when families are dealing with unnatural death will be discussed in this chapter. The following themes emerged:

a) Evangelizing Instead of Comforting

b) Sound Biblical Teachings

c) Gender Disparities

d) Weathering the Storm

e) Christianity and Xhosa Traditional Culture

f) Significance of Bodies

g) Designing a New Liturgy

Recommendations will be given in order to practically implement the conclusion that is made from the findings and for further research projects.

7.2 THE LIMITATIONS OF THE STUDY

7.2.1 The withdrawal of the participants

The investigation provided the information on grief that is caused by the Xhosa tradition during the mourning process of the unnatural death. However, there were some limitations necessitating to be mentioned as they might have played a role in influencing the overall findings of this study. Dealing with such a sensitive topic like unnatural death, some people did not want to participate as they are still in anger and denial, following the loss of their loved ones through unnatural death. They did not want to participate in the research as they still regard their loved ones as still alive; and not dead.

For example, a woman had agreed to my plea to be interviewed, her son-in-law who is my neighbor marshaled this process. To my surprise, my neighbor called me indicating that the appointment is aborted. When I tried to enquire the reason, he informed me that his mother-in-law had decided to cancel the appointment. What worried him was that, she vehemently denied that her son passed away. She knew nothing about the accident but insisted that her son is in Cape Town. It is where he was working before his unexpected death in a terrible accident, on his way back to Eastern Cape. On the other hand, that was a blessing in disguise as they were not

245

aware that she has not registered the loss in her mind, but still on denial. As the family, they started to give meaning to some of her habits since her son passed on five years ago. For example, she objected to the distribution of her son's clothing, movable and fixed assets.

She often visits her son's house, which is about 2km away from her home. She usually spends a couple of days there alone. She is an introvert by nature but she became worse after the tragic death of her son. Subsequently, I suggested that they should consider seeking for the professional help, before it is too late. My neighbor and his spouse appreciated my advice and confessed that they had been monitoring her but the outbreak of COVID-19 in 2020 disturbed them, as they were locked-down in Gauteng Province for almost a year.

7.2.2 The COVID-19 & the Lockdown Levels

The outbreak of COVID-19 led to the enforcement of the lockdown levels by the State President through the Department of Cooperative Governance and Traditional Affairs (CoGTA), under the Disaster Management Act 57 of 2002, to combat the spread. According to Government Gazette No 43148, "for the period of lockdown-

(i)   every person is confined to his or her place of residence, unless strictly for purpose of performing an essential service, obtaining an essential good or service, collecting a social grant, or seeking emergency, lifesaving, or chronic medical attention delayed the process for almost a year.

People were forced to remain at home and only moved for essential services like food, funerals and health problems;

(ii)   Every gathering as defined in regulation 1 is hereby prohibited, except for funeral as provided for in sub-regulation (8)…,'' (2020:6).

This happened during the level 5 of the lock down. The sensitivity of the research and the vulnerability of the sample without doubt demanded face-to face, more especially on the third category; that is the category of parents and siblings.

The investigation process was initially intended to be face-to-face interviews but the struggle to secure appointments with the respondents compelled the researcher to make use of virtual conversations; as the researcher was so desperate to have these respondents for his process of interviews because of their experience and exposure for this research topic. Morse pointed out, "qualitative research must be a biased activity,'' (2010:238). Rudestam and Newton added, ''this is because qualitative researchers deliberately seek knowledgeable respondents who can contribute significantly to enriching the understanding of a phenomenon,'' (2015:123).

Some, especially in the second category (clergy and congregants) received the questionnaires as per a covenant but never responded; only continually kept procrastinating. To avoid late submissions the researcher had no choice but to replace them. The researcher had to use anyone available without considering his/her level of education and fluency in English; which is a research language.

7.2.3 Language Barrier and the Expression

The participants were not English speaking people; as a result, the majority of the respondents were interviewed in Xhosa. Translation into English was required after the transcription of interviews. This process was tedious and very time consuming and may have affected the time line of the study.

Due to the use of the structured interviews, using open-ended questions, there were many differences in the degree of the responses and the answers varied in length, detail and quality. This increased the difficulty and complexity in categorization.

Another issue the researcher noticed was that, in some instances control over the interview process was reduced because some participants often brought in many issues that, although significant to the topic, were not relevant to the focus of the present research. For example, Pumla says when asked about what aggravated the grief, "*The adherence of the hospital to COVID-19 regulations barred us from visiting him before he was operated. We feel that he died not at peace with us; feeling that we have abandoned him*, (5.9.2). On the other hand, when Nobonga was asked how she felt; she answered, "*I am really in pains. Many things happened after the death of my brother. His death divided us as the siblings and as the extended family because some of my siblings accused some family members of bewitching Anele; as a result, my uncle's family didn't attend the funeral and the rituals the family performed. I feel sad that ever since he passed on, he never appeared in my dreams*, (5.9.1). They raised concerns that also needed the attention of the researcher, as a pastoral caregiver.

It has been proven in this research that the participant's interest in the study may influence the data. For example Bertram and Christiansen state, ''participants are

also likely to give the kinds of answers that they think are socially acceptable or that they know the researcher wants to hear,'' (2018:184).

On a negative note, they also specify, ''if a person is uninterested in being interviewed and sees it a waste of time, he or she will probably want to get the process over as quickly as possible and thus give quick answers,'' (2018:184). Some respondents signaled the signs of heart-brokenness and misery as questions were challenging their emotional wounds. The researcher would at times stop the process of interviews and get into her/his world of pain in order to bring therapy, tame the storm and then move on with the interviews.

7.3 FINDINGS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

7.3.1 Evangelizing instead of comforting

7.3.1.1 The Findings

From this research, it transpired that in other instances some Christian groups use the funeral service as an opportunity to proselyte new members instead of comforting the family members especially the women and children who are prohibited by the Xhosa traditionalists. Instead of focusing on and being concerned with emotional well-being of the grieving family, these Christian groups seem to be more focusing on gaining new members and marketing their denominations. De White had similar findings. She argues, ''church leaders also use the church burial as a pressure mechanism, threatening people that they only are 'good Christians' if they regularly attend service and pay their tithes, then the church will bury them,''

(2011: 194). That has nothing to do now with comforting the disgruntled and wounded grieving family members; whereas the expectation at this moment is striving towards nurturing them back to a degree of normalcy.

