

**Unusual liturgical ritual practice by present-day prophets in South Africa: A
practical theological analysis**

by

Baby Carol Shilubane

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Supervisor: Prof C. J. Wepener

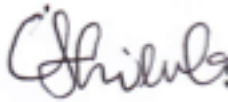
August 2019

DECLARATION

I Baby Carol Shilubane declare that this **Dissertation on Unusual liturgical ritual practice by present-day prophets in South Africa: A practical theological analysis** is my original work and the sources I have cited have been indicated and acknowledged by means of complete references. Furthermore, I declare that this work has not been submitted to any other University.

STUDENT NAME: BABY CAROL SHILUBANE

Signature (Student)



Date: August 2019

Supervisor: Prof C. J. Wepener

Signature (Supervisor)

Date:

Acknowledgement

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ABSTRACT

South Africa has witnessed a recent upsurge of prophets attributable to poverty, unfavourable economic conditions, weak health systems, and supernatural causes that provide fertile ground for 'prophetism', healing and deliverance. The research is based on the cognizance of the desperation for divine healing and miracles that have driven communities to engage in harmful religious practices, even the elite fall prey to this trend. Prophets fiercely compete to gain and keep clients. Prophets are aware of the favourable pragmatic disposition based on non-theoretical religion. This study is motivated by the need to explore, interpret, and analyse the phenomenon to gain a deeper understanding of the problem. News about South African prophets was prevalent on social media globally, commenting on the unusual liturgical ritual practice by prophets: the ingestion of antiseptic liquid and petrol or the spraying of insecticide fumigant, as well as the oral consumption of grass to heal, is attributable to the perception of 'bad practice'. The research has utilised practical theological models, qualitative empirical media research, and instrumentation of theories from theology and social sciences to unpack this phenomenon toward normative standards applicable to scriptural traditions, theological concepts and other disciplines to aid in the reshaping of practice regarding the new trend.

Keywords

Liturgy; liturgical rituals; inculturation; prophets; unusual healing; deliverance; African worldview; parapsychology; metaphysics; cult of personality; globalisation; consumerism; materialism; media .

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Chapter 1

Introduction

1.1. Introduction of the research

Given today's rapid communication through social media platforms, social media has become a constitutive part of online news distribution and consumption (Kümpel et al. 2015, p. 1). News of South African prophets was prevalent on social media globally, commenting on the unusual liturgical ritual practice of prophets, e.g., the ingestion of antiseptic liquid and petrol or the use of insecticide fumigant, as well as the oral consumption of grass to heal. South Africa has witnessed a recent upsurge of prophets. Lately, miracle seekers are thronging there for breakthroughs, open doors, prosperity, protection, etc.

Since corruption has taken root, the seemingly self-serving government, with a few elite, rich politicians channel resources elsewhere, poverty, inequality, and unemployment are rampant. An example of this is how the Guptas have stored the billions they have transferred from the undertakings of South Africa's government in Dubai (Pauw & du Preez 2017, p. 334). According to Du Plessis & Breed (2013, p. 1), in a year, South Africa loses approximately thirty billion due to pay-offs and corruption, affecting the poor and the vulnerable, the most adverse being corruption.

These unfavourable economic conditions and the squatter mentality of miracle seekers provide fertile ground for 'prophetism.' The 'genetic makeup' of miracle seekers is to know what their future holds (foretelling or predictions). Therefore, prophetic churches, practice healing, and deliverance are popular with miracle seekers. This includes the elite, who also fall prey to such churches. A qualitative inquiry will be employed to inquire, interpret, understand, and reflect critically: 1) Why contemporary prophets employ potentially harmful liturgical ritual practices? 2) How do we understand what these unusual liturgical rituals are about?; 3) And why are people going in high numbers to these churches? In other words, what is the rationale behind such practices?

An interpretation of the continuing process of theological formulation, clarification, and construction on good practice will be executed and analysed, to provide insight into the phenomenon and formulate strategies that will enable change. Transformative developments and maintenance of good liturgical practice will be executed. A theory for

praxis will be developed. There should be a moving away from the individualistic approach based on personal perception and ubiquitous exhibitions of power by these prophets. The prophets should come to an understanding that ministry is servitude or servanthood, committed to the mission, a high commission.

1.2. Aim of the Study

The main aim of this study is to investigate the unusual liturgical ritual practice, employed by prophets, and why people are attracted to them, using the multidisciplinary approach, by Osmer (2008, p. 9). The research seeks to critically inquire, reflect, and interpret this kind of liturgical ritual practice and what can be done to bring change. Theoretical concepts from theology and other disciplines like social sciences and medicine will be employed.

The research endeavours to explore, explain, and assist in the process of looking into better practices from unconventional to conventional methods. Moreover, the research seeks to interpret the continuing process of theological formulation, clarification, and construction of practices from a biblical perspective. The research seeks to contribute and effectuate transformative developments in the inculcation of the maintenance of conventional liturgical ritual practice. The research findings will benefit the church leadership and the community. A theory for praxis will be developed. Furthermore, the research seeks to probe whether transformative development and maintenance of good liturgy can be achieved. Theoretical concepts from theology and other disciplines: psychology, anthropology, and sociology will be employed.

1.2.1. Main research questions

1. Why do contemporary prophets employ potentially harmful liturgical ritual practice?
2. How do we understand what these unusual liturgical rituals are?
3. Why are people going in high numbers to these churches?
4. What can be done to bring transformation?

1.3. A brief background of the rise of present-day prophets

The following list contains some of news headlines which consists of unusual liturgical rituals

practices employed by some churches that caused an outrage on social media and the public at large. E.g.:

- A prophet claims, 'God instructs me to heal using this product' (Dettol), (Sebola 2016).
- A South African pastor says, "This spray is not harmful. As you can see, I use it on myself, I can use anything I am told to use in the name of the Lord" (Molobi 2016).
- "Not only does he make them eat grass, he makes them crawl around mooing like cows!" (Mdluli 2019).

The names of the churches under study are 1) Mount Zion General Assembly, (Prophet Lethebo Rabalago); 2) Spiritual Christian Church, (Prophet Rufus Phala); 3) Rabboni Centre Ministries, (Pastor Lesego Daniel).

This phenomenon caused a global outrage in the media, the people of South Africa, and the government. The government has pronounced to regularise these institutions, among others, that are using unconventional methods. The intervention of the South African government through the Commission for Promotion and Protection of the Rights of Religious Cultural and Linguistic Communities condemns these unusual liturgical practices. Mkwanazi-Xaluva acknowledges that: "People who are fed snakes and grass, made to drink petrol or trampled on by pastors almost never want to lay criminal charges. Until the laws are changed, we are going to sit with this problem. The police are also reluctant to deal with religious people" (Kumalo 2017).

The trend has captured many and has spread substantially in South Africa. According to Van Eck (2013, p. 244), "The kingdom of God has been taken over by an unclean mixed kind 'of seed' that grows wild, invasive and difficult, if at all possible, to control." Furthermore contemporary liturgical rituals in South Africa are considered to be 'high-risk religion', according to Battin (1990, p. 74), "The religious faith of believers involves a willingness to take substantial physical risks: risks to health, physical functioning, and even the risk of death."

1.4. Methodology

According to Hawks (1989, pp. 30-39):

Practical Theology is the critical study of contemporary activities and experience of Christians and the church in relation to God's will and purpose for them. The study

may also involve concepts, ideas, beliefs, convictions, attitudes and worldviews, as these affect experiences and behaviour. The purpose is understanding, prediction and revision of practice with a view to enhancing Christians and the church.

1.4.1. Practical Theological Interpretation

According to Swinton & Mowat (2016, pp. 6-7),

A theological reflection examines church practices as they interact with world traditions. Practical theology is a crucial discipline which questions general ideas and application - such as ritual enactments and world customs. It takes on a variety of applications and performance by Christians that are noteworthy and need morally accurate reflection that remains loyal to the gospel, and by bringing to light the meaning of Christian application to allow constant presence, action, and veracity.

Swinton & Mowat (2016, p. 15), further argue that: "Situations have cultures and histories, they occur within particular contexts which often have their own traditions and expectation and they contain specific forms of practice that again themselves contain history, tradition, theology and social experiences and expectations." Practical theology interprets the texts of contemporary lives and practices. Woodward & Pattison state (2000, p. 7),

Pastoral/practical theology is a position where religious conviction, the transmission of customs, and practice encounter present-day experiential occurrences, inquiries, deeds and conducts resulting in a dialogue that is reciprocally enriching, intellectually crucial, and practically transforming.

Osmer (2008, p. 4), proposes a model of practical theology that forms the basis and general approach of practical theology that is suitable to interpret this inquiry of unusual liturgical ritual practice, the model has the following four main tasks of practical theological interpretation: the descriptive-empirical task: what is going on?; the interpretive task: why is it going?; the normative task: what ought to be going on?; the pragmatic task: how might we respond? These four tasks are not independent of each other the activities involved are dependent on each other. An illustration of the four tasks Osmer (2008, p. 4) to interpret the inquiry:

(a) The pastoral cycle Osmer (2008, p 4)

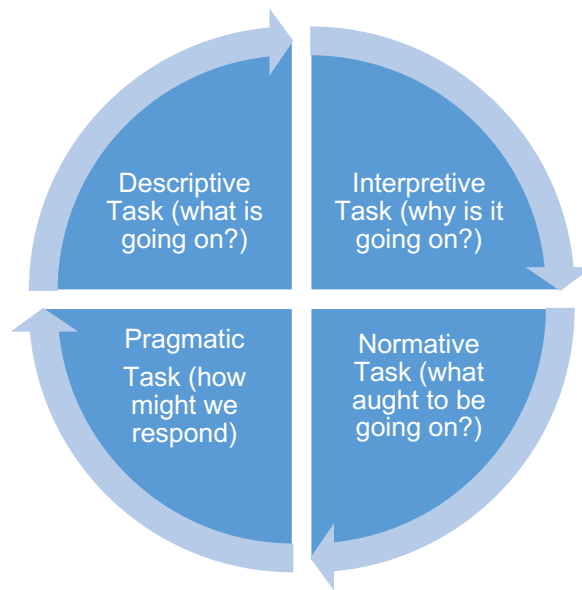


Figure1. 1: A depiction of the four tasks

Source: Osmer, 2008, p. 4

An introduction (Osmer 2008, p.4), practical theology's four tasks:

- Descriptive-empirical: What is going on? Gathering information to better understand particular episodes, situations, or contexts.
- Interpretive: Why is this going on? Entering into a dialogue with the social sciences to interpret and explain why certain actions and patterns are taking place.
- Normative: What ought to be going on? Raising normative questions from the perspectives of theology, ethics and other fields.
- Pragmatic: How might we respond? Forming an action plan and undertaking specific responses that seek to shape the episode, situation, or context in desirable directions.

The thesis will employ Osmer's 'pastoral circle', as well as Henriot & Holland's model. The models are resourceful for this thesis partly because the research seeks to understand, describe and deliver the required results, solutions and change.

(b) The pastoral circle, Henriot & Holland (1983, p. 7).

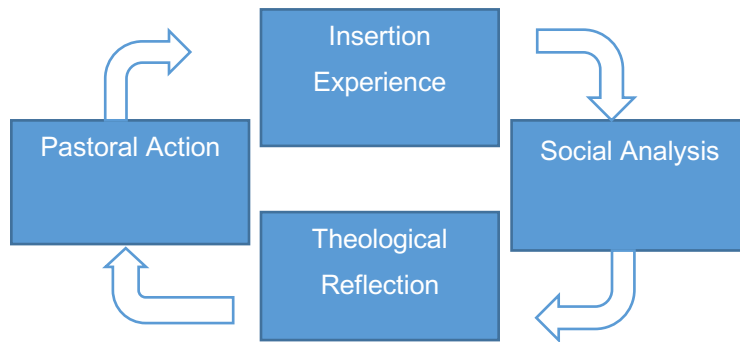


Figure1. 2: The 'pastoral circle'

Construed from Henriot & Holland (1983, p. 7)

"The pastoral circle starts with the insertion of experiences by actors, social analysis, and theological reflection, followed by the pastoral planning for change" (Henriot & Holland 1983, p. 7-13). The interpretation of the 'four-step process':

- Insertion (Contact, Encounter, Experience, or Immersion) – locating “the geography of our pastoral responses in the lived experience of individuals and communities.” Through immersion into the problem, by collecting data, utilising various methods strategising to discern patterns and problems that affect the society.
- Social Analysis – “examines causes, probes consequences, delineates linkages, and identifies actors, e.g. who are these pastors?” The inquiry looks at what is taking place. Thus the inquiry probes deeper to determine the causes concerning the phenomenon utilising key concepts, methods, looking back at historical, scientific, and contemporary values concerning trends that are occurring and looking at the economic, political and cultural influences.
- Theological Reflection – “concerns an effort to understand more broadly and deeply the analysed experience in the light of living faith” (Henriot & Holland 1983 p, 13). Then the situation will be assessed through biblical and theological reflection.

- Pastoral Planning – is a detailed course or direction to be followed concerning situations. This dimension seeks to know how might we respond to situations and what can be done to reach the desired result. (Henriot & Holland 1983, p, 13).

1.4.2. Case Selection

This inquiry is contemporary, unique, and complex; it is a challenging national phenomenon, which is less researched. The inquiry will be both a process of learning and the product of our learning (Stake 1995, p. 237). The researcher has chosen three churches that practice unusual liturgical rituals. This challenging phenomenon has left South Africans and even the whole world ‘talking.’ Some are asking if the phenomenon has clashed with social expectations, such as social responsibility, social accountability, and social values. The inquiry will follow a multiple-case design. The individual cases are similar in some aspects, but different in others, to allow pattern-matching or cross-case comparisons. Collective or multiple case studies allow for a detailed description of each case and its liturgical ritual practices. “The case has stages of life – only one of which may be observed, but the sense of history and the future are part of the picture” (Stake 2006, p. 3). The three case studies chosen are described below:

- Case A involves eating of grass, as a liturgical ritual practice.
- Case B involves the spraying of fumigant as a liturgical ritual practice.
- Case C involves consumption of antiseptic liquid as a liturgical ritual practice.

1.4.3. Case study

The case study approach is relevant for this research because case studies lead to the interpretation of the phenomenon. The case study approach aids in each case study in this inquiry and will provide the primary vehicle for research in the interpretive tradition, in an attempt to understand the phenomenon (Walsham 1993, p. 14). The case studies employed usually are characterized uniquely, (a small number of subjects are examined in detail), or where it is a revelatory case of observing any natural phenomenon, which exists in a set of data (Yin 1984, pp. 38-40). The case studies focus on holistic description and explanation and meaningful characteristics of real-life events (Merriam 1998, p. 29; Yin 1994, p.13). Rule et al. (2011, p. 302) considers a case study to have the following attributes:

- The case study enquires about the present-day real-life phenomena.
- The case centers on a single occurrence of a phenomenon that is open-ended.

- The demarcation line between phenomenon and context are not clear.
- Makes use of multiple sources of evidence

Case studies can be used to explain, describe, or explore events or phenomena in everyday contexts or situations.