7.3.1.2 The Recommendations

The researcher is also of the view that the church should not take advantage of the grieving family for their mission of evangelism. The funeral should not be an instrument for converting people but an instrument for comforting, deconstructing and debriefing the grieving family members. The focus should be on assisting the family members to be able to deal with the pain of losing the loved one in an accidental death that was not expected.

The main aim is to help them to deal with death and pain so that they may finally move on with their lives. These programs should aim at succoring the church to journey well with those who are still disgruntled because the mourning process caused awful agony than healing, subsequent to some religious prohibitions and belief differences. Some respondents are still struggling to find closure because they were prohibited from viewing and giving last respect to their brothers and sons. However, the scenario is irreversible and bodies cannot be exhumed for them to view. The bible study programs should focus on deconstructing such grieving and aggrieved family members by instilling to them the doctrine of the Christian eschatology.

7.3.2 The Sound biblical teaching

7.3.2.1 The Findings

The researcher discovered that the majority of the denominations that were interviewed conduct bible studies.

Nevertheless, they are done unsystematically or without having any guidelines or manuals or any other commentaries that give appropriate scriptural interpretation of the scriptures. Another barrier is the capacitation of the ministers. They lack sound knowledge to impart to the members of the congregation in order to be able to deal with all the life challenges, including cultural beliefs and unnatural death.

The issue of bible study and preaching came out in interviews. It was clear that bible study could help in members dealing with issues of grief and on the relevant issues. Preaching could be used in touching the hearts of members to understand the issue of death. It is through bible study that members of the congregation can be exposed to teachings such as unnatural death, sanctity of life, love, forgiveness, the victory of Christians, the consequences of sin, holiness and other topical issues that are not usually tackled during preaching. These topical issues are very important and should be expanded during bible teaching because they form bases of Christian principles. The role played by the church is noted and gratified with enormous applauds. However, the response of the respondents proves that the therapy methods used were not sufficient to heal the emotional wounds of the grieving family members.

7.3.2.2 The Recommendation

It is high time that the church puts emphasis on bible teaching instead of preaching so that topical issues are discussed in detail for the spiritual maturity of members of the congregation.

The bible studies will help believers to develop love for each other, forgive even the unnatural burial rituals that may cause rift among the family members. Further, if the biblical teaching is emphasized, believers will know that Christ is above all powers and after his death, he was resurrected; and thereafter he conquered death. Therefore that means all believers should not fear and be moved by other religious beliefs; even if the family elders act contrary to their interests in the process of disposing the remains of those who died unnaturally.

The bible mentions that Christians are more than conquers (Romans 8:37) and that all believers were given power to be children of God (John 1:12), therefore we have power from God that is more powerful than that of other deities therefore there is no need to fear and struggle to find closure because of the prohibitions during mourning of the unnatural death. It must be emphasized that God is for everyone and accommodates everyone as the bible says, "so God created … male and female he created them,'' (Gen 1:27). Even if the traditional rites dealing with unnatural death may treat the females as nonentities and subordinates the church should assure them about the unconditional care and providence of God; is for all and without discrimination.

7.3.3 The Gender Disparities

7.3.3.1 The Findings

This research proved that the Xhosa culture is so concerned and cautious with gender when dealing unnatural death. Women are excluded in the process. Generally, the scholars have seen this issue of gender disparities as a global phenomenon.

Nelson-Jones R. writes, ''central to the thinking of many feminists is the idea that men have used their positions of power and influence to oppress women both inside and outside the home….Men are on the inside and women on the outside,'' (2006:425). He further quotes Taylor (1996:208) providing a modified version of this when she states, ''so while there is a recognition that men have been the victims of a sexist culture and its rigid patterns of socialization, it is still men who hold the balance of power and receive a disproportionate share of social rewards and privileges,'' (2006:425).

The following analysis of the research findings proves the above perceptions to be true. The majority of the female respondents in the third category complained about the way they were treated during the mourning period because of their gender. Nokubonga (pseudonym) complained that she was not informed about the changes that were made after an announcement before the day of the funeral. They waited at home, as it was promised that, the body will start at home so that it is viewed but outside the yard; to her (family women's) surprise they noticed a crowd of men coming from the grave yard's side. When she enquired from her brother, she was told that they have already buried Anele (pseudonym), her brother. None of the family elders has given an explanation or apologized to them for the change of plan.

In addition, the story narrated in chapter one about the woman who visited the priest troubled by the way, her child was buried and the incident that happened in the community concerning the exchange of bodies that was noticed at the grave yard. The graveyard incident left her not knowing whether she is mourning for a correct person and whether the grave belongs to her son.

That she is the woman; the family culture does not allow her to voice her concerns. She used the freedom that the church gives to her congregants as they are all treated alike to express herself to her spiritual father. The analysis of this research highlighted that the Xhosa tradition is not treating men and women equally when dealing with unnatural death. Women are sidelined and men are given an upper hand. Women are prohibited from participating in the burial rites. The traditionalists defend their practice stating that this process is done in order to protect the women.

Women are restricted based on their gender and because they are perceived to be less or weaker and more vulnerable than men. Jindra M. and Noret J. say, ''In precolonial Africa, the social ranking of an ancestor was most often based on age, gender, marital status, and especially the existence of children. This was reflected in beliefs about the immortality of the dead, and thus also in funeral rites. Commoners, the unmarried, children, women and those defined as ''bad deaths'' were often denied immortality as ancestors,'' (2011:28). The church is directly affected by this belief because the funeral is the family driven rite. The church dances to the music of the family. Nevertheless, in trying to debrief and console the women who are segregated by the Xhosa, some denominations in their aftercare conduct services in memory for their departed church members. The Jindra and

254

Noret state, ''the Christian promise of an afterlife was attractive to women and to others who were not offered any afterlife under the traditional cosmology,'' (2011:28). The church becomes the strong support system to the troubled and vulnerable women.