1.4.4. Multiple case study

This research has adopted a multiple case study design, also known as a collective case study design (Daymon & Holloway 2010, p. 119). It is logical for this study to use a multiple case study approach in which according to, Yin (2009, p. 59), the design focuses on two or more cases. This means that each case within these multiple cases may still be holistic or embedded (Yin 2009, p. 59). Compared to the single case approach, the multiple case study has the critical advantage that it allows for the collection of a more abundant data set and strengthens research findings (Yin 1994, p. 31). Multiple case designs also allow for cross-case analysis and comparison, and the investigation of a particular phenomenon in various settings, as this will enable the researcher to explore differences within and between cases: A, B, and C. for the understanding of these cases. The goal is to replicate findings across cases, because comparisons will be drawn, on the cases and the researcher has carefully chosen the cases to predict similar results across cases or predict contrasting results based on a theory (Komodromos & Halkias, 2016, p. 52).

Multiple case study method a depiction of Yin (2014, p.60):

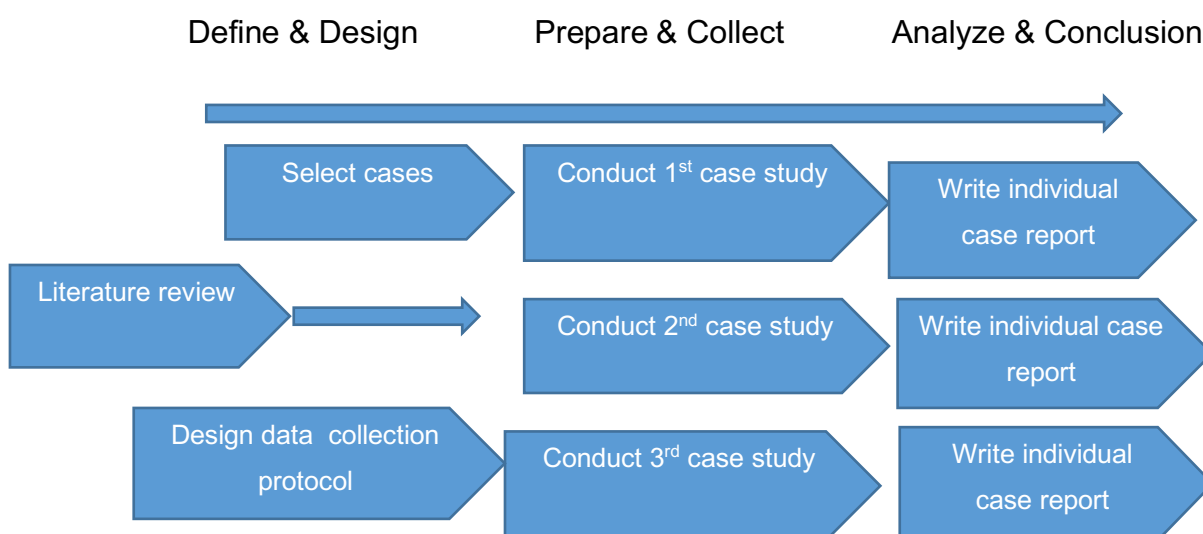


Figure1. 3: Multiple case study method

A depiction of Yin (2014, p.60),

1.4.5. The purpose of the case study research

The aim of case studies is threefold, namely exploratory, descriptive, and explanatory (Yin 2009, p. 7). Yin (2009, p. 7) corroborates that the research method can be utilized to realize these three purposes. The only distinguishing factor between case studies, is the ability to answer “how” and “why” questions when the researcher has no control of behavioral events and to focus on a present-day phenomenon (Yin 2009, pp. 7–8). The three purposes of research, namely exploratory, descriptive, and explanatory, are discussed within the context of case study research. They are a valuable means of understanding what is happening to seek new insights, to ask questions, and to assess phenomena in a new light (Yin 2009, p. 9). Case studies answer “what” questions (Auriacombe 2001, p. 46). To determine how the phenomenon observed might be explained by digging deeper and gaining new insights utilizing biblical and scientific theories.

(a) Exploratory research

Exploratory research explores new topics or fields (Babbie & Mouton, 2001, pp.79–81). The use of exploratory research methods is advocated when the topic is new and if there is limited knowledge on the subject area, for example, the topic of present-day churches’ unusual healing practice that has recently developed (Yin 2003a, p.5). The goal of an exploratory case study (single or multiple) is to define research questions of a study or to determine the feasibility of the required study course of action (Yin 2003a, p. 5). Kohn (1997, p. 3) concurs by stating that exploration case studies seek to explore areas or issues wherein “little theory is available, or measurement is unclear.” As exploratory case studies explore new topics or areas formerly not researched (Babbie & Mouton 2001, pp. 79–81), these studies primarily aim to answer ‘what’ questions (Auriacombe 2001, p. 46; Yin 2009, p.9).

(b) Descriptive Research

The research enquires the event in their pure form to keep away from altering the phenomenon in order to determine the origin and the consequences of the problem, (Leedy

& Ormrod 2010, p. 182), To recount a procedure or the effects of an event or an intervention, mainly when such events affect many different parties', answers 'how' questions (Auriacombe 2001, p. 46). When a process describes a phenomenon within its context (Yin 2003, p. 50) through cautious scientific observation, conceptual analysis, historical analysis, case studies, and multivariate descriptive statistics (Babbie & Mouton 2001, p. 80).

(c) Explanatory case studies

Explanatory case studies answer 'how' and 'why' questions (Yin 2009, p. 9) and explain how complex phenomenon is characterised by its flexibility. Babbie & Mouton (2001, p. 81) consider explanatory research as seeking to discover why a phenomenon has specific characteristics. Explanatory case studies thus present "data bearing on cause-effect relationships explaining how events happened" (Yin 2003, p. 5). A single descriptive case study gives the rationale for developing explanations about the occurrence of a phenomenon. These clarifications can later be further investigated by putting them to new cases in other contexts (Darke, Shanks & Broadbent 1998, p. 281).

1.5. Historical method

Welman & Krüger (2002, p. 179), argue that historical understanding can be obtained through a number of sources like newspapers, reports, correspondence and information from the past that has been preserved. The historical method could seek to advance a better understanding of social interactions that have already occurred, to describe, interpret and analyse the structure of the phenomenon being researched. History helps to yield more understanding of the whole situation, past and present. History is used to refer not only to the process of 'enquiry' but also to knowledge obtained as the result of 'enquiry' into different human actions and the written account of the same (Kocher 1978, p. 1).

1.5.1. Steps in historical research

Historical research is quite different from experimental studies. However, a historical research worker has to pass through similar stages such as selecting, stating and delimiting the problem.

1.5.2. The features of historical method

The historical method is one which deals with past events and interprets in the light of the present. It is past-oriented. Concerned with giving an account of past events or facts in the spirit of inquiring critically for the whole truth. The purpose of the historical method is to explain the present or anticipating the future based on a systematic collection and critical evaluation of data pertaining to past occurrences (Wilson 1987 in Adanza 1995, p.31). There are only a few researchers who utilise the historical method.

1.5.3. The steps of the historical method

- Formulate a researchable problem that is best approached with historical design.
- Specify the data needed to address the research question.
- Determine sufficient data that is available.
- Collect known data, new data, and previously unknown data sources that are available.
- Evaluate data through external and internal criticisms.
- Initiate the descriptive synthesis of findings in a written report while continuing to collect data.

1.5.4. Three major procedures of historical research

Adanza (1995, p. 32) enumerates the types of historical records which may be available in written, pictorial, mechanical form, and printed materials. Secondary sources may still be very important. The focus of historical research may be individuals, concepts, ideas, or phenomena. Secondary sources are information furnished by a person who was not a direct observer or participant of the event, object or condition.

- Data collection with documents
- Subjecting data to external criticism
- Writing the research report (Adanza 1995, p.31-32).

1.6. Ethnography

The ethnographic approach in this qualitative research design will enable, support, encourage, and help the investigator to explain validly.

information shared and learned patterns of values, behavior, beliefs, rational way of life. The ethnographic approach will also enable the investigator to explain the language of the culture, shared by the group of people in this particular research, in their natural setting and environment. In studying ethnography through secondary virtual processes. The observation entails studying activities or practices by personalities or organizations constituting a societal problem within the convention of indirect observation in order to understand, describe, and analyze cultural challenges. Hinds et al. (1997, p.408) argue that “the utilization of secondary data, is a respected, common, and cost-effective approach to maximizing the usefulness of collected data.”

This type of ethnography, the role of the researcher, is to observe, social media archives, online news, and analyze these practices in par with accepted values and norms, biblical standards, or theological traditions to obtain an in-depth study. “The study of cultural artifacts, of documents where appropriate, is a somewhat secondary device in which they are examined as “social products”... this is a step forward from using them as mere sources of secondary data,” (Hammersley & Atkinson 1983 p.137).

Punch & Oancea (2014, p.160) identify six features of ethnography:

- The behaviour of the group is understood by understanding the culturally shared meanings within the group;
- The study is conducted to understand meaning from the perspective of the people in a group;
- The group is studied in a natural setting;
- The design evolves during the study rather than being pre-defined;
- A variety of data collection technique is used within a single study;
- Data collection occurs over a long period of time.

1.7. Research tools

1.7.1. Primary and Secondary data sources

The researcher collected available data to describe and to analyze the cases. “This is the time where vast amounts of data are being collected and archived by researchers all over the world, the practicality of utilizing existing data for research is becoming more prevalent” (Johnston 2014, p.619). Technology is revolutionizing the world, where online interviews will

soon substitute the method of collecting data by being present in the data-collecting field. “These developments are giving us a new kind of world” “one that is hyperconnected and data-saturated, a world where the internet of everyone is linked to an internet of everything” (Wooldridge 2015, p.29). Concerning secondary data, Boslaugh (2007, p. ix), argues that:

Data, which has already been collected by someone else, pre-existing or pre-collected information, should be identified, since data collected may not be the information that the researcher would like to have.

Secondary data involves collecting existing information, which is an area of interest to the researcher and which requires research. “Data may have been collected previously, for some other purpose not related to the research” (Vartanian 2011, p.15). Secondary data may help in gaining initial insight into the problem, by way of concluding, and answering the question or solving the problem.

1.7.2. Benefits of secondary data analysis

Vartanian (2011, p.13-15), outlines the following points about the benefits of secondary data.

- Analysis of existing data can answer a great variety of appropriate research questions;
- Secondary data analysis normally requires less time;
- Readily available data that, covers a broad array of topics, from reputable organisations;
- Available large data sets involving advanced statistical techniques, such as fixed-effect modelling or hierarchical linear modelling;
- Cost-effective;
- Data obtainable in a short period of time;
- Relevance and prompt examination of current issues

1.7.3. Limitations of secondary data analysis

To complete the analysis, the researcher must have the ability to locate and identify data befitting to the research or whether the data answers the research question.

1.7.4. Sources of secondary data

Data can be sourced on the internet, in newspapers, journals, books, to name but a few. Data for this inquiry utilized the media coverage following the leading media outlets in South Africa. The media research is aimed at providing a basic understanding of the inquiry, to supply with sufficient information, and to describe the characteristics of the phenomenon in question. The media coverage of the phenomena was covered from 2014 to 2019. The original articles following the media coverage were examined. According to Vartanian (2011, p.13-15), "Secondary data sets today cover a broad array of topics, and the quality of these datasets, from reputable organizations, is often high." The incidences of unusual healing methods were mediatized nationwide by almost all media outlets, like the ones mentioned below, but not limited to global media.

This research will analyze the leading media outlets that are most popular among the majority of the people in South Africa. Furner (2004:233) proposes that when analyzing a concept, the researcher should precisely define the meaning of the given concept "by identifying and specifying the conditions under which any entity or phenomenon is (or could be) classified under the concept in question."

Data collection involved the extraction of critical information from the media outlet, namely, the following media houses:



The criteria for choosing 'Daily Sun', 'City Press' and 'News 24' media outlets are as follows:

- The articles are primary articles, not sourced from other media;
- The media is influential among their readers based on circulation and readership;
- Their target is the general public (nationally) not tightly defined demographically;
- Their articles are sourced directly from the places of inquiry;
- The leading media outlets are the first outlets to pick up news; they are everywhere - in all the provinces.

1.8. Data Collection

According to Yin (2003, pp. 83-96), there are six possible sources of evidence for case studies: documents, archival records, interviews, direct observation, participant observation, and physical artefacts. Data in this inquiry is sourced online from the internet and media

following media coverage of the phenomena from 2014 to 2019; mass media is a useful source of information about current, historical affairs, events, public opinions and attitudes (Mason 2007, p. 7). “A case study has the ability to deal with a full variety of evidence, documents, artefacts, interviews, and observations” (Yin 2003, p.8). Case studies do not imply the use of a particular type of evidence, but it can be done using either qualitative or quantitative evidence or both (Yin 1981, p. 58). Qualitative inquiry is suitable for this research because of its exploratory, inductive and non-numerical approach (Greig *et al.* 2007, p.137).

The researcher collected available documentation from media sources to describe and analyse the three case studies to answer the research questions. This entails the identification of pre-existing or pre-collected information from secondary sources, e.g., the media outlets: ‘The Daily Sun,’ ‘News24,’ and ‘The Citizen’ and a few others.’ (Boslaugh 2007: ix) substantiate that, “secondary data involves collecting existing information, which is an area of interest to the researcher and which requires research, as well as generating new insights from previous analyses.”

Data may have been collected previously, for some other purpose not related to the research (Vartanian 2010, p. 3). Data collected was used in gaining initial insight into the problem, by way of concluding, and answering the question or analysing the problem of the ‘phenomenon.’ Heaton (2004, p.16), adds the following about secondary data information:

To explore new and emerging social phenomena. More data (and types of data) are available than ever before. There is a unique opportunity to explore this ever-growing sources of data and to ask important research questions. However, there are unique methodological considerations when utilizing existing data to investigate new research questions and generate new knowledge. Nevertheless, online data search adequately assists in uncovering important existing data, relative to the research inquiry or study. The researcher examined all documentation that met the criteria for the phenomenon.

As previously stated in sources of data, the ‘Daily Sun,’ The Citizen, News24, and a few others are South Africa’s most popular media outlets among black people. They have the highest circulation preference by the majority. Indirect observation involving secondary sources were utilized based on previously collected data; there were no interviews. Indirect observation depends to no small extent on secondary sources (Beri 2007, p. 106). Indirect observation is qualitative and can be utilized in descriptive research. Beri (2007, p. 106)

says, the advantages of using indirect observation imply that an observer generally looks for physical traces of behaviour or occurrence of the event. Indirect observation largely depends on how best the observer can identify physical traces of the problem under study. Direct observation is far more common than indirect observation. The indirect observer can analyze the data of other observers (e.g., media outlets, i.e., 'The Daily Sun, News24 and City press' and a few others) to inquire about a contemporary situation, namely, an unusual healing practice.

- The researcher was able to indirectly observe the phenomenon by media outlets, e.g., unusual ritual practices, void of human interaction.
- The researcher can interpret observer information from another perspective, shedding light on data disregarded by the previous observer.
- The internet and the media's massive sharing of information have made it possible for the indirect observer to acquire the required data.

The wealth of data collected in an observational study provides researchers with the opportunity to capture valuable data of everyday realities, without having to ask for the information precisely. There is no direct contact with humans. The cases examined in this research have an unusual theological context. The popularity of newspapers was advantageous to utilize as tools to collect and capture valuable data. The researcher searched the database using relevant keywords and key phrases for each case, exploring unusual healing practices.

Raw data involving each case study was collected and effectively organised in folders according to the cases. The folders were named according to the three case studies to enable the researcher to track and organise the information accordingly. Other folders were created to store relevant information according to themes and contexts that emerged from data, to ensure enough evidence to investigate, interpret, explain and arrive at the study's findings to develop a praxis.

1.9. Multiple case studies analysis

The case study data were documented and organized. The planning was done before data collection commenced and maintained throughout the process (Yin 1994, pp. 94-98). The case study database included evidence, such as media sources, and other observations subject to secondary analysis (Yin 1994, pp. 96). Multiple case studies enabled the

researcher to explore data without and within and between the three cases. The goal was to reproduce findings across the cases. As comparisons were drawn, the cases were chosen carefully to predict similar or differences results across cases to predict differences in the results based on the theory (Yin 2003, p.60).

Multiple case study allows analysis within each setting and across settings. In a multiple case study, several cases are examined to understand similarities and differences between cases and in the three cases. Yin (2003, p. 47) describes how multiple case studies can be used to either “(a) predicts similar results (a literal replication) or (b) predicts contrasting results but for predictable reasons (a theoretical replication).” The researcher looked into cross-case analysis to find what is standard across the cases, not what is unique to each (Stake 2006, p. 39). During the cross-case analysis phase, the researcher endeavored to build “abstractions across cases” (Merriam, 1998, p. 195) and “a general explanation that fits each of the individual cases, even though the cases will vary in their details” (Yin 1994, p. 112). Upon completion of the case analysis, the cumulative results were again analyzed at the whole case level (multiple), involving whole case pattern-matching and explanation building. Cross-case pattern-matching and explanation building allowed the researcher to see “processes and outcomes that occur across the three cases, to understand how local conditions qualify them, and thus develop more sophisticated descriptions and more powerful explanations” (Miles & Huberman 1984, p. 172).

1.10. Ethical considerations

Ethics is the study of moral behaviour within the framework of society and just or erroneous actions. It deals with the values, conduct, and the implications thereof (Mafunisa 2002, p. 193). The methodological approach that was taken in this research is void of any human contact. The research methodology and methods undertaken are deemed inoffensive.

The Code of Conduct for South Africa effective from January 1, 1996, Section 16 of the Bill of Rights provides that: Everyone has the right to freedom of expression, which includes:

1. liberty of the press and other media;
2. to liberally receive and impart information or ideas;
3. Freedom of artistic creativity; and
4. Academic freedom and freedom of scientific research.

Sometimes media coverage brings bad publicity about occurrences and may ultimately put pressure or lead to the charges and prosecutions of those involved Baughman (2001, p.9). Especially when it involves:

- Exposing impropriety (protecting the common good), e.g., the prophet who used insecticide – fumigant was charged by the company that manufactured the brand.
- Protecting public health and safety (the investigator is likened to an ombudsman) in a quest to generate transformation.
- To prevent the public from being misled by an action or statement of individuals or organizations (keeping the public informed of efficacious information).

This research is free from the misinterpretation of data and has strived not to compromise the truth. The research depends on the types of behaviour being researched and the media platforms that were utilized as source material (Wilson et al. 2012, p.215). The content used was a necessary form of online interaction and provided essential data on areas of interest, such as recreational, drug use, or food safety. practices. An example of this is the ingestion and consumption of non-edible liquids or fumigants and grass (Morgan, Snelson & Elison-Bower 2010, p.1).

1.11. Significance of the study

The reason for the research is to provide a description, as well as a solution on this critical matter, the ‘unusual’ healing ritual practice that was mediatised, and gave bad press nationally and globally. The research undertakes to resolve theoretical questions of this phenomenon about unusual liturgical ritual practice conducted by contemporary prophets in South Africa and to generate transformation that will lead to new perspectives. There is a need to stop the phenomenon.

1.12. Limitations of the study

While the phenomenon is being explored by the researcher not much has been written on the subject. Exploratory research explores new topics or fields (Babbie & Mouton 2001, pp. 79–81). The use of exploratory research methods is recommended on this research because the topic is new and there exists only limited knowledge on the subject. The study primarily aims to answer the ‘what’ questions (Auriacombe 2001, p. 46; Yin 2009, p. 9). To

answer the research questions is proving onerous, owing to the fact that there is limited documentation about the subject of study.

1.13. Chapter Summary

Qualitative research endeavours to understand the case, “therefore providing insight into the issue or to redraw from a generalisation” (Merriam 2009, p.48). And ultimately describe, analysis, or summarise context. According to Stake (2003, pp.155-156), the case study researcher should present the case inclusive of the following five elements:

- How much to make the report of the story about the unusual ritual healing practice by prophets in South Africa;
- How much to compare with other cases - looking back at the past about unusual healing methods and the development of the practice;
- How much to formalise generalisations or leave such generalising to readers;
- How much description of the researcher to include in the report; and
- Whether or not and how much to protect anonymity.

This chapter includes an explanation of the methods used to complete this inquiry. The researcher discussed the use of the case study approach and provided a rationale as to why this approach is best for this study. This chapter also provides a rationale for the use of multiple case analysis. The chapter concluded with a summary of the data used and the processes, through which data was collected, analysed and interpreted (Yin 2003, p. 13). Case study research is more than merely researching a single individual or situation. This approach has the potential to deal with complex situations. According to Yin (2003), case study data allows for multiple data sources for the investigator to address a broader range of historical, attitudinal, and behavioral issues (Yin 2003, pp.97-98).

1.14. Outline of each Chapters

The various chapters of this study are arranged on the basis of the four tasks of practical theological interpretation as emphasised by Osmer (2008, p.4). In this practical theological research project these four tasks do not perform independently from each other or in a strictly sequential way; they are interrelated. In the course of the research, the activities involved in the various tasks constantly circle back like a spiral as new insights emerge.

Chapter 1.

Chapter 1 is the introduction, methods, and the four primary functions of the roles of qualitative research by Richie & Lewis (2003, p. 27). These will be used in conjunction with the four tasks of (Osmer 2008, p.4, e.g., The contextual function describes the nature of the unusual liturgical ritual practice; the function will answer the first task of “what is going on?”

- The explanatory function will examine the reasons or associations surrounding unusual liturgical ritual practice; this function will answer the interpretive task of “why is it going on?”, through interviews and participatory observation, etc.;
- The evaluative function, evaluates and assess the actual issues of liturgy, this function will answer the third task of “what ought to be going on?”
- The generative function, the development of theories and strategies to resolve the problem, will answer the practical task – “How might we respond?”.

Richie & Lewis (2003, p. 27), model four functions, describing the contextual nature of what exists, the explanation of their associations, the evaluation of their effectiveness, and the generation of the development of needed theories, and strategies thereof. According to Richie & Louis (2003, p. 27), the contextual, the situation or the background of the problem is described, e.g. what is going on? The next step is the explanatory function that examines the situation at hand by examining and explaining, e.g. why is it going on? The assessment of the problem, i.e. the making of a judgement about the problem, e.g. what ought to be going on? Lastly the generative function that deals with the strategies to resolve the problem to answer – how might we respond? Below is a depiction of the four stages of the research according to Richie & Lewis 2003, P.27).

Chapter 2. Qualitative

In Chapter 2, the researcher employed a qualitative research method as an approach that will allow the researcher to utilize existing data collected, compiled, and accessible for research. Media articles were used to obtain information to aid the understanding of the phenomena of liturgical practices employed by the prophets. The following concepts are features of qualitative research, according to (Hennink, Hutter, & Baily 2011, p. 9).

- The reason for the researcher to employ qualitative research is that the approach will enable the researcher to identify issues concerning unusual liturgical rituals employed by

prophets and understand the meanings and interpretations that they give to their behavior, events, or objects in order to understand and observe their social and cultural norms.

- To enquire about practices.
- Qualitative research seeks to embrace and understand the contextual influences on the research issues, e.g., the liturgical practices of these churches.

Denzin & Lincoln (2008, p. 4) further state that qualitative research involves an interpretive approach of the world. This research will employ media coverage of the phenomenon as a secondary source. Due to the advance in technology, an extensive amount of data that has been compiled, utilizing existing data is becoming more prevalent. The research attempts to analyze the situation by interpreting trends or practices by prophets to make sense of it all. Denzin & Lincoln (1998, pp. 28-29) state that qualitative research is primarily interested in situations and practices. Qualitative research assumes that human beings are, by definition 'interpretive creatures'. How we make sense of the behavior of these pastors/prophets, and the world and our experiences, involves a constant process of interpretation and meaning and seeking that makes the world visible (Creswell & Poth 2017, p. 7).

Qualitative research recognizes 'the world' as the locus of complex interpretive processes within which human beings struggle to make sense of their experiences, i.e., identifying, developing, and understanding of these meanings. We intend to uncover complexities in order to better understand and act upon and within any given situation. Qualitative research is a process of careful, rigorous inquiry into aspects of the social world. It produces formal statements or conceptual frameworks that provide new ways of understanding the world and, therefore, comprises knowledge that is practically useful for those who work with issues around learning and adjustment to the pressures and demands of the social world (McLeod 2001, p. 3).

Chapter 3. Empirical

The empirical chapter utilizes the descriptive-empirical task of Osmer's 2008, p.4) method of practical theological interpretation that asks: 'What is going on?' This involves the gathering of information that aids us to distinguish patterns and dynamics in particular episodes, situations, or contexts (Osmer 2008, p. 4). The empirical task seeks to investigate empirically, indirect non-participant observation (information that is gained by indirect

observation). Indirect observation is based on data collected, documented data, newspapers, the internet, books, among others.

Chapter 4. Liturgy

The liturgical expression, performance, participation, the structure, the elements and the dynamics, of the contemporary liturgy, were studied in this chapter from a variety of perspectives and sanguinely contributed to the comprehension of present-day prophetic churches. The new brand, popular in contemporary Christianity is predisposed to media hype, marked by prophetic ostentation and the exigency of the miraculous. Their liturgy is still in the making, some of their distinctive practices were recently developed, with their liturgy adopted from Pentecostal roots, therefore taking on, to a small degree a 'new face'.

This chapter examined the following:

- Firstly, a definition of liturgy will be explicated or clarified;
- Secondly, the origin and history of Pentecostals will be established;
- Thirdly, the introduction of the 'new brand' the hyper-modern contemporary church trending in South Africa today;
- Fourthly, liturgical features of present-day prophetic churches inherent of Pentecostal DNA was explored.

Chapter 5. Inculturation

In Chapter 5, the topic of inculturation will be discussed. Inculturation largely explains the rapid growth of present-day churches, by proclaiming the Gospel appropriate or fitting for diverse cultures, as part of the human phenomenon. The insertion of Christianity is a process whereby cultures encounter one another. This inquiry seeks to uncover the dynamic inculturation processes to aid in the comprehension of the phenomenon.

The enormous and unparalleled infamous contribution by present-day prophets is changing the face of South Africa, in its ongoing task of unusual demonstration of their power. Their pragmatic approach lies in the emphasis of signs and wonders that are sometimes peculiar. Although the church is responsible for carrying out the commission, it should remain reliable as long as it continues to embrace cultures in the world. The challenge for the church is to remain truthful to biblical tradition, to communicate and remain faithful to the true Gospel, giving birth to a genuinely inculturated local church. Inculturation is a necessary operation

that allows the presence of God to unfold to its fullest, transforming culture in the process. Therefore, churches should remain authentic as it continues to be inclusive of cultures.

Chapter 6. Ritual functions its nature and ceremonial rites

This chapter examined the religious phenomenon of ritual functions and its nature in the context of healing ritual practice, given to unusual ritual healing practice in South Africa. Generally, rituals are indispensable elements in the nature and essence of humankind, apart from regulating and controlling a social situation for the sake of social order. It was argued for rituals as the object and the *liturgia condenda* as the aim of this chapter. Such an object and aim, however, requires a multidisciplinary approach, which uses amongst other sources, ritual studies, and cultural anthropology. Then the theories of Ronald Grimes (one of the most prominent contemporary exponents of ritual studies) and Gerard Lukken (a famous Dutch liturgist) and most other authors on ritual were presented. Building on their work, the researcher's own theory on ritual was formulated, which serves as part of a framework for the interpretation of the documented rituals.

Chapter 7. Worldview

African worldviews encompass the African society, with shared constructs, shared beliefs, feeling and knowledge, with members of the group. According to African society, cosmology is arranged in a hierarchical form of forces, that possess degrees of vital force (the dynamic African concept). Ontology means that man is the center of existence or central position. God is the explanation of man's origin and sustenance; moreover, God occupies the highest position.

African reality is experienced in a common ritualistic way in the form of rites. Communities connect in the form of ceremonies by ritualised symbolic actions that define relationships with the divine, ancestors, societal relationships, and nature. Harmony with the divine, ancestors, society, and nature is maintained to avoid disharmony and unnecessary retribution. The well-being of the individual or healing depends on moral behavior. Healing is paramount in the African psyche, and so is salvation. Salvation is categorized as healing (for the soul). The next chapter will delineate this phenomenon through the lens of prophets.

Chapter 8. Normative

The normative chapter is closely associated with the empirical chapter. In the empirical chapter, the situation was described; the normative chapter determines how the situation ought to be. In other words, this chapter reflects on what ought to be going on? (Osmer 2008, p. 4). It acquires a reflective dialogical stance, a prophetic discernment, and human shaping; this infers change. The current practices by present-day prophets were reflected upon critically through a normative lens. The integral part of this normative chapter, according to Grenz & Smith (2003, pp. 19, 81) entails the following:

- A norm - prescribes some aspect of moral conduct;
- Normative ethics - formulate standards and principles for human conduct (ethical norms);
- Christian ethics - studies how humans ought to live according to biblical and Christian convictions.

Classical biblical views and contemporary African views will be expounded upon to understand the current situation of unusual practices by present-day prophets in South Africa. Firstly the meaning of prophecy, who is the prophet and the functions of a prophet will be delineated upon.

Chapter 9.

This chapter recaps Richard Osmer's model concerning the pastoral cycle. The model will assist in fitting this chapter into the bigger whole. The four areas of the pastoral cycle are distinctive yet closely connected. Each area has a directive question and a theological referent. The two models: the pastoral cycle by Osmer (2008, p. 4) and the spiral model by Heitink (1999, p. 165). These models are utilised to aid in the explanation and the interpretation of situations. "The strength of the model is the way it helps participants unpack the 'social, moral, and ethical implications' of particular social issues in order to affect social change grounded in Christian faith and values" (Trokan 1997, p.148). The process acquires a reflective dialogical stance, a prophetic discernment, and human shaping; this infers change to arrive at a praxis, by reflecting critically on the current practices that were dealt with in the sequence of the pastoral. Practical theology exists for the sake of change, by reflecting upon the existing practice, and looking through the biblical lens, the normative task forms a basis for making adjustments in order to enact a more faithful one.