The Recommendations

Respondents in category 1, the category of elders and community leaders indicated that the Xhosa traditions have no founder and no written source but depend on an oral tradition. Thus, they change with time and the influence of other cultures. Before the civilization and the introduction of mortuary services people were buried on the same day where they fallen. However, today there is a lot involved in an unnatural death, the police, the forensic pathology health services and the mortuaries. The body is kept for a long time.

Some bodies are damaged in such a way that they cannot be identified. Why this cannot be explained to the women, nobody knows. If bodies are in a good condition to be viewed by the families, one could consider lifting up those prohibitions to women. If you care to look at the services mentioned above that is police, forensic pathology and the mortuaries the employees who handle these bodies are also women. The change in the political, social and religious spheres should also affect and influence the Xhosa traditionalists. These institutions have a belief that men and women are equal and neither is better than the other and neither should be treated with more respect than the other should; everyone should be equal on all levels, simple as that they share equal rights. The church on the other hand as voice of the voiceless should encourage the recognition, empowerment and protection

of females as men's equals in all spheres. If men view bodies, the women should also follow suit in order to weather the storm that torments Xhosa traditional families in the death rituals of unnatural death.

7.3.4 Weathering the Storm

7.3.4.1 The Findings

The researcher has discovered that even though the church is trying to give care to her congregants but it is not enough.

Some respondents indicated that the church members never paid visits after the funeral. In her response, respondent No. 5.9.5, whose pseudonym is Nobusuku, felt that the church and the community did not do much to ease her pain because they were not there when she needed them most.

She ended up trying to soothe her pain by attending the Indaba zoSindiso Services, where she would shed tears without anyone noticing or disturbing her.

Images of the members of Indaba zoSindiso in their prayer meetings

Indaba zoSindiso (News of Salvation) is a popular and large ecumenical group of St Elizabeth Paul's followers who is commemorated by the Anglican Church in Southern Africa on the 13th of May. When they worship, they spend lot of time in corporate praying and dancing to choruses.

Days after the funeral are very crucial to the grieving family members because it's when reality of loss is starting to dawn and the pain of losing the loved unexpectedly is beginning to torment the grievers.

All the things that didn't go well before and during the funerary start to resurface in one's memory, giving birth to resentment and number of emotional strange behaviors. If no care is given one might end up venting his/her anger towards those he/she, feels did not treat him or her well. At this stage, she/he is a danger to herself/himself; as she/he can be violent to the perpetrators or suicidal.

It is also vivid that the pastoral caregivers are found wanting because of their lack of skills of dealing with grieving family members after an unexpected death. That might be one of the reasons why the grievers would end up seeking therapy from professional counselors or physicians with costs.

7.3.4.2 The Recommendations

The research has clearly pointed out that grieving people need help throughout the mourning period. Christian believers have the obligation to reach out to these who are grieved and devastated by unnatural death. They should do that through evangelism so that other people can hear the gospel and receive Christ as their personal Savior.

Milne states, ''any church that ignores evangelism to revive its members as well as reaching unsaved souls is missing its mandate,'' (1982: 114). This implies that people who are victimized by unnatural death need to know the truth about the

gospel. This is the duty of the believers as Christ commissioned his disciples to go into the world.

According to Matthew 28 verses 19 & 20, "therefore go and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, and teaching them to obey everything I have commanded you…,'' (NIV). That means believers must also ensure that they are doing merciful work such as helping the needy, cheering the sick and giving courage to those who are grieved by the unnatural death and traditional rites. The church needs to train her caregivers on how to pastorally journey with the grieving family members throughout the mourning process; until they are completely healed. They should be exposed to different models of dealing with grief. They church should also design different support programs to help those who are grieving unnatural death and other catastrophic grieving incidents. Chapter six of this research might also be helpful to the caregivers in their attempts to get into space of the family members who are grieving the unexpected loss in a Xhosa traditional family.

7.3.5 The Christianity and the Xhosa Traditional Culture

7.3.5.1 The Findings

An interaction between Christianity and Xhosa Traditional Culture cannot be avoided as they form part of the society.

It is normal that when two different religious systems exist in one community, the tendencies of conflicts of socio-religious, ideological, physical, and even political characters will arise between them. Since Christianity encountered the traditional

religion, there has always been a sharp conflict between traditionalists and Christians. Jindra M. and Noret J. say, "in fact, there is considerable degree of diversity in religious practice in Africa today, and burial rites surely reflect pluralism, with a spectrum of practices that range from an exclusive commitment to the practice of one religion (even then with much diversity, depending on the specific denomination or tradition) to the common situation of both Christian and traditional rites being performed in parallel, sometimes with tension, sometimes with mutual respect," (2011:29). The two religions possess contrasting views and practices when it comes to the burial of a person who has died in an unnatural way.

The research has vividly proved that the traditionalists perform some ritualistic ceremonies before burying a dead person as mentioned in chapter 4 of this study, which openly dealt with the Xhosa mourning rituals. Some Christian denominations are opposed to these ceremonies, except the majority of the African Independent Churches and some main line churches who merged the Christian and the traditional beliefs. Jindra and Noret noted, "in the second half of the twentieth century, more churches began to adopt elements of local traditions, from rites to musical styles," (2011:29). However, not all the denominations adopted the African culture. In some families where the African traditions are still practiced, there are prohibitions that are traumatic to those who are segregated in the process of the burial of the body of a person who died unnaturally.

That is caused by the fact that the traditionalists have to perform a number of cleansing and farewell ceremonies before the funeral. A number of these rites exclude women and children. The church therefore may struggle to get into their world of pain, as the church has to toe the line of the family elders.

7.3.5.2 The Recommendations

Because every Xhosa family is made up of Christians and traditionalists, they should not shun one another but should discuss their differences, especially the Christians who are in the majority. The Christians should take it as their responsibility to educate and explain to the traditionalists the objective and definition of religion. The findings of this study vividly show that the two religions have their strengths and weaknesses. It is recommended that the two should realize that both of them are virtually doing the same thing.