Chapter 2

Qualitative research

2.1. Introduction

This inquiry is a qualitative media-based research about the most circularised news coverage of unusual liturgical ritual practice by contemporary prophets in South Africa. Liturgical research projects in South Africa have not yet focused on this kind of data, making it necessary for an extensive discussion on methodology. The news of South African prophets was and still is globally prevalent in social media. Social media focused on unusual liturgical ritual practice of prophets, e.g.:

- the ingestion of antiseptic liquid, bleach, antifreeze or petrol,
- the spraying of insecticide fumigant on adherents, as well as,
- the consumption of grass.

Media sources can be both primary and secondary. The media is considered to be a primary source if it records events as they occur or the coverage of events as they unfold. If an article is interpreted or has opinion interjected, it is considered a secondary source. "A primary source is the result of first-hand knowledge of a topic. A secondary source is a record that was created sometime after the event" (Hamilton 2005, p. 4-6). When researchers search for information already available about events, it is considered a secondary source. The interpretation or description of this phenomenon and its analysis by the researcher from news articles is considered secondary source information.

Some people usually believe the media and form opinions and leave a comment on social media. This study examined 'unusual healing practice of contemporary prophets', published during the period of 2014 to 2018, by well-known media outlets: 'Daily Sun'; 'News24'; and 'City Press'. Chyi & McCombs (2004, p.22), explain how the media portray the story in order to keep it alive and fresh. The type of topic and the way it is portrayed increases news coverage. The media coverage referred to contemporary prophets involved in unusual healing practice as: "prophet of doom", "charlatans," "fake prophets," or "infamous prophets." The inquiry about the prophets followed the utilisation of qualitative research. The attempt to decipher these social events, by individuals and their communities underpins this study.

Denzin & Lincoln (1998, p. 28), says that qualitative research involves the utilisation of various methods and approaches, which enables researchers to explore the social world in the attempt to understand the unique ways that individuals and communities live. Research provides what is happening in communities by providing multiple views on issues, and “The prominence of elements in the news influences the prominence of those elements among the public” (Carroll & McCombs 2003, p. 36).

Fielding (2014, p. 1066) describes a current major trend as,

The rise of “citizen research” via online media that entails unpredictable changes in the practice and purposes of social research; because we would have to go back to the invention of the printing press for a socio-technological development of equivalent magnitude.

Media has evolved over the last decade to become an important tool to acquire and spread information about people and situations and is therefore qualitative research. Qualitative research makes sense of the world, by identifying or developing an understanding of meaning, seeking the complexities of situations. The growth of media usage and the analysis of aspects in qualitative research use the analogy of a detective story without a fixed ending: who did what, when, and why, within a particular situation and formulating this into evidence that will enable a fair judgement to be made. Unlike a detective a qualitative researcher does not seek to solve a case, the story is part of a wide variety of evidence that will be offered to the jury as it seeks to discern what is the truth and what is not.

2.2. The societal relevance of qualitative research

Qualitative research is a form of social inquiry that focuses on the way people interpret and make sense of their experiences in the world in which they live. In the words of Atkinson *et al.* (2001, p. 7), qualitative research is an ‘umbrella term’ that has a number of approaches that exist within the wider framework of this type of research. Most of these approaches have the same aim: to understand the social reality of individuals, groups and cultures. Researchers use qualitative approach to explore the behaviour, perspectives, feelings, and experiences of people, of what lies at the core of their lives. The basis of qualitative research lies in the interpretive approach of social realities and the description of the lived experience of human beings. Qualitative research as a social inquiry makes an effort to understand contexts in which activities take place. Equivalently the media enquire about a variety of situations or contexts and inform the public (Atkinson *et al.*, 2001, p. 7).

2.3. Current trends in qualitative research

Qualitative research is in a period of rapid change and new challenges. The current state and development of qualitative data analysis is a field that is constantly expanding. In particular, the evolving and changing environment in three different aspects: data sources, data collection and data analysis. Visual, virtual, textual, and other types of data deriving from social media now complement traditional sources of data, such as interviews, focus groups, transcripts, and observation protocol. There is now an opportunity to draw upon vast qualitative data streams. Therefore, new data collection tools - data mining techniques have emerged in recent years. Participation and observation with new forms of digital and network data collection and analysis of a more complete picture of a specific community. There is a need to reflect on and discuss the use of qualitative techniques in order to facilitate further exploration through a qualitative lens. According to Benoliel (1984, p.3), "Qualitative research has been described as modes (functions) of systematic inquiry concerned with understanding human beings and the nature of their transactions with themselves and with their surroundings."

2.4. Trends and challenges for the future of qualitative inquiry.

Flick (2015, p.8), notes the following about trends and challenges for the future of qualitative inquiry:

- to make qualitative inquiry really international, global, and local?
- to make qualitative inquiry really societally relevant without boiling it down to limited variations (just interviews, just results)?
- to adapt it to new contexts (e.g., citizen research), uses, and phenomena (data)?

2.5. The purpose of employing a qualitative research

The researcher employed a qualitative research method as an approach that allowed the researcher to utilise existing data that was collected, compiled, and accessible for research. Media articles were used to obtain information to aid the understanding of the liturgical practices employed by prophets. The following concepts are features of qualitative research according to (Hennink, Hutter, & Baily 2011, p. 9):

- The reason for the researcher to employ qualitative research is the approach that will enable the researcher to identify issues concerning unusual liturgical rituals employed by prophets. Qualitative research enables the researcher to understand the meanings and interpretations that they give to behaviour, events, or objects in order to understand and observe social and cultural norms, concerning present-day prophets.
- To study unusual liturgical rituals practices, as well as identify how the prophets' behaviours, are shaped by the context of their lives, such as socioeconomic, cultural or physical context.
- Qualitative research seeks to find out influential issues contextual influences on the research issues, e.g. the liturgical practices of these churches.

Denzin & Lincoln (2008, p. 4) further state that qualitative research involves an interpretive approach to the world. This research will employ media coverage of the phenomenon as a secondary source. Due to technological advances, an extensive amount of data that has been compiled, therefore, utilising existing data is becoming more prevalent. The research attempts to understand the situation by interpreting trends or practices by prophets to make sense of it all. Denzin & Lincoln (1998, p. 28-29) state that qualitative research is essentially interested in situations and practices. Qualitative research assumes that human beings are by definition 'interpretive creatures'. The way in which we make sense of the behaviour of these pastors/prophets, of the world and our experiences within the world, involves a constant process of interpretation, meaning, and seeking that makes the world visible (Creswell & Poth 2017, p. 7).

Qualitative research recognises 'the world' as the locus of complex interpretive processes within which human beings struggle to make sense of their experiences, i.e. identifying, developing and understanding of these meanings. Our intention is to uncover complexities in order to better understand and act upon and within any given situation. Qualitative research is a process of careful, rigorous enquiry into aspects of the social world. Qualitative research produces formal statements or conceptual frameworks that provide new ways of understanding the world. Therefore, this comprises knowledge that is practically useful for those who work with issues around learning and adjustment to the pressures and demands of the social world (McLeod 2001, p. 3).

2.6. The four major functions of the roles of qualitative research

The four major functions of the roles of qualitative research by Ritchie & Lewis (2003, p. 27) can be used in conjunction with the four tasks of Osmer (2008, p. 4), e.g.:

- The contextual function describes the nature of the unusual liturgical ritual practice. The function will answer the first task of “what is going on?”
- The explanatory function will examine the reasons or associations surrounding unusual liturgical ritual practice. This function will answer the interpretive task of “why is it going on?”, through interviews and participatory observation etc.
- The evaluative function evaluates and assesses the actual issues of liturgy. This function will answer the third task of “what ought to be going on?”
- The generative function, the development of theories and strategies to resolve the problem will answer the pragmatic task – “How might we respond?”

Ritchie & Lewis’ (2003, p. 27), modelling of four functions describe the contextual nature of what exists, the explanation of their associations, the evaluation of their effectiveness, and the generation of the development of the needed theories, and strategies thereof.

According to Ritchie & Louis (2003, p. 27) the contextual, the situation or background of the problem is described as, e.g. “what is going on”? The next step is the explanatory function that examines the situation at hand by examining and explaining, e.g. why is it going on? The assessment of the problem, i.e. the making of a judgement about the problem, e.g. what ought to be going on? Lastly, the generative function that deals with the strategies to resolve the problem to answer: “how might we respond”? Below is a depiction of the four stages of research:

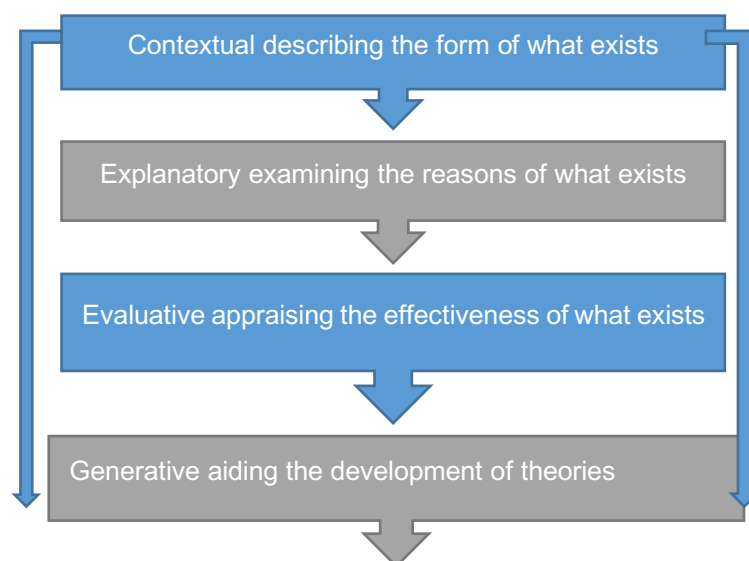


Figure 2. 1: A depiction of the four major functions of the roles of qualitative research.

2.7. The rationale for the utilisation of the qualitative research design

The utilisation of qualitative research design is that the interpretive and descriptive inquiry centres in the way in which people make sense of their reality and attach meaning to it. This approach is suitable for this research because understanding human actions and experiences to reflect upon, as well as to interpret them is the centre of both practical theological research, as well as qualitative research. Doodly (1984, p. 283) argues that qualitative research as social research is based on non-quantitative observation. This enquiry is also based on non-quantitative observation. The quantitative inquiry has systematic properties, therefore, determining choices and actions, while qualitative inquiry will allow for different viewpoints as a point of departure, as employed in this research, i.e. triangulation consisting of case studies, historical and ethnographic methodological viewpoints.

According to Brewer & Hunter (1989, p. 17), triangulated measurements try to pinpoint the values of a phenomenon more accurately by sighting the different methodological viewpoints allowing the researcher to solve emerging problems. Denzin & Lincoln (2003, p. 289) distinguish four main types of triangulation that are incorporated into the study.

2.8. Data triangulation

The illustration of the triangulation approach to qualitative research

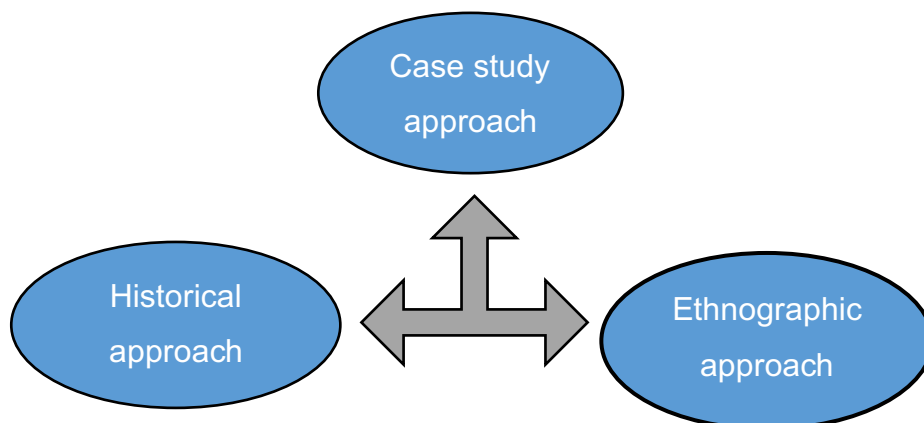


Figure 2. 2: A depiction of the triangulation approach to qualitative research

- Data triangulation – the use of different data sources which should be distinguished from the use of different methods for producing data;
- Investigator triangulation – minimise bias;
- Theory triangulation – approach with a different perspective;
- Methodological triangulation – researching within methods and among methods;
- Data triangulation –this technique will allow the researcher to facilitate the application and combination of the case study, ethnography, and historical research methods in this study of the same phenomenon. The three points are established by observations taken from different perspectives to interpret and to understand the phenomenon, i.e. upon (case study) and from the two ends of the baseline (ethnographic and historical) for producing data.

Obrien & Saldanha (2014, p. 5) consider triangulation as the backbone of solid, high-quality research. Obrien & Saldanha (2014, p. 39) consider triangulation as crosschecking the results of one set of data with the results from another set of data, notably integration. The different elements can be combined – subjects, material, strategies, methods, purposes, perspectives, and investigators.

2.9. Data processes

2.9.1. The interpretive/descriptive approach

The interpretive or interpretivist model and descriptive research are suitable for this inquiry. The method is suitable for this research because it centres on the way in which human beings make sense of their subjective reality and attach meaning to it. Researchers with this worldview believe that understanding human experiences is as important as focusing on explanation, prediction, and control. The data generate new theoretical ideas, and help modify already existing theories or uncover the essence of phenomena. It is important to respect the context and culture in which the study takes place. If researchers understand the context, they can locate the actions and perceptions of individuals and grasp the meanings that they communicate. In a broader sense, the context includes the economic, political and cultural framework, (Alasuutari 2010, p.13).

2.9.2. Analysis of qualitative research

This research has followed a qualitative data analysis. Qualitative data is non-numerical. It includes analysing data. Analysing qualitative data will help to produce findings on the phenomenon (unusual liturgical ritual practice) of contemporary churches and possibly precipitate change. A paradigm shift is essential for both individual approaches, the interperceptual (contemporary prophets) and/or their organisations, to explore aspects that may lead to change. The analysis of this inquiry involves finding patterns and themes in the data collected for evaluation. Analysing this data will help to compile a report that can be utilised to effect a change. This inquiry has utilised the qualitative data analysis by identifying, examining, and interpreting patterns and themes in the data.

These patterns and themes purposely contributed to answering the research questions. Seidel (1998, p.2) says that “qualitative data analysis involves the identification, examination, and interpretation of patterns and themes in textual data, and determines how these patterns and themes help answer the research questions at hand.” When analysing qualitative data, it is important that the researcher continuously ask the following types of questions:

- What patterns/common themes emerge around specific items in the data?
- How do these patterns (or lack thereof) help to shed light on the broader study question(s)?
- Are there any deviations from these patterns?
- If, yes, what factors could explain these atypical responses?
- What interesting stories emerge from the data?
- How can these stories help to shed light on the broader study question?
- Do any of the patterns/emergent themes suggest that additional data needs to be collected?
- Do any of the study questions need to be revised?
- Do the patterns that emerge support the findings of other corresponding qualitative analyses that have been conducted?

2.9.3. The Data Analysis Process

Seidel (1998, p. 2) developed a useful model to explain the basic process of qualitative data analysis. The model consists of three parts:

- Noticing
- Collecting
- Thinking about interesting things.

These parts are interlinked and cyclical, e.g. while thinking about things, one notices further things and collect them. Seidel likens the process to solving a jigsaw puzzle. Noticing interesting things in the data and assigning 'codes' to them, based on topic or theme, potentially breaks the data into fragments. Codes which have been applied to the data then act as sorting and collection devices, e.g.:

(a)

- Code = S & W
- Category = Signs and Wonders
- Subject = They seek after signs and wonders because they want confirmation of the truth of God. Some people need to see to believe instead of believing to see.
- The Bible refers to people like these as 'wicked' (Psalm 78:32); and as 'adulterous', (Mathew 12:39-40), as 'curious thrill-seekers' or 'miracle seekers', (John 6:2). And as people who need something for themselves, e.g. 'get rich now mentality' (John 6:26).

(b)

- Code = P
- Category = Portrayed by the media as
- Subject = (1). 'infamous'
- (2). 'fake'
- (3). 'charlatan'

Therefore, coding is not only labelling, but also linking data to an idea. It is a cyclic process. By incorporating more cycles into the coding process, richer meanings, categories, themes, and concepts are generated from the data (Saldaña 2013, p. 5-8).

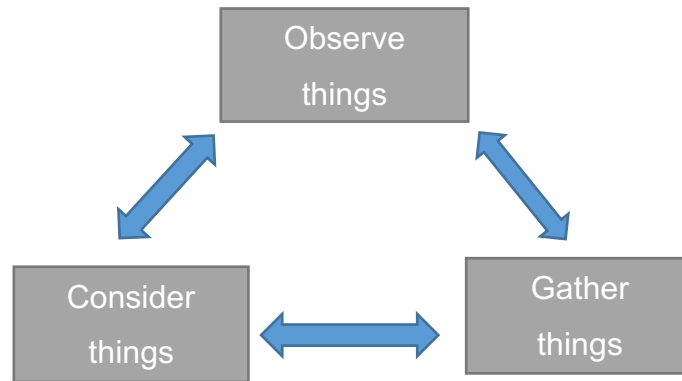


Figure 2. 3: The Data Analysis Process

Source: Seidel, 1998, page

2.9.4. The cognitive processes involved in qualitative research

The nature, causes, and result of any phenomenon becoming utterly different due to alterations in what is exhibited, or what is kept suppressed and especially in how observations are categorised. “The social world is ...a kaleidoscope of potential realities, any of which can be readily evoked by altering how observations are framed and categorized” (Edelman 1993, p. 232).

Morse (1994, p. 23-43) believes that all qualitative analysis, regardless of the specific approach, involves:

- comprehending the phenomenon under study;
- synthesising a portrait of the phenomenon that accounts for relations and linkages within its aspects;
- theorising about how and why these relations appear as they do; and
- re-contextualising, or putting the new knowledge about phenomena and relations back into the context of how others have articulated the evolving knowledge.

This set of steps helps to illustrate a series of cognitive processes by which raw data are examined and reformulated. Morse (1994, p. 23-43), has summarised the cognitive processes involved in qualitative research to help us to understand how the researcher's cognitive processes interact with qualitative data to bring about findings and generate new knowledge. Qualitative data analysis involves the identification, examination, and

interpretation of patterns and themes in textual data and determines how these patterns and themes help answer the research questions at hand.

2.9.5. Creating Themes

This approach will be utilised in this inquiry to review data to see what main themes emerge and then explore if change can be applied on the phenomenon. The term “theme” is used to denote the fact that the data are grouped around a central theme or issue (Brink & Wood, 1994 p. 215). A key quotation was selected from the information to illustrate the themes. This is more like a literary analysis. Themes are good for this research because they help in compacting information, as qualitative data can be vast. There is an understanding to compare the same issues in the three cases involved. This is like an assemblage of compacted information that would have otherwise been a considerable amount of data. Table 2.1 helped to discern patterns and common relationships regarding the three cases of study.

As an implicit topic that organises a group of repeating ideas, like in Table 2.1 below, to answer the study (Ryan & Bernard 2003, p.90). It considers a thread of underlying meaning, implicitly discovered at the interpretative level and elements of subjective understanding to the three case studies of this inquiry.

The following table is an example of themes and the results concerning the three case studies in question:

Table 2. 1: Analysis table reflecting themes and categories

THEME	CASE STUDY	RESULT
1. The meaning behind names and titles	A 1.Professor	A university professor or a teacher (especially in a specialised field) at the university in charge of other teachers. A faculty member of highest academic rank.
	B. 1.Detective 2.General	1. The prophet’s ability to detect or discern the source of the problem and provide a solution. 2. A high ranking officer in charge with authority and power to command, e.g. command an affliction to go from adherents.

	C Advocate	'Advocate general prophet' triple barrelled name. An apostle who holds the scales of justice, who predicts the future.
2. Icons, portraits and the name of the church	A	1. The logo or church brand is a cross on the world globe, indicating that the church is a representative of Jesus who died to save the world. The inspiration is to impact the whole world.
	B	1. The logo of the church shows a dove (the Holy Spirit) circling the world globe with the inscription, "releasing generals to the nations." This is indicative of the church's global mission and vision.
	C	A dove symbolises the Holy Spirit. Ark and Spiritual. Ark means a very big vessel to house even the global community.
3. Emphasis on diagnostics	A	Both the prophet and the congregation insist on predicting the future.
	B	The prophet insists on diagnosing people to heal, hence his nickname the detective.
	C	Foretelling the future rests in the DNA of the population who have a spiritualistic or foretelling background.
4. Healing method	A	1. Grass eating to prove the power of God. 2. Guzzling petrol to prove the power of God. Photos came from the church's Facebook.
	B	On the 27 th November 2016, the prophet demonstrated the power of God by first spraying the insecticide on himself, then on his congregants (From the church's Facebook).
	C	1. The use of Dettol – an antiseptic liquid. 2. The use of antifreeze to heal. 3. The use "of" Jik – a bleach to heal.

5. Deliverance sessions	A	Every Sunday and other prayer meetings during the week, as well as outreaches.
	B	Deliverance sessions, are sometimes displayed on Facebook.
	C	Prayer meetings are allegedly conducted during the week. Outreaches are conducted on a regular basis, to encourage church growth.
6. Cult of personality	A	The prophet is placed on a pedestal by miracle seekers and thrill-seekers; the prophet of God is highly esteemed, instead of the God of the prophet.
	B	It is no secret that miracle seekers idolise prophets and pastors, and some perceive them as heroes almost as a worshipful image. 'Why' ? the congregants are grateful to be free from afflictions.
	C	It is no secret that miracle seekers idolise prophets and pastors, and some perceive them as heroes almost as a worshipful image. 'Why' ? the congregants are grateful to be free from afflictions.
7. Quest for spiritual power	A	Occasional fasting and prayer, as well as outreaches for the youths to curb the problem of 'nyaupé' – (a drug notorious in the townships) for the church to cause an impact in the community.
	B	The researcher found out that every other Friday the church is involved in prayer and fasting. According to Mark 9:29, some afflictions come out through prayer and fasting.
	C	They also fast and pray, to cause a huge influence on the community.
8. Clairvoyance: <i>clair-</i> meaning "clear" and	A	Being able to discern or perceive things or events beyond normal sensory contact in the future, as well as the present problem that must have

voyance - meaning "vision"		brought the individual to the church to be prayed for.
	B	Having extrasensory perception to be able to discern or perceive things or events beyond normal sensory contact in the future as well as the present problem that must have brought the individual to the church to be prayed for.
	C	The ability to gain information about an object, things, or events beyond normal sensory contact in the future, as well as the present problem that must have brought the individual to the church to be prayed for.
9. Quest for fame	A	Recently celebrity-culture has taken hold of the church. Popularity contests among church leaders is not ruled out. Contemporary pastors/prophets are able to access the media instantly and constantly. Miracle seekers are able to compare preachers through the results on social media and are able to make a choice.
	B	Contemporary pastors/prophets are able to access media instantly and constantly by publicising their ritual practices through social media as a form of advertising for more clients.
	C	Contemporary pastors/prophets are able to access media instantly and constantly by publicising their church services performing their healing rituals through social media as a form of advertisement for more clients.

2.9.6. Creating the code and category

The code is made up of three parts: the code, the category, and the subject. Codes can be descriptive, analytical or both. Coding has helped to reduce the amount of raw data in this

inquiry into manageable sections, and present description and interpretation at a higher logical level, Schilling (2006, p.33). Charmaz (2006, p. 46), describes coding as a vital link between data collection and explaining the meaning of the data. A *code* is a descriptive construct designed by the researcher to capture the primary content or essence of the data and is an interpretive activity. Saldaña 2013, p.3–8). Coding is not only labelling, but also links data to an idea. It is a cyclic process. By incorporating more cycles into the coding process, richer meanings, categories, themes, and concepts are generated from the data (Saldaña 2013, p. 5-8).

Table 2. 2: Analysis table: coding and categorising:

CODE	CATEGORY	SUBJECT
P	Portrayed by the media as:	1. infamous 2. controversial 3. fake prophet 4. wolf
D	Dangerous or harmful items	1. 'antifreez' – car coolant 2. 'petrol' 3. 'Jik' – bleach 4. 'Doom' – insect spray 5. 'Dettol' – antiseptic liquid
H/A	Harmful acts	1. throwing stones at congregants 2. eating grass 3. placing heavy speakers on congregants 4. commanding congregants to sleep during church service
H	Hospitalisation	Four cases, in critical condition after drinking undiluted bleach.
P/A	Passed away	Six cases of death after drinking of undiluted 'Jik'
CC	Charges	Contravening
S	Summoned	Two cases
E	Effects of the items. According to the owners of the brands, the	1. petrol: causes dizziness, extreme fatigue, convulsions, body weakness and unconsciousness.

	dangers of using their brands wrongly may cause what is written in the next column	2. Jik: burns the inside, causes nausea, chest pains, lowered blood pressure and delirium, followed by coma and death. 3. Dettol: causes nausea, vomiting, sore throat and abdominal pains. 4. 'antifreeze': intoxication, vomiting, abdominal pains, decreased level of consciousness, headache, seizures, kidney failure or brain damage. 5. Spraying of Doom (pesticide): causes nausea, dizziness, diarrhoea and death. 6. grass consumption in humans: human stomachs have difficulty in digesting raw leaves or grass.
S & W	Signs & Wonders	They seek after signs and wonders because they want confirmation of the truth of God. Some people need to see to believe, instead of believing to see. The Bible refers to people like these as 'wicked' (Psalm 78:32); 'adulterous', (Mathew 12:39-40), as 'curious thrill-seekers' or 'miracle seekers', (John 6:2). As people who need something for themselves, e.g. 'get rich now mentality' (John 6:26).

2.10. The research gap

The research gap in this inquiry is that the research problem or the phenomenon has not been answered appropriately in this field yet. The question of unusual liturgical ritual practice by contemporary prophets in South Africa', is quite new, authors have yet to contribute by submitting publications about the phenomenon. There is insufficient information about this topic. This trend had recently developed. There is a deficit on empirical studies in this context, either from a theoretical perspective or a methodological approach. According to Alvesson & Sandberg (2013, pp.43-45), although gap spotting is the prevalent way of constructing research questions, these established ways of generating research questions rarely express more ambitious and systematic attempts to challenge the assumptions underlying existing theories.

The research gap specifically refers to the scientific process of solving the issue or answering the research question, which has yet to be carried out. Despite the huge variety in research styles within the social sciences, there is broad consensus about the importance of generating original and significant theoretical contributions (Alvesson & Sandberg, 2013, p.43-45). There is a research gap that is yet to be researched concerning the new trend or contemporary liturgical ritual practice. The knowledge gap needs to be filled by this new research because we know little or nothing about it (Alvesson & Sandberg 2013, p.43-45).

This research is crucial as it seeks to offer comprehensive capabilities concerning the information relating to the conditions of the subject of unusual healing practice in South Africa. The research wants to present fundamental issues that underlie the subject. The research also attempts to present an analytical presentation relating to the current situation, which is of significance to our society. Furthermore, this research relates to our social life and social challenges that need a qualitative data inquiry and an appropriate method to analyse this subject. A popular 'generic' approach in qualitative free-form research is the exploratory part of the study design or data collection and data analysis. The description is the result of the process, findings or results (Alvesson & Sandberg, 2013, p.43-45). In considering the impact of the study, the researcher had to reflect on what constructive and applied contribution this study will make to the practical theological field of research. The impact of what is being reported in this study will be written with anticipation of the reader in mind and equally precipitate a solution to the ornate subject.

The study endeavours to reflect extensively on the contribution that this study will produce to improve our understanding of the concept of unusual liturgical healing ritual practice and to promote a new understanding in the field of research. The significance of this study could simply be reflected in the following three questions:

- Why should the study of unusual liturgical ritual practice be investigated?
- What significant scientific contribution will this study generate in the field of practical theology research?
- What can generate an atmosphere of the fundamental proposition that will serve as a foundation for the attributes of feasible biblical leadership in our nation?

The immense importance of this research is to inform action, to come up with a purposeful resolution and to develop a praxis. The inquiry seeks to contextualise its findings within the

larger body of research, in order to produce knowledge that is applicable within and outside the research setting, i.e. in church settings. The expected outcome of this study is that it may have implications and recommendations for future practice. Furthermore, this research seeks to create knowledge that can be applied to real-world situations. The research also seeks to enhance the knowledge of how to best address our challenges, the new trend, namely, unusual healing practice that seems to be a widespread occurrence in this country. The goal is to understand and learn about people and the world around us. The goal is also to discover ideas and insights that require flexibility to offer an opportunity for considering and unravelling various elements of this complicated subject.

There is a lack of empirical studies involving this particular context, from a theoretical perspective and a methodological approach. This research is significant and crucial as it seeks to unravel and offer comprehensive capabilities concerning the information relating to the conditions of the subject of unusual healing practice in South Africa and to be able to present fundamental issues that underlie the subject. Media or secondary research is a viable instrument or tool to acquire social information on such burning issues.

These current significant trends in social media is a consequence in the “citizen research” via online media and are likely to entail unpredictable changes as described by Fielding (2014, p. 1066). Visual, virtual, textual, and other types of data derived from social media now complement traditional sources of data used in the past, such as interviews, focus groups, transcripts, and observation protocols.

2.11. Chapter Summary

This qualitative inquiry focusses on the comprehension, interpretation, and analysis of the current situation in our country, namely unusual liturgical ritual practices that are prevalent. This inquiry seeks to make sense of the societal reality, situation, or context in which we live. The aim is to understand the social reality of individuals, groups and cultures, e.g. to understand the reason why:

- Present-day prophets are employing unusual liturgical ritual practice to heal.
- The cultural background (ethnographic research) where the churches are situated.
- People prefer present-day churches despite negative press.