They should therefore open a path to discuss their differences and be tolerant with each other. These differences should be discussed in the family meetings before hand. For example Mr. Tyatyeka (pseudonym) one of the respondents in chapter 5, category 1, stated that in his family they affiliate to different religions, Christianity and African Traditional Religion but when they have any religious activity they put aside those differences and work together as the family. They detail each step that is taken, so that all family members are fully informed whether they are prohibited or allowed to participate in the event. They value and maintain the family values. Covey S.R. in his 7 habits of highly effective people suggests, ''synergy is everywhere in nature.

If you plant two plants close together, the roots commingle and improve the quality of the soil so that both plants will grow better than if they were separated,'' (1999:263). He defines synergy by saying, "…it means that the whole is greater than the sum of its parts,'' (1999:263-264). That means if the Christian Religion and the

African Traditional Religion can work together in the disposal of the remains of the victims of unnatural death, commingling their rituals and reasoning together; a lot can be achieved and women can benefit. That the body of the deceased proves to be so important during the mourning period these religions should see to it that no one is excluded in the process.

7.3.6 The Significance of Bodies

7.3.6.1 The Findings

Accidental deaths can be particularly onerous for the women and children to recover from, more so when the deceased's body has not been viewed. This was evident during the interviews of the third category that is of parents and siblings, only two out of six members had an opportunity to view their child. The four respondents that did not view the bodies of their loved ones, and they are still having the feeling of resentment and anger. They are struggling to accept that their loved ones are no longer living as they never even saw their coffins. The only images they have are those of the last encounter with them. Nokubonga (pseudonym) in 5.11.1 who is still struggling to come to terms with the loss of her brother compared the grief she felt when she lost her mother and how significant the viewing of her body was towards her reaching the fifth stage of grief which is acceptance.

She is still in denial and this is a pain she does not know its destination. Respondent 5.7.2, Mr Tyatyeka (pseudonym) stipulated vividly the bodies of the unnatural death victims are not viewed by women and children as are believed not to be strong enough to endure traumatic situations. The body might be damaged beyond

recognition. He further narrated the story of her daughter who lost her son in a terrible accident, and forced to go and view her son's body even though she was prohibited to do so. She could not endure what she saw and she came out of the mortuary like a nincompoop. Coming to the two that viewed, Mjoli (5.11.4) and Nobusuku (5.11.5) (pseudonyms); they are the couple. Nobusuku did not recall anything about viewing as she was in a state of depression. She could not recall anything about the funeral service of her son. It was only revealed by her husband that they both viewed the body of her son who drowned to death.

7.3.6.2 The Recommendations

The scenarios of Nobusuku and Mr Tyatyeka's daughter leave me lingering, and not knowing whether to say viewing the unnatural death body is therapeutic or devastating. Their reactions to the situations tempt me to concur with the Xhosa culture that women and children should be prohibited from viewing body if the injuries that the deceased sustained have changed his/her identity, so that they keep the original image. This reminds me of former Mrs. Mbangatha's at the forensic pathology service's center when she refused to go and view the body of her son.

A nurse by profession, she randomly said, *"I don't want any new image of Qhawe, I just want to keep the one of the Qhawe I know; my son."* I felt like persuading her to go and view so that she finds closure but having viewed the body I just realized that she was veracious because the boy sustained face and head injuries that completely changed his image. The issue of viewing bodily and badly harmed bodies need to be assessed by the family elders and people who insist should

undergo a previewing counsel, to avoid further emotional trauma. A special service for viewing should be arranged by the family and the church at least few days before the funeral.

7.3.7 Designing a New Liturgy

7.3.7.1 The Findings

The church plays a pivotal part in the life of our community, especially through worship, preaching, burial and pastoral care. The majority of the churches complained that their liturgy is very silent concerning unnatural death. The respondents in category B, in chapter five stated that there is no special liturgy for unnatural death burial; they use the same liturgy for any type of death. Their exposure to different situations proved their liturgy very shallow as compared to the depth of the wound to heal; resulting to a delayed healing process.

7.3.7.2 The Recommendations

It is not the intention of the researcher to interfere with the any existing liturgy of the church, but to supplement wherever needed. The liturgy will hopefully aid in empowering the clergy in the confusion of unnatural deaths and funeral services.

The research has brought to light that sometimes a clash arises between the church and the cultural family; therefore, the liturgy should be designed in such a way that it bridges the gap between the church and the family. Moreover, the liturgy should also talk to the hearts and minds of the prohibited family members.

The suggested order of service:

264

Item	Responsibility
Hymn	Choir
Introduction of the Officiating Minister	Church Member
Hymn/ Chorus	Choir
Corporate Prayer	All
Lord's Prayer	Choir
Reading of the Word *(The Lesson should relevant to death, resurrection, love, forgiveness and salvation and hope)*	Church Member
Hymn/Chorus	Choir
Preaching of the Word	Officiating Minister *(May delegate)*
Words of encouragement	Church members who have experienced such death
Collection of Gifts	All
Blessing of Gifts	Officiating Minister *(May be delegated)*
Corporate Prayer *(for the family and the deceased)*	All
Hymn / Chorus	
Vote of thanks and announcements *(Explaining the proceedings of the funeral/mourning period)*	Family

Benediction/ Final Blessing	Officiating Minister
END	

This liturgy is not intended to supersede or replace the existing liturgy of any church. It could be used to augment or fill the gaps that are there when one is dealing with unnatural death in Xhosa tradition. I hope that this liturgy can go a long way to feel the gap as it accommodates all the involved parties; that is the church and the family.

7.4 The Conclusion

The aim of this study has been to find a way of pastorally journeying with grieving families for an unnatural death in a Xhosa traditional family.

Grief care also heightened by the events that transpired after the death of their loved ones through unnatural death cause. In this process, women and children are barred from participating in the pre-burial and burial death rituals. The failure is attributed to the fact that women and children are hardly ever present when adults are grieving and mourning unnatural death. There are rituals that are performed by mourners, particularly the family members and these rituals are culturally determined.