This inquiry utilised the qualitative approach to explore the behaviour, perspectives or attitudes of the cultural group and that of the prophets. The basis of qualitative research lies

in the interpretive approach of their social reality and the description of their lives. Similarly, the media makes enquiries about a variety of situations or contexts in societies. Qualitative research as a social inquiry makes an effort to understand contexts in which activities take place. Alasuutari (2010, p.13) connotes that researchers with this worldview believe that understanding human experiences is as important as focusing on explanation, prediction and control. The data generates new theoretical ideas, and help modify already existing theories or uncover the essence of phenomena. It is important to respect the context and culture in which the study takes place.

If researchers understand the context, they can locate the actions and perceptions of individuals and grasp the meanings that they communicate. In a broader sense, the context includes the economic, political, and cultural framework Alasuutari (2010, p.13). The current state and development of qualitative data analysis will find a field that is constantly expanding. In particular, the evolving and changing environment in three different aspects: data sources, data collection and data analysis.

Conducting social research will no longer involve in-person interviews in the future. It could be outlined as “Maybe they do not need us anymore.” Fielding (2014, p. 1066) describing the current major trend of ‘online research’ – with everything being conducted online, this means that citizen research is likely to entail unpredictable changes in the practice and purposes of social research. There are now opportunities to draw upon vast qualitative data streams, and as a consequence, new data collection tools, web crawling and data mining techniques have emerged in recent years.

Chapter 3

Empirical

3.1. The descriptive-empirical task

This chapter utilises the descriptive-empirical task of Osmer's (2008, p. 4) method of practical theological interpretation that asks: What is going on? This involves the gathering of information that aids us to distinguish patterns and dynamics, in particular, episodes, situations, or contexts that require interpretation of contemporary practices. It seeks to investigate empirically non-participant observation (information that is gained by indirect observation). According to (Anguera, *et al.* 2018, p.1) indirect observation entails observing past behaviour, involving material generated from social media (Facebook posts), providing significant sources of information.

The Descriptive-Empirical Task: Priestly Listening is grounded in a theology of presence, attending to others in their particularity within the presence of God. Osmer's descriptive approach aims at primarily attending to the situation, (Osmer 2008, p. 4), for example attending to the phenomenon of (unusual liturgical ritual healing practice) in South Africa. Also, gathering knowledge about the situation, by describing, exploring, and explaining it. The target was to find out how things are or how they have been and how they should be. The researcher has collected evidence through secondary sources (media-based research) to gain knowledge and as a means of solving a problem.

The pastoral cycle was utilised to delineate the phenomenon of unusual liturgical ritual healing practice. There is a national concern that present-day prophets have tipped the scale of what are considered conventional healing methods, toward somewhat strange asymmetrical methods never heard of or experienced before. There is a propensity to over-emphasising the miraculous, deliverance, healing, and to employ strange and unbalanced healing methods, e.g. eating grass, flowers, drinking antiseptic liquid, gasoline, bleach and spraying congregants with insecticides, (Sebola 2016; Molobi 2017).

The following schematic drawing indicates the unstableness of liturgical ritual healing practice carried out by some prophets. Biblical standards should be utilised as a measure of balancing the scales concerning healing methods. Acceptable fundamental truths should govern basic principles employed, the prophet's own interpretation of Scriptures should not be labelled as the will of God. The focus should be Theocentric instead of anthropocentric.

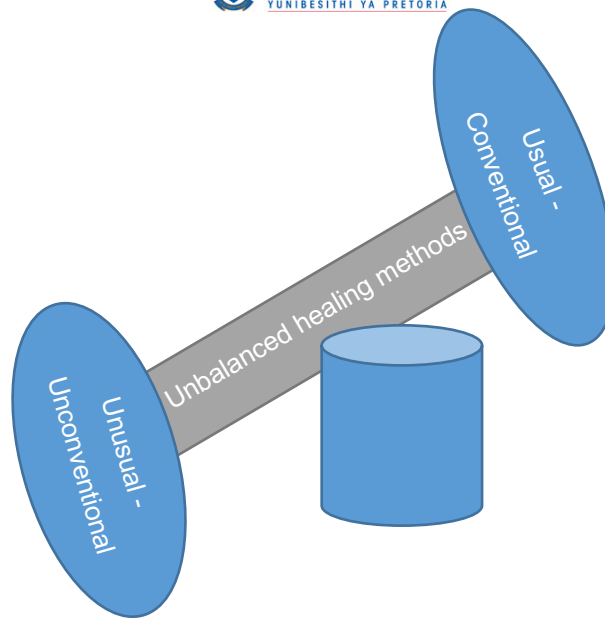


Figure 3. 1: Schematic drawing depicting unbalanced methods of healing in practical theology

- Healing methods should be balanced according to scriptures.
- Usual or conventional (infallible) methods should be employed in liturgical ritual healing practice.
- Unconventional or unusual (fallible) methods are misleading and momentary.

3.2. The pastoral cycle

The following schematic drawing by Green (2009, p. 41) of the pastoral cycle was employed conjunctively with the descriptive task of Osmer (2008, p. 4) as the plan of action that was followed to unravel the phenomenon: unusual liturgical ritual healing practices. The pastoral cycle suggests that to understand the object of the study one can commence by exploring and describing the phenomenon. Then the researcher must dig deeper through analysis, engage in reflection upon what was identified, and plan a transformative response. In some cases, it starts as theories and generalisations concerning a specific matter, while in other cases, it could start with individual observations. With whichever question or comment it commences, it should, for the sake of a responsible process be carried through the cycle at least three times. The researcher has to start with a preliminary exploration and description → dig deeper through analysis → engage in reflection upon what we have identified → plan a transformative response → repeat the process → again → and again, the process will be repeated for further knowledge to the point of employing other disciplines and (theories) for the interpretation of the phenomenon.

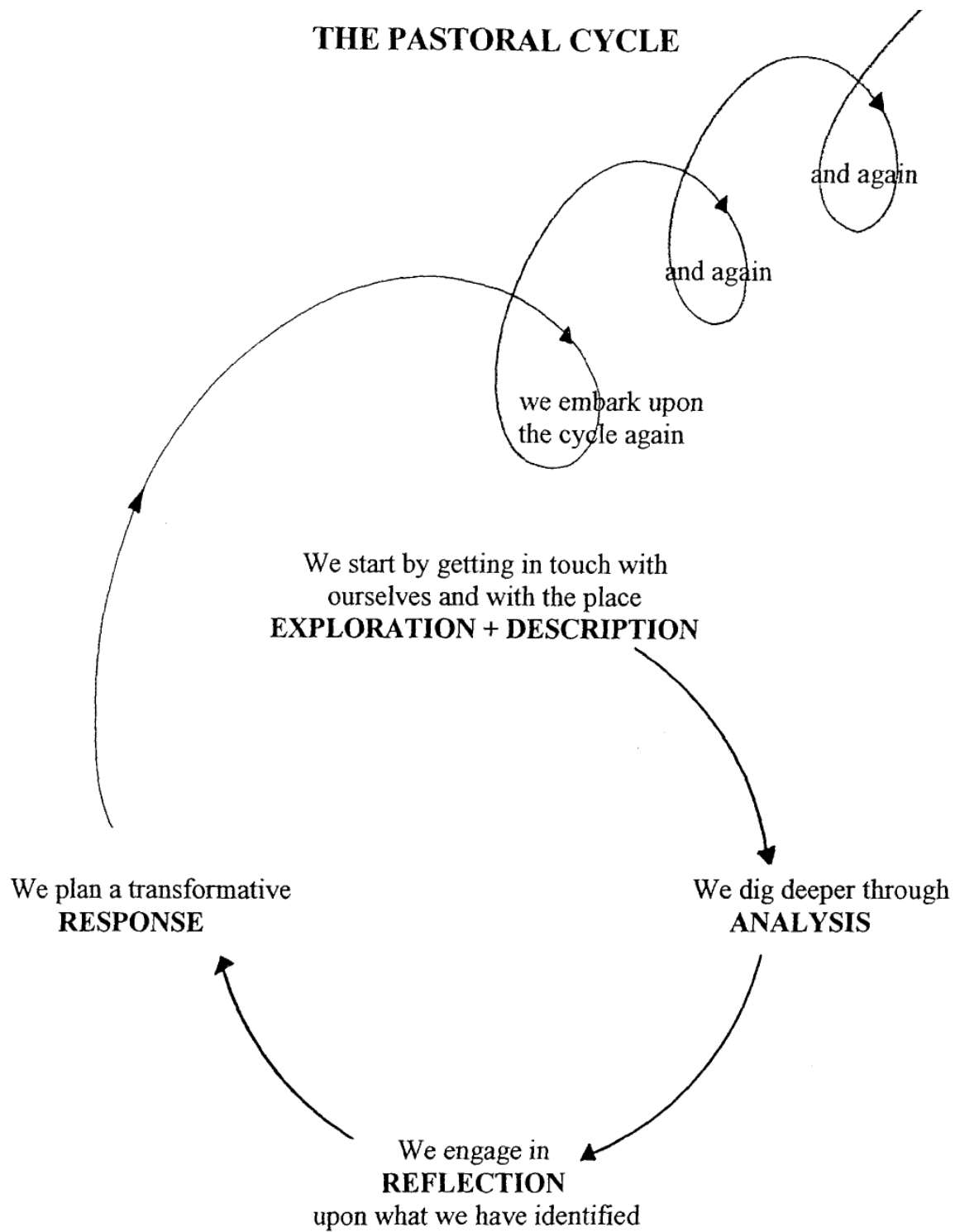


Figure 3. 2: The pastoral cycle

Source: Green (2009, p. 41)

Following the sequence: description → interpretation → description → and revision of interpretation, therefore, portraying affecting interrelation. The object must be studied from several different viewpoints, either from the angles of various established sciences or just from miscellaneous practical points of view. Repeating the different vistas helps to understand the object better because the initial inspections can serve as a basis for later examinations. The process thus resembles a spiral, which gets gradually closer to the goal. To get acquainted with this phenomenon that is not well-known, a strategic plan to cover all phases of investigation should be established (Green 2009, p. 41).

3.3 The use of qualitative media

3.3.1. The use of qualitative media research

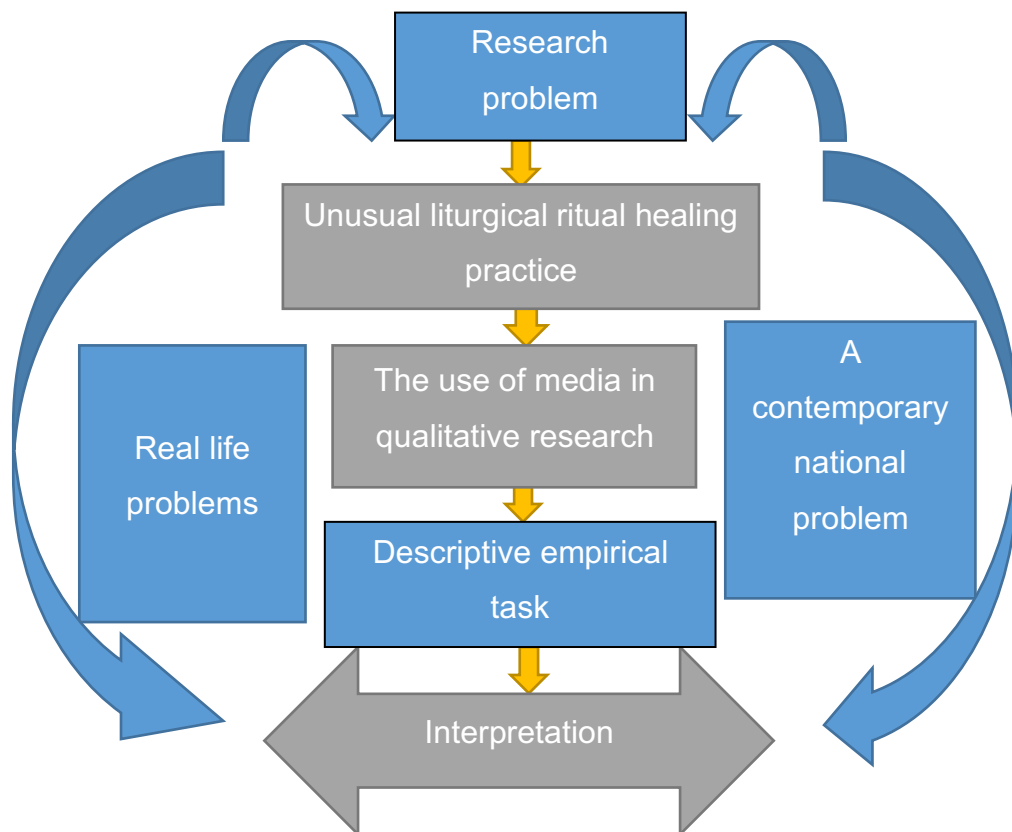


Figure 3. 3: Schematic drawing depicting the process of the use of qualitative media research in practical theology

Researching a salient problem → which is unusual liturgical ritual healing practice → a real-life problem → which is a contemporary national problem → utilizing media qualitative research → involving a descriptive-empirical task → to interpret the phenomenon.

Qualitative media research is necessary for present-day research since the utilisation of existing literature has proven to be extremely profitable. Qualitative media research offers researchers with easily accessible extensive information crucial to contemporary situations. Moreover, substantial present-day research problems or situations are made available on social media. According to Berger (2020, p.30-31):

The development of social media sites such as Facebook, Twitter, WhatsApp, LinkedIn, and Pinterest, and video sites such as YouTube and Vimeo means that people now can create messages and images that can be seen by vast numbers of people. Specific uploads (photos and video) have the potential to go 'viral,' to be seen by a vast number of people. Different research methods lend themselves to each of these areas of communication. If you are interested in the narratives carried by mass media, one will use qualitative or interpretative techniques such as semiotics or ideological analysis.

Concerning data collected Geertz (1973, p. 9) says, "what we call our data constructions of other people's constructions of what they and their compatriots are up to." Media has become a valuable tool for research. According to Fielding (2014, p. 1066),

Media, "current major trend", the rise of "citizen research" online research is likely to entail unpredictable changes in the practice and purposes of social research. The growth of media usage and analyzation of aspects in qualitative research uses the analogy of a detective story without a fixed ending: who did what, when, and why, within a particular situation and formulating this into evidence that will enable a fair judgment. Unlike a detective, a qualitative researcher does not seek to solve a case. The story is part of a wide variety of evidence that will be offered to the jury (the public) as it seeks to discern what the truth is and what is not. The evidence must be presented before a judge (the reader of the story) who will read the report and pronounce the final verdict (drawing own conclusion).

Media has evolved over the last decade to become a valuable tool to acquire and spread information. This information is primarily about people and situations. Therefore, this information is qualitative research, which helps make sense of the world, by identifying or developing an understanding of meaning-seeking of the complexities of situations (Denzin & Lincoln 1998, p. 29).