The rituals play a significant role in processing grief but are focused on male adults. However, women and children seldom participate in performing the rituals. According to the researcher, this affects mostly those who affiliate to other religions like Christianity and Islam. The research has proven that some family

members succumb to syncretism. There are denominations and people who merge different religious beliefs. However, the traditionalists preserve their protocols as they regard and accept them as part of their culture. However, those who practice Christian life in a Xhosa traditional family fail to accept the authenticity of these rites. However, the family elders whose major role is to protect the family traditions do not succumb or show empathy to their feelings and emotions; which they know emanate from other religious beliefs and traditions.

Mbiti puts it clearly in this way, ''yet we must take note that there are conflicts between Christian life and the life of those who follow only African Religion. …conflicts arise concern traditional African rituals, especially those of offerings in connection with the departed, African initiation rites, marriage customs, the place of sorcery, evil magic and witchcraft in African life, and methods of dealing with disease, misfortunes and suffering,'' (1975:191). He observes, "Followers of a given religion are often ready to fight and defend it or something related to it. They are sometimes unreasonable fierce and fanatical if their religion is threatened by force or disrespected. They treasure their religion, and anything that threatens it would seem to threaten their whole existence,'' (1975:197).

The stories narrated in chapter 1 and the interviews in chapter 5 as well as the findings and recommendation in chapter 7 attest to what Mbiti is saying above, because if people were not influenced by other religious practices, no one would be complaining about the traditional cultural practices, thus prohibitions from burial rites. If families were practicing one religion, they would be loyal and follow their cultural practices and beliefs without complaint or comparison.

According to Mbiti, ''African Religion does not seek to compete with the other religions or with science; it only wants to cooperate in the search for a better understanding of the world in which mankind lives, and in working for the welfare of all peoples, (1975:194). Mbiti is of the view that each religion has to be respected as he states, ''we cannot say that African Religion is better or worse than these other religions. It is simply the religious system, which African ancestors developed in response to their life's situations,'' (1975:194). An old English proverb says there is no smoke without fire.

That means even if one might not comprehend the rationale behind these rituals, the truth of the matter is that there is probably a good reason for it. According to Parrinder, "The ritual surrounding death is long and complex in most places. The great aim of much time and expense is to ensure a proper funeral for the departed, so that his spirit may be contented in the world beyond, and will not return as a dissatisfied ghost to plague his family. Funerals are last transitional rites, introducing a man into the world of spirits. Bodies are usually buried as soon possible after death, because of the putrefaction of corpses in hot countries,'' (1981:98). What Parrinder explains here qualifies the foresaid English expression.

Therefore, the pastoral caregivers have a duty of bridging the gaps that are caused by conflict of contrasting religious beliefs that emerge during unnatural death. It has surfaced that nuclear families practice different religions, some with Christian churches that regard traditional religion as evil and barbaric, yet some churches have intermingled Christianity and Xhosa traditional religions.

Mbiti explains, ''Some African Christians have broken off from mission Churches and formed their own where they are able more freely to incorporate traditional

African customs into their Christian life. At the same time, they are trying to make Christianity reach the roots of African life and bring hope where there was no hope. Many people in fact follow a combination of African Religion and Christianity..., (1975:192). He continues, '' Furthermore, African Christians often feel complete foreigners in mission churches. For example, much of formal Christianity is based on books but there are older Christians who do not read; the hymns are translated from European, English and American versions and are sung to foreign tunes, which have little rhythm, and without bodily movements like clapping the hands or twisting the loins as a religious expression. Worship in mission churches is simple dull for most Africans. However, Independent Churches are an attempt to find a place to feel at home, not only in worship but also in the whole profession and expression of Christian Faith.

Beneath the umbrella of Independent Churches, African Christians can freely shed their tears, voice their sorrows, present their spiritual and physical needs, respond to the world in which they live and empty their selves before God (1989:234).

What Mbiti is saying here is also supported by Mr Msingathi, the respondent in the second category of interviews as he says, "*That is what we are as the St John's Apostolic Faith Mission. Our Christian values are mostly associated with African culture except ubungungoma (divine healing). We perform these death rituals for cleansing in both natural and unnatural deaths,*'' (5.9.3).

The researcher regards this as syncretism hence he is swimming in the same pool with Nokuzola, the respondent in the first category who says, "*Beliefs and practices can never be forced. I just explain my standpoint and leave them alone to avoid conflict of doctrines and practices. However, as a paternal aunt who has spiritual*

269

responsibilities over some of their children I refuse to be dictated and be forced to be syncretic in my job. If they want to do it the Christian way, I simply excuse myself.'' This almost has some similarities to what Tyatyeka says in the same category, "*We respect one's faith and keep the family bonds. No one is forced to follow a certain religion. However, we support one another as a family even if our religions differ*.'' In addition, Skeyi in the second category says, ''*Even if someone in the family tries to persuade us to follow his/her tradition; we don't succumb; rather we withdraw from the funeral and allow the family to officiate. We are known to be firm in our culture; I would say that this might be reason why we don't experience challenges. We conduct our services from the day we receive the news about the death until burial and after care without hassles*,'' (5.9.4).

The researcher is of the view that syncretism should be avoided at all costs, people should be buried according to their religious beliefs, and everyone should respect that. The church should have firm structures of dealing with the pain.

For example, the pain of grieving ritual barriers of unnatural death can be avoided if women and children are provided with grief care. It was established that pastoral care is relevant to women and children's grief. The effectiveness of pastoral care is a result of the Holy Spirit who empowers believers for service. However, pastoral caregivers should appreciate that women and children, like other people, who possess human dignity endowed to them by God therefore, they also need care. It was argued that the church should incorporate the family, village and the institutions in the facilitating of grief care. The family and village play a vital role in the rearing of women and children within the African context. Pastoral care should

also focus on assisting women and children to make decisions and choices for themselves.

Based on this discussion, the pastoral intervention strategy is recommended with practitioner of pastoral care as the key player. In the pastoral intervention strategy, the church is equipped to assist women and children to cope and adjust to the loss of their children and siblings. The church has to offer new channels for its ministry of caring, healing and growth as it was discovered in this research that the caregivers need capacitation. Mbiti expresses, ''through modern change these traditional religions cannot remain intact, but they are by no means extinct. In times of crisis, they often come to the surface, or people revert to them in secret. Traditional religions are not primarily for the individual, but for his community of which he is part,'' (1989:2).