3.3.2. The concept of social media

On account of the publicity given to present-day prophets, there has been a paradigm shift. Research about the phenomenon has been kindled, probing existential social problems is a reality. Since 2014 South Africans have seen the rise of the radical movement of prophets, more inclined to social media. Liturgical ritual practices differ from that of their predecessors, but the emphasis is the same. They both profess salvation through Christ, the manifestation of the Holy Spirit, deliverance, miracles, signs, and wonders. These attributes pose as actions of invocation that appeal to society. These ministries display their miraculous activities on Facebook. According to Norton (1997, p. 409), Facebook posts are readily available to the public and in “exchanging information with their interlocutors; they are also constantly organizing and reorganising a sense of who they are and how they relate to the social world.”

According to (Tau 2016) “Prophet Rabalago made headlines in 2016 after pictures surfaced on Facebook of him spraying Doom on his congregations.” They display the miraculous activities that in turn advertise the brand. The function of Facebook is varied. Testimonies are one of the functions of post-miracle advertisers, because according to Gbote & Kgatla (2014, p. 7), “Those who received their miracles testify to the manifestations of God's power, during church services.” In a liturgical event, selected individuals testify how God answered their prayers through the prophet in terms of health, breakthrough, jobs, promotions, obtaining a house or wealth. The function of testimonies is supposed to point people to the healing grace of God. However, now it seems as if people testify to recruit affiliates, sow seed or place the man of God at the helm, or centre of power. Often healing testimonies are not medically verifiable. Some ‘TV Channels’ involved in healing require diagnostic medical proof of illness before and after healing. Some people claim that other ministries hire actors in exchange for money, to stage miraculous events. Physical miracles are identifiable: getting a new job, promotion at work or other visible physical miracles verifiable to those closer to the individual. Lest people think is a hoax, e.g. (Mlotshwa 2019), says that: “In February, a video clip of a man identified as Elliot Moyo went viral, after he was “resurrected” from a coffin by a church leader – pastor, in Gauteng.” According to Smirnova (2011, p.38), “In a more practical sense, technologizing a discourse can be defined as the process of influencing people’s way of thinking through the use of certain linguistic strategies.” This relates to a metaphorical narration posed to conceal actual facts.”

3.4. Unusual liturgical ritual healing practice

As mentioned earlier, the phenomenon of unusual liturgical ritual practice has caused quite a stir in the media, the people of South Africa, and the government. The government has pronounced to regularise these institutions, among others, that are using unconventional methods. The intervention of the South African government through the Commission for Promotion and Protection of the Rights of Religious Cultural and Linguistic Communities condemns these unusual liturgical practices. Mkwanazi-Xaluva acknowledges that: “People who are fed snakes and grass, made to drink petrol or trampled on by pastors almost never want to lay criminal charges. Until the laws are changed, we are going to sit with this problem. The police are also reluctant to deal with religious people” (Kumalo 2017).

Contemporary liturgical rituals are considered to be ‘high-risk religion’. “The religious faith of believers involves a willingness to take substantial physical risks: risks to health, physical functioning, and even the risk of death” (Battin 1990, p. 74). The following list of news headlines contains some description of unusual liturgical rituals practice employed by some churches causing outrage on social media and the public at large.

- A prophet claims, “God instructs me to heal using this product (Dettol)” (Sebola 2016).
- A South African pastor says, “This spray is not harmful. As you can see, I use it on myself, I can use anything I am told to use in the name of the Lord” (Molobi 2016).
- “Not only does he make them eat grass, he makes them crawl around mooing like cows!” (Mdluli 2019).

3.5. Present-day prophetic churches

Concerning the participation of South Africans at present-day prophetic churches, City Press wrote, “The desperation for divine healing and miracles is driving South Africans to engage in harmful religious practices. Experts are also citing poor self-esteem and a lack of social support” (Mapumulo 2017). We cannot dispute the fact that with the emergence of prophets the audience has been captivated. There is a notion that contemporary prophetism, healing and deliverance have taken momentum everywhere, and followers are attracted to it. Lartey (2001, p. 8), substantiate this when he wrote:

The success of these churches is its ability to proliferate itself as ‘powerful and effective and set people at liberty’. The liturgy of these churches is provisioned

towards the acquaintance with the efficacious aura of the Holy Spirit. Christians have been encouraged to have an awareness of God in their midst, manifested in tangible ways. In this sense, the ministries have been entirely popular within the community, respectively, because they have been found relevant, vibrant, and effective.

There is an assertion that most people go to these churches after they have consulted, traditional healers, clinics, and hospitals. Communities have been impacted by these churches. Some have left their mainline churches, and others have double affiliations. Concerning youth affiliates, Asamoah-Gyadu (2005, p. 112–13) says, “The youth respond positively because they notice something new... they acknowledge miracles, healing, salvation, deliverance, through testimonies of their peers.”

3.6. On the concept of present-day liturgy

It is vital for preachers to preach. Preaching heightens the devotion, cognitive processes, and self-esteem of those already in the fellowship, a vital undertaking, both to hold together their belief and make them more productive exponents of the teachings (Harries 1984, p. 57). Due to the fierce competition of gaining and keeping clients, prophets are aware of the pragmatic disposition based on practical religion. They aspire to see a living religion in their situational reality. According to Stolz (2008, p. 59-60), on “salvation goods” are:

An end or means to an end which is offered by a religion, embedded in a specific worldview and a system of life practices, and which may be aspired to or used by an individual or a social group. Salvation goods may be confined to certain points in time or lasting: set in the future or the present; transcendent or immanent. Individual or collective; ascetic or contemplative; aspired to actively or given to the individual by an external power.

The religious perception or worldview displayed by present-day adherent's exhibits inclinations of consumerism: church attendance is based on buying and selling miracles and predictions. Going to church is comparable with going to the supermarket to get bare necessities and fill the trolley with needs and wants. Concerning their liturgy Kalu (2013, p. 307) noted that their liturgy is a spirited worship with melodic tunes, dance, and singing; abstaining from theoretical reason. Worshippers pay attention to arduous situations that give rise to a central fundamental African worldview with the emphasis of miracles, vision, dreams, and healing. There is a perception that salvation is attained while in the pursuit of

blessings and protection from misfortune. “Religions are less about ‘the holy’ than about blessings, salvation, and protection from misfortune, as well as about the providers and mediators of salvation” (Riesebrodt 2010, p. xiii).

3.7. The concept of deliverance

Deliverance remains central in present-day prophetic churches; the importance of the ministry of deliverance resonates well with the practice of earlier tradition of utilising inanimate objects combined with spiritual power to heal. Concerning the use of inanimate objects, (Tau 2016) wrote: “The pastor who claimed he could heal people using any resource available to him at the time to heal, for instance, the use of an insecticide (Doom)”. Resane (2016, p. 2) concurs that “these churches mostly have features such as casting out demons, healing the sick, with a proclivity towards deliverance from any form of bondage such as poverty, unemployment, marital needs, a promotion at work, childlessness, bewitchment, etc.” Some extreme display of power has left South Africans in bewilderment. Some present-day prophetic ministry, “provide alternatives in the forms of anointing oil, blessed water, calendars, or handkerchiefs” (Van den Torren 2015, p. 113).

3.8. Factors that gave rise to the growth of Present-day Prophetic Ministries

3.8.1. Problem-solving capabilities

Deliverance churches are good at advertising their putative capabilities of solving problems to entice crowds. Despite healing and deliverance, prophecy is also a significant feature inherent in the ideology of Africans (to fore-know the future). Prophecy, healing, and deliverance used to be the function of witchdoctors. Most African families were accustomed to consulting witchdoctors, and prophets seem to have taken the place of witchdoctors.

According to Elom-Donkor (2010 p.3),

Religion in an African context is related to ‘problem- solving,’ and its validity and potency are judged according to its ability to resolve problems relating to the wellbeing of the individuals and their communities.

People who have contracted incurable diseases are fearful and even those with blood-related diseases or diseases that seem impervious to medical treatment; in desperation, they turn to deliverance ministries that make assertions of success in administering much needed divine healing. People who are attracted to deliverance churches search for, and require the following:

- Healing: physical, psychological, and emotional;
- Anointing: for breakthrough/success, e.g. promotion at work, success in business finding a job, starting a business, getting the right partner;
- Protection: from evil forces;
- Solution: from stressful situations e.g. getting out of debts, winning court cases, restoration of marriages, winning elections, avoidance of being implicated on corruption cases concerning state capture, to name but a few.

Different categories of people go to prophetic churches to overcome life's complications. Symbolic ritual objects like anointed water, oil for (healing, breakthrough, and protection), anointed stickers for protecting the car from accidents, for protecting the house, handbags, wallets, and oneself, are put up for sale in the church. Asamoah-Gyadu, a renowned Ghanaian scholar of Pentecostal churches, maintains that:

Deliverance has a specific purpose, and it seeks to: let people free i.e., physically, emotionally, economically, and spiritually, so that there may be restored to proper functioning ... enabled to enjoy the fullness that Jesus promises to all who come to him (2004:399). He further explains that healing and deliverance mean being freed from demonic influences and curses so that people may enjoy health and wholeness.

People are encouraged and seem to find solace by attending prophetic churches. Charismatic pastors tend to announce a series of positive statements like 'Miracles are going to happen today' or 'This a special day for miracles' or 'Something good is going to happen to you today.' It is one of the ways of setting an atmosphere of expectancy to the crowd. The decisive statement is often preceded by testimonies of past deliverance, miracles, and breakthroughs that took place to encourage and spark interest among the crowds to believe in their exploits.

3.8.2. The concept of poverty

Inequality of living standards in South Africa continue to decline, the rising unemployment, and social injustice raises the level of poverty. Inhumane conditions, such as lack of appropriate food, housing (living in squatter camps) infrastructure: lack of proper roads, power supply, water supply, pit toilets, and lack of proper health care, continue to hinder ordinary citizens. Corruption in the government and private sector has worsened the condition. It would, therefore, appear that "it is the poor and the vulnerable who suffer most under corruption" (Du Plessis & Breed 2013, p.1). Concerning the term poverty, Wepener *et al.* (2010, p. 64) define poverty as "a state of affairs where the absence of material

resources, the denied space for trust and identity forming, as well as the loss of civil skills impact negatively on one another, in a seemingly unstoppable and negatively escalating spiral.”

Well-being in an African context involves wholeness of life. One cannot dispute the social relevance of contemporary churches. Their Gospel applies to social existential needs and is in accordance with societal requirements. Even the elite adhere to this need. According to (Mapumulo 2017), Seleme Melato, a clinical psychologist based in Johannesburg, says: “Churches that practise these activities are popular among the poor. They seem able to convince churchgoers to regard the church as a source of socioemotional support, as well as a protector of those who are in need of deliverance.”

3.8.3. Deterioration of the health delivery system

The deterioration of public hospitals has mostly affected the poor. Health care facilities and services in public hospitals are almost at the brink of collapse; there is a notion that the best health care is available in private hospitals (in particular the Netcare group). According to Rispel (2018) the health system performs poorly due to a combination of factors, including the poor management of public sector hospitals, professional health shortages (mainly in rural areas), low productivity levels among staff, escalating private health care costs and poor quality of care. Chibango’s (2016, pp. 61-62) attestation is relevant to the South African health system, especially in rural areas, when he writes: “The delivery of health care services remains scanty in the country due to lack of adequate medical facilities, shortage of drugs as well a lack of medical personnel.” One cannot dispute that ill health and poverty are allies.

Furthermore poverty plays a significant role in ill-health and is also a critical hurdle for the marginalised. In order to avoid health-care hurdles, an undertaking to the well-publicised church, that offers the prophetic, healing, and deliverance seem to be the best option for some. At the root of these churches' emphasis on deliverance is the firm belief that poverty, suffering, and the hindrance to succeed are as a result of a curse. Prophetic movements create and promote dependency on the prophets; this, in turn, results in people becoming so dependent on the prophet and frequently need to consult him for prophetic services.

3.8.4. Supernatural causes

According to Lartey (2001, p. 13), “the basic fear of malevolent forces [and the “power” to address them], a dependence on the [prophet’s] ‘anointing’, and the belief that the protection

and blessing of God will remain upon them, so long as they remain faithful [to God, to the church, and the prophet].” Supernatural causes of maladies and failure according to the African worldview are attributable to malevolent spirits (see Chapter 7). The African reality of duality means that malevolent spirits can cause harm in an individual, except for prayer. “Such prayers are “boisterous and very physical” (Omenyo & Arthur 2013, p. 53) . Indeed, terms like ‘spiritual warfare’, ‘spiritual battle’, and ‘military prayers’ are frequently mentioned by believers who expressing such prayer rituals (Asamoah-Gyadu 2007, p. 311; Omenyo & Adjei 2013, p. 53). Besides malevolent forces, generational or ancestral curses also cause harm, due to evil covenants made by ancestors. Kalu (2008, p.174) argues, “Covenants can only be reversed by recognizing their existence, potent reality, character, and appropriate rituals of disengagement. They are legally binding and may not be wished away without due processes.”

In an African worldview, there is a perception that one must not flaunt one’s blessings or prosperity in the community to avoid jealousy. One is supposed to set a standard at the level of the community or appear pitiful to avoid witchcraft attacks. Jealousy is blamed on those who are closest to the protagonist. Therefore, family members (sibling rivalry), neighbours or co-workers can turn into enemies (antagonists) perceived as witches or sorcerers, and it can cause fierce opposition enough to send one hurtling for deliverance. Sickness, hardships, spiritual attacks, failure, stagnation, setback, bad-luck, rejection, premature birth, or death are attributed to these alleged enemies. The promise of blessings, good health, protection, breakthrough, prosperity is the solution people seek through prayer. As Kalu (2008, p. 186) notes, “in the African worldview, to discover the source of a problem is to seek the help of the diviner.”