He further articulates, ''Since something of African Religion finds a place in a major religion like Christianity, as we have mentioned, it means that certain aspects of it will be modified by Christianity and kept in the Churches of Africa.

Obviously, some aspects of African Religion will die out, partly through modern education, and partly because of the people's movement to live in the cities. But we need to remember that African Religion is complex, and even if certain aspects of it die out , other aspects will survive and many of them will be changed or transformed to meet the needs of the changing times,'' (1975:193).

Nomaphelo in the second category is trying to bring forth the origin of unnatural death burial rites as she says, "*The generation gap: Most of the traditions and beliefs have been established and adhered to long ago. As time goes on their original meaning has been "diluted" or even changed. For example, the original*

significance of not bringing a sudden death corpse home was that since this death occurred during the time of war it was believed that if the corpse is brought home and seen by women the warriors would be weak in the battle. The second reason was that since the man died of umkhonto (spear) which together with the warriors was strengthened by traditional medicine, the medicine would not work. There is a logic explanation behind this belief- there was no time to bury the dead during war. Man quickly buried the dead man where he has fallen. This belief was later extended to all the people who died with accident including those who died underground in gold mines, car accident, gunshot etc. and with the availability of mortuaries and time to bury the original meaning and logic is lost,'' (5.9.2). The researcher believes that the pastoral caregivers have a duty to enlighten the church members about what the literature contains about these cultural rites. Mbiti says, ''Christianity in Africa is so old that it can rightly be described as an indigenous, traditional and African religion,'' (1989:229).

According to Mbiti, ''at the same time they are trying to make Christianity reach the roots of African life and bring hope where there was no hope,'' (1975:192). In that, way the church will remain relevant to the deep needs of people. According to Mbiti, ''At the same time there are new ideas in the Bible which enrich the people's understanding of the world as interpreted through the Bible and Christian teaching. In particular, they see Jesus Christ as addressing himself to them and not only to the people of his region and time.

His concern with sick, the poor, the hungry and the oppressed, touches at the heart of the African concern as well,'' (190-191). The caregivers should not be afraid to talk about these traumatic events as they explore issues of grief with Xhosa

traditional women and children. The caregivers should continue to provide comfort, support and more importantly, listen empathically to their painful stories in grieving unnatural death, as Jesus Christ did in his ministry.

In order to find a pastoral care model that will help the caregivers and the clergy to therapeutically journey with grieving family members due to the observance of cultural rites in the unnatural death, the five stages of grief by Kubler-Ross were presented by the researcher. A healing methodology was vividly proposed in chapter 6 to journey with those who prohibited by Xhosa tradition to participate in the unnatural death rituals. These 5 stages of grief are there in order to help the grieving family members on how to grieve. The liturgy was also designed as a tool to augment the existing denominational liturgies that were found to lacking and having no clear direction on unnatural death.

The liturgy will hopefully aid in empowering the clergy and the caregivers in the turmoil of unnatural death and the funeral services.

The research has proved beyond reasonable doubt that many people look up to the church for pastoral care. It is therefore of significant importance that the church ought to fully exercise its pastoral role in the community.

The researcher has established through the research interviews that the Xhosa traditional unnatural death rituals indeed bring trauma to the women and children. This research has also brought to light that sometimes a clash arises between the church and the family, subsequent to the cultural values of the community. Even though the researcher believes that the main objectives of this researcher have been achieved; however he feels and recommends further topics to be researched.

7.5 The Recommendation for Further Study

This study has brought to the fore some elements that are a great hindrance to healing after the unnatural death in Xhosa tradition. The cultural beliefs of the family promote or enhance trauma and anxiety. It is in that reason the researcher further invites and recommends research on the following four issues:

- The role of the church in the elimination of prohibitions to women during the grieving process of unnatural death, in a Xhosa traditional family. ☐ The danger of syncretism in a multi-cultural and religious society.
- How the African Independent Churches deal with unnatural death, their mourning rituals, and aftercare.
- The establishment of whether belief that unnatural deaths bring curse to the community is it a myth or a reality.

Should the above four issues be dealt with successfully and the findings as well as the recommendations be implemented, the problem of the pain caused by unnatural death to women and children in traditional family can be addressed and resolved.

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Appendix A

Questions for the Elders/ Community Leaders

Q1. What is your position at home and how big is your family/community?

(*Sithini isikhundla sakho ekhaya kwaye lukhulu kangakanani usapho lwekhaya okanye lwengingqi yakho?*)

Q2. Is your family/community firm, united and holding to the Xhosa culture?

(

Ingabe usapho uluntu kwingingqi yakho luqinile, lumanyene kwaye lubambelele kwinkcubeko kaXhosa?)

Q3. How do you deal with those who refuse to abide by the set standards and norms?

(*Nithini ngabo bangavumiyo ukuhlala kwizigaba nemimiselo ebekiweyo?*)

Q4. Why according to your culture there are different regulations in mourning natural and unnatural deaths and what cultural implications if that is hindered?

(*Kutheni ngokwenkcubeko yakho kukho imigaqo eyahlukileyo ekuzileleni ukufa kwengozi nokufa ngokugula, ithini imiphumela yenkcubeko xa le nzila ingenziwanga?*)

Q5. Do you find resistance within and outside the family/community during this time? If yes, how you react to that?

(*Ingaba kukhona na ukusokoliswa ngeli xesha apha ngaphakathi nangaphandle kosapho okanye kokuhlala?*)

Q6. Why women and children are barred from the disposal of the mortal remains?

(*Kutheni amakhosikazi nabantwana bebekelwa bucala nje ekungcwatyweni kweentsalela?*)

Q7. Have you ever tried to enter into their world of pain to understand the pain and trauma that they went through during this time of grief?

(*Ubukhe wazama na ukungena kwintlungu yabo ukuzama ukuqonda intlungu nokukrazuka abathe bakufuna ngeli xesha lentlungu yokufelwa?*)

296

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Q8. How do you assist them out of the predicament and help them to find closure?

Ubancedisa kanjani kobu bunzima, ubancedisa njani ukuze bafumane ukuxola?)

Q9. According to your opinion, are these cultural norms and regulations in such times of mourning still are relevant in this generation? If nor yes what are the challenges and what can be done to solve them?

(*Ngokoluvo lwakho ingaba le mimiselo nale miqathango ngamaxesha enzila asalungile na kwesi sizukulwana? Ukuba akunjalo ithini imiceli mngeni kwaye kunokuthiwani ukuyisombulula?*)

Q10. What advice can you give to family/community elders who find themselves in the same situation in future?

(*Lithini icebo onokulinika usapho okanye abadala kwingingqi yakho abanokuzifumana bekule meko kwilixa elizayo?*)

Annexure B

Questions for Congregants /Clergy

Q1. For how long have you been in this ministry?

(*Unexesha elingakanani ukolu lungiselelo?*)

Q2. What is your vital role during the time of bereavement?

(I*thini eyona ndima yakho ephambili ngexesha lokufelwa?*)

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Q3. How do you deal with the issue of congregants succumbing to African Religion and culture yet being Christians?

Ukuqubisana njani namarhamente athi engamaKrestu kodwa baphinde baphinde babekho kwinkolo yakwaNtu?)

Q4. Have you ever dealt with the family grieving through abnormal or unnatural death? Can you narrate the major challenges from getting into their world of pain?

(*Wawukhe waqubisana na nosapho olukwintlungu yokushiywa ngendlela engaqhelekanga okanye ngengozi? Ungakwazi ukubalisa imiceli mngeni owathi wahlangabezana nayo ngexesha uzama ukungena kwintlungu yabo?*)

Q5. Did you manage to soothe all of them or not? If not, why?

(*Wakwazi okanye awuzange ukwazi ukubathoba iintlungu bonke? Ukuba awuzange ukwazi kwakutheni?*)

Q6. Are your church services structuring the same for both the natural and unnatural deaths? If not, why?

(*Ingaba iinkonzo zenu zisekwe ngokufanayo kukufa kwengozi nokufa ngokugula?*)

Q7. Is your church support system strong enough to help the pastoral caregivers deal effectively with the unnatural death survivors?

(*Ingaba iintsika zenu zenkonzo zimi ngokomeleleyo ukunceda abefundisi nabo bakhathalele abantu ukuqubisana ngempumelelo nabo bathe bashiywa ngabantu babo ngengozi?*)

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Q8. Are there any amendments you think can be done to the current liturgy of your church regarding the unnatural death?

(*Zikhona izilungiso ocinga ukuba zingenziwa kwinkqubo yecawe yakho ngokubhekiselele kukufa kwengozi?*)

Q9. Considering the cultural and religious clashes that prevail during the time of grief, when do you think, the pastoral caregivers should begin to give therapy to the survivors? Should it be before or after the funeral?

(*Xa sijonge ungquzulwano uluthi lubekho ngexesha le ntlungu yokufelwa, ucinga ukuba leliphi ixesha, ekengafuneka abefundisi nabanye abakhathalele abantu baqalise ukunika intuthuzelo kwabo baseleyo? Ingaba kuphambi okanye kusemva kwesingcwabo?*)

Q10. What advice can you give to pastoral caregivers who find themselves in the same predicament in future?

(Lithini icebo ongalinika *abefundisi nabanye abakhathalele abantu abangazifumana bekule ngxaki kwixa elizayo?*)

Appendix C

Questions for the Parents and siblings

Q1. When did the incident occur?

(*Senzeka nini esi sehlo?*)

Q2. What was your relationship with the diseased and how did you feel when you received the news?

(*Kwakusithini ukuzalana kwakho nomfi kwaye waziva njani xa ufumana ezi ndaba?*)

Q3. What aggravated the grief and making if very hard to accept the loss?

(*Yintoni eyathi yabaxa intlungu isenza kubenzima kakhulu ukwamkela ilahleko?*) Q4. In your opinion what could have been done differently to ease the pain and predicament?

(*Ngokoluvo lwakho yintoni le yahlukileyo yayinokwenziwa ukupholisa intlungu nobu ngxaki?*)

Q5.　What role did the church and the community play, if any?

(*Ndima yini eyadlalwa yicawe nangabahlali, ukuba ikhona?*)

Q6. How are you feeling now?

(*Uziva njani ngoku?*)

Q7. What can be done for you to finally have closure?

(*Yintoni ongayenzelwa ukuze ekugqibeleni uxole?*)

Q8. What is your belief on life after death?

(*Ithini inkolelo yakho kubomi emva kokufa?*)

09.　What advice can you give to those who find themselves in the same predicament in future?

(Lithini icebo ongalinika *abo bazibona bekule ngxaki kwixa elizayo?*)

10.　What advice can you give to those who preside over these cultural beliefs when unnatural death hits the family?

(*Lithini icebo olokuninika abo bongamela kwezi nkolelo zesintu xa ukufa ngengozi kufikile ekhayeni?*)

LETTER OF INTRODUCTION AND INFORMED CONSENT FOR

PARTICIPATION IN ACADEMIC RESEARCH

<u>Master's Degree in Practical Theology</u> **Researcher:**

Mqunyana Simnikiwe Nkosivumile Oswald: 0834108622
(15396674)

You are cordially invited to participate in an academic research study due to your experience and knowledge in the research area, namely Master's Degree in Practical Theology. Each participant must receive, read, understand and sign this document *before* the start of the study.

- **Purpose of the study**: The purpose of the study is to help the bereaved deal with the pain of grieving unnatural death in a traditional family, therapeutically work with families of the deceased in order to develop strategies to deal with death and design a model that will help

302

the clergy, chaplains, pastoral care givers and grieving families deal with unnatural death. The results of the study may be published in an academic journal. You will be provided with a summary of our findings on request. No participant's name will be used in the final publication.

- **Duration of the study**: The study will be conducted over a period of 5 months and its projected date of completion is August 2023.

- **Research procedures**: The study is based on Clergy, church congregants and affected families. Structured, unstructured and interviews will be used.

- **What is expected of you**: Free to give information and withdraw from the research.

- **Your rights**: Your participation in this study is very important. You may, however, choose not to participate and you may also stop participating at any time without stating any reasons and without any negative consequences. You, as participant, may contact the researcher at any time in order to clarify any issues pertaining to this research. The respondent as well as the researcher must each keep a copy of this signed document.

Confidentiality: All information will be treated as confidential as possible, participants or their organizations will be kept anonymous, participants and the University of Pretoria will have access to the raw data and that data will be confidential. The participants and their organizations will be anonymous for ever.

VERBAL INFORMED CONSENT *(Only applicable if respondent cannot write)*

I, the researcher, have read and have explained fully to the respondent, named

_____ and his/her relatives, the letter of introduction. The respondent indicated that he/she understands that he/she will be free to withdraw at any time.

Respondent: _____

Researcher: Mqunyana S.O.N.

Witness: _____

Date: _____

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ANGLICAN   MTHATHA
Anglican Church of Southern Africa

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2018-07-11

The Very Revd Simnikiwe Oswald Nkosivumile Mqunyana

Theology Student
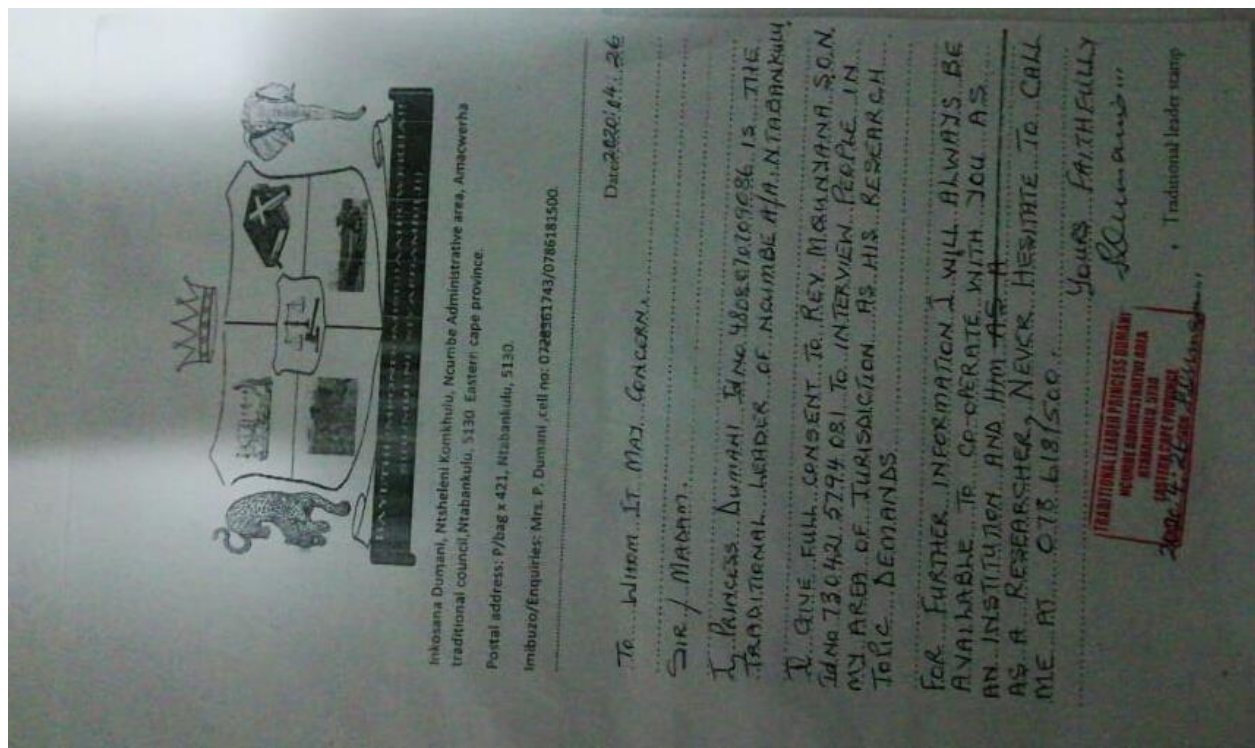
University of Pretoria

Dear Simnikiwe

304

I hereby grant you permission to conduct interviews for your study among Anglican members

of the Diocese of Mthatha.

It is my hope that once the study has been completed submitted and passed, we as a diocese would

be able to learn from the findings.

Yours in Christ

The Right Revd Dr H.C.N. Ndwandwe

NCUMBE STORE

P.O. BOX 44

MT FRERE

5090

12 MAY 2021

DEAR SIMNIKIWE

I THEMBELA MBEKELA THE LANGAUGE HEAD AT NTSHELENI PRIMARY SCHOOL HEREBY WISH TO CONFIRM THAT I WILL BE ABLE TO RENDER THE INTERPRETATION SERVICES IN YOUR ENSUING PROJECT; AS REQUESTED.

HOWEVER, I WOULD BE HAPPY IF YOU FURNISH ME WITH YOUR SCHEDULE AT LEAST A WEEK BEFORE SO THAT I PREPARE MYSELF.

I WISH YOU ALL THE BEST.

YOURS SINCERELY

MS T. MBEKELA (0737019895)

DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION
NTSHELENI S.P.S
OR TAMBO INLAND DISTRICT
SIGN:.....Mbekela
DATE:.....12/05/2021

307

QINGQINGCWELE

QINGQINGCWELE EASTERN CAPE SCHOOL OF THEOLOGY
" Et erit lux"(Genesis 1:3)
(Constituent of the Association of Christian Religious Practitione
Chief Henry Bokleni Centre P.O.Box 46 Ntlaza 5114. 33 John Beer Drive, Northcrest
MTHATHA .5100
Email: qingqingcwele@gmail.com/bishopnyataza@gmailcom   Cell: 071 984 1609

Dear Simnikiwe

Greetings

I hope this communiqué finds you well.

Following our discussion regarding your interest to interview our staff members from different denominations; I have discussed the matter with all the relevant stake holders. Subsequently; I Bishop N. Nodwengu hereby wish to grant you a permission to interview the students and the tutors of the above-named ecumenical institution.

For further information never hesitate to call us at any of the above contact details

Yours Sincerely

Bishop N. Nodwengu

N Nompaphe

17/06/ 2020

308