3.8.5. Corruption and the distribution of wealth

The schematic drawing below is an illustration of unequal wealth distribution creating a gap between the rich and the poor:

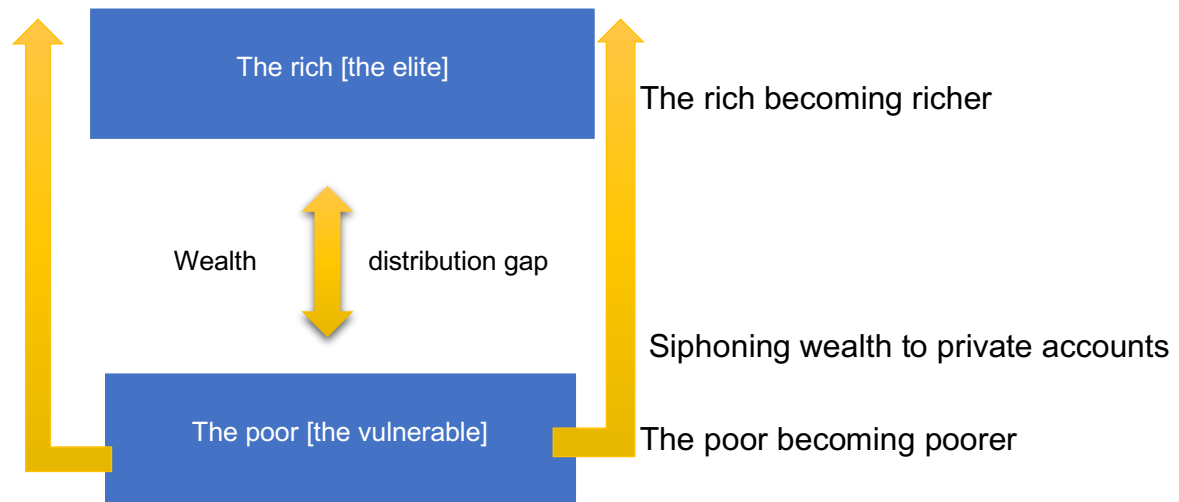


Figure 3. 4. An illustration of unequal wealth distribution gap between the rich and the poor

- the country's resources are unequally distributed
- national income is diverted to private accounts of 'the elite'
- the poor have faced decades of exploitation by the privileged class
- the poor are denied access to resources

When the democratic government took over, people's expectations went up, finally, with the new dispensation, the long-awaited freedom was assured. Poor people pinned their hope to the new democratic government. However, more than two decades later, corrupt practices have affected society, imposing additional contexts of poverty amongst the vulnerable. As a consequence, shacks, homelessness, unemployment, joblessness among the youth have escalated, limited infrastructure, for example, poor sanitation and Eskom's load-shedding have affected small businesses and the (general) economy further incapacitating the poor. Lack of access to essential services, for instance, water scarcity due to depletion of essential structures have affected mainly the poor.

The self-seeking government, as well as the private sector, have further exacerbated public coffers by bribery and corrupt siphoning of money to personal accounts locally and internationally, further displacing the common people. According to Zucman (2015 p. 34-35), corruption is a cause of low development and exacerbates poverty where poverty prevails; corruption, therefore, needs to be included amongst causes of the consequences of poverty." People have lost hope and have redirected their expectations to prophetic

churches, that promise, healing, deliverance, breakthrough, the fruit of the womb, and prosperity, among others. South Africans who have to deal with the rising costs of bare essentials and debts have turned to supernatural means to meet existential needs. Moreover, seeing the opulent lifestyles of prophets that seem appealing, they are drawn to this kind of Gospel, which promises freedom from poverty and the opportunity of getting rich through God's blessings. People are thronging these churches for liberation (alleviation from maladies and well-being).

3.9. Identifying Supporters and "Persuadables" Watkins

Prophets have much needed support from their followers. Some people will support a leader's agenda early on because it moves their interests forward. However, identifying people, as supporters does not mean that one can take them for granted. One has to strengthen support by nurturing their followers to ensure that their support does not slip away suddenly. Prophets also need to increase influence by upholding followers to become more effective leaders who must persuade and intensify the devotion of supporters (Watkins 2001, p.19). Followers in present-day churches develop strong roots of support systems as in the example below:

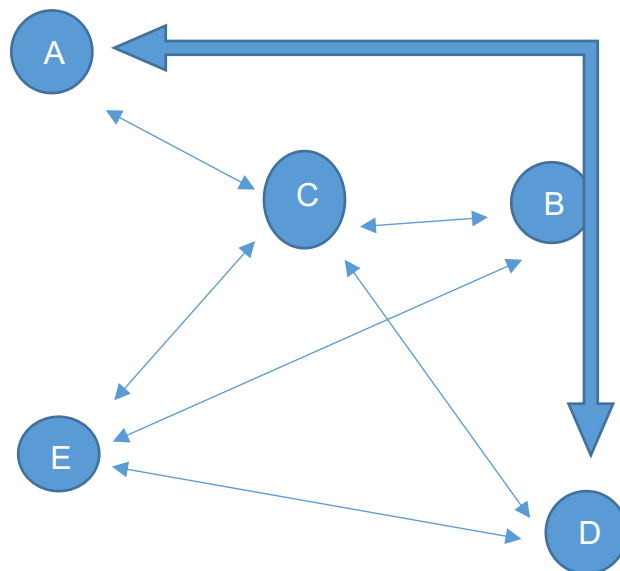


Figure 3.5: Influence diagram

Source: Watkins, M. (2001, p.19)

There are agents that are elements of the support structure who influence the group like the illustrations above and below:

- A. is influenced by C.
- B. is influenced by C.
- C. influences networks.
- D. who is a new in the group is aware of C's high influence on everybody.
- E. is also influenced by C.

These churches have robust support systems that are impenetrable. It is evident because each time a pastor/prophet is facing charges and must appear in court, the prophet's loyal-agents bring together hundreds of supporters to gather outside court buildings to protest on behalf their leader. Mostly, supporters arrive early before their leader to support and to show solidarity to the pastor/prophet; for instance, it happened in Bushiri, Omotoso, and Rabalago's cases.

3.10. Present-day prophetic ministries

This new trend seems to pose a challenge in South Africa, attributable to the perception of 'bad practice.' Regardless of 'bad press', the trend is becoming more and more appealing to many. "The prophetic ministries attract people from different social classes, gender, and age groups, including the top cadres in politics and the arts" (White, Tella & Ampofo 2016, p. 3). Newer religious trends, remarkable liturgical ritual practice, and promises of well-being are an attraction to many. "Despite warnings from the commission, congregants continue to flock to such churches and even defend the pastors against criticism and public condemnation" (Mapumulo 2017). The ability to draw more and more followers by emergent prophetic churches is trending.

The following are the names of churches in this research:

- 1) . Mount Zion General Assembly, (Prophet Lethebo Rabalago)
- 2) . Rabboni Centre Ministries, (Pastor Lesego Daniel)
- 3) AK Spiritual Christian Church, (Prophet Rufus Phala)

3.11 Case Studies

3.11. (a). The three case studies

The research was conducted qualitatively while working empirically to examine the three churches as case studies. In the initial stages of the research, the researcher was privileged to conduct participant observation. Brief interviews were conducted. Unfortunately, participant observation could no longer take place. The reason being, the churches no longer wished to be contacted. During the brief participant observation, the researcher noticed the following activities: fasting, prayer mountains pilgrimages, laying on of hands, mass prayers, all-night prayers, outreach programmes, amongst others. In the following schematic drawing: are the names of present-day prophetic churches and prophets that are in the research:

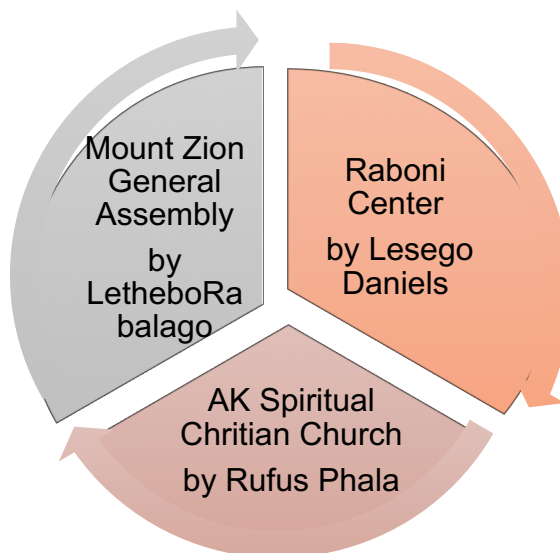


Figure 3. 6: The names of present-day prophetic churches and prophets that are in the research

3.11. (b). Media houses involved in the research:

Empirical data collected concerning these churches was placed in a more comprehensive framework that explains how the liturgy was conducted and the explanation of patterns of behaviour, attitudes, and ideas through the lens of media houses. The three reputable media houses (as previously indicated in chapter one, under the sub-heading: secondary sources), employed to source information through digital media were mainly the three amongst others:



3.11.1. CASE STUDY: 1

Prophet Lethebo Rabalago	Mount Zion General Assembly
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Self-given titles / Iconic names:

1. 'Detective' - The prophet's ability to detect or discern the source of the problem and provide a solution.
2. 'General' - High ranking officer in charge with authority and power to command, e.g. command an affliction to go from adherents.

3.11.1.1. A brief background

Mount Zion church is situated in Zebediela almost 61 km from Polokwane. Lethebo Rabalago, approximately in his late twenties, asserts that he was chosen while still in his mother's womb to become a prophet and that God, had used him to heal thousands of people. Some refer to him as the prophet, detective, and general. Pastor Lethebo Rabalago of MZGA is another disciple of Pastor Lesego Daniel. They have the same distinctive characteristics ecclesiastically. The unconventional practice by Lethebo Rabalago comprises spraying the congregants with Doom to demonstrate the power of God. According to a report by (Vilakazi 2016), Lethebo Rabalago of MZGA, had in full view posted photographs on his Facebook page spraying congregants with Doom Super Multi Insect Killer to cure an assortment of ailments. A post about a congregant, said: "I came here with a pain in my back and stomach. Now, after the prophet sprayed me with Doom, I am healed. My nose was blocked for a week, but after the prophet sprayed me with Doom, I feel healed. I thank God for healing me." There was supposed to be medical proof to authenticate the adduced miracles.

3.11.1.2. Healing method

According to (Molobi 2016), Lethebo Rabalago said that there is nothing special about Doom. He has been instructed by the Holy Spirit to use it at the night session, "I use anything that the Lord directs me to use to heal people," said the prophet. He said that he is aware of the dangers of the product, but when it comes to the work of the Lord, it becomes harmless. "It is not about Doom. I can use anything that I am instructed to use" says, Lethebo Rabalago who says that God, can instruct him to use anything and to make a dangerous insecticide like Doom harmless to bring healing to the sick. The prophet was seemingly referring the

scripture of Mark 16: 15-18, “And these signs shall follow them that believe; In my name, shall they cast out devils; they shall speak with new tongues; They shall take up serpents; and if they drink any deadly thing, it shall not hurt them; they shall lay hands on sick, and they shall recover,” (Matlala The Citizen 1 December 2016:1). According to The Citizen, the prophet called on the sick to come forward, and a woman called Mrs. Mitala went forth and told the prophet that she suffers from an ulcer. The prophet sprayed Doom on her, and she reportedly received her healing and deliverance” (Matlala The Citizen 1 December 2016:1) “In a world sick of disease, social discontent, poverty, and unrest, these spaces act as buffer zones to ascertain energy and the will to press on through harsh times, both socially and economically. ”New Pentecostals are operating as havens of deliverance(s) against multifaceted ills” (Khanyile 2016, p. 26).

According to Facebook posts by the church, they claim that Doom - an insecticide, brought healing to a woman with a stomach ulcer through God (Matlala The Citizen 1 December 2016:1). According to (Seeth 2016), Rabalago asserts that he utilises Doom insect killer to heal people with cancer, HIV or any other illness, as well as drive out demons, (Seeth 2016). Regarding prophet Rabalago’s bizarre healing methods, Muvhenzhe (2016) says that prophet Rabalago, “called on the usher to bring the big stones into the church.” Then, with the church members lying down on the floor at his feet, he drops the heavy stones onto them. “The stones will heal your sins, and God has instructed me to do this,” he told the congregation

When Daily Sun interviewed one member (a woman) about the incident, she said, “The people who are saying negative things about the prophet, are sent by demons. He is a good prophet who prays for people, and they get healed,” said the member. “Leave us alone with our rocks” (Muvhenzhe 2016). The Daily Sun further reported the following statement from prophet Rabalago: “We did everything to heal people and cast out their demons. I put big speakers on them, I drive over them, and they never get injured because it is the power of God in me that makes everything possible” (Muvhenzhe 2016).

3.11.1.2.1. The dangers of pyrethrin

According to (Ngoepe 2016) “Some of the symptoms caused by inhaling pyrethrin are difficulty in breathing, coughing, seizures, which can lead to death, upset stomachs and vomiting.” Tiger Brands responded by saying that they find the practice alarming and

extremely concerning. “Doom is formulated to kill specific insects, which are detailed on the cans, and the packaging has very clear instructions and health warnings for humans, which must be adhered to. Using this product for purposes other than what it is intended for, poses health risks, and is therefore dangerous” (Ngoepe 2016).

3.11.1.2.2. The CRL’s comments

According to the Daily Sun, the Commission for the Promotion and Protection of the Right of cultural, religious, and linguistic communities, Chairperson Thoko Mkhwanazi Xaluva said it is difficult for the commission to do anything in these kinds of cases because the people did not see themselves as victims. “There needs to be regulation that will stop these pastors from harming people. There is no law that makes it illegal for pastors to throw rocks at people. The pastors do as they please because the congregants are not complaining” (Muvhenzhe 2016).

3.11.1.2.3. The charges against the prophet

The court interdict for prophet Rabalago according to (Myambo 2017): the Doom prophet appeared in the Limpopo High Court to challenge an interdict granted to the Department of Health, refraining him from using insecticide on people. The church followers were in view outside the court to support him. Limpopo Health Department spokesperson Derrick Kganyago wanted Rabalago to be mentally evaluated, which led to launching an interdict, which the High Court granted, (Myambo 2017). Rabalago was charged with: Five cases of assault with the intent to do grievous bodily harm, and three, breaking environmental laws contravening the 1947 Agricultural Remedies Act” (Ngwadla 2018). Rabalago’s lawyer defended him by arguing that the insecticide was prayed over before spraying it on church members, which made it holy. Judge George Phatudi contended that Rabalago was not a scientist of toxic chemicals (Sebola 2017). These types of cases will prove challenging for the government to adjudicate because of the individuals’ unwillingness to lay charges against the pastors.

3.11.2. CASE STUDY: 2.

Prophet Lesego Daniel	Rabboni Centre Ministries
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Self-given title / iconic name:

‘Professor’ - A university professor or a teacher (especially in the specialised field) at the university in charge of other teachers. A faculty member of highest academic rank.

3.12.2.1. His brief background

According to the Rabboni Centre Ministries website

(www.rabbonicentreministries.com/facebook), Pastor Lesego Daniel was born on 15 May 1972. He grew up in Ga-Rankuwa Zone 5 (a township north of Pretoria and/or Tshwane-South Africa) and finished his tertiary education. He started the ministry after spending much time in the presence of God. Lesego Daniel is gifted in healing the sick, prophesying, and teaching the Word. He has been in full-time ministry since 1999, under the supervision of different men of God, who paved the way for him to start the ministry. He founded Rabboni Centre Ministries in November 2002

(<http://www.rabbonicentreministries.org.za/learn-recognise-true-one-part-1/papa-201-3/>).

3.11.2.1. Healing method

According to (Reilly 2014), Lesego Daniel made his congregation eat grass to 'be closer to God' before stamping on them. Rosemary Phetha, the 21-year-old law student, attested to eating grass to demonstrate God's power. She claims that she had been battling a sore throat for more than a year, but was healed after she ate the grass. Another one of Daniel's followers, Doreen Kgatle, of Ga-Rankuwa, claims she suffered a stroke two years ago, and could not walk, but soon after eating the grass, as the pastor had ordered, she started gaining strength, and an hour later, she could walk again.

Sethusa & Mathebula (2014) report another healing method. Rabboni church believers have taken their faith to 'another level'. They are drinking petrol as they believe it will help them to connect to God. In a video post by the church, Daniels claims to turn petrol into pineapple juice. This miraculous power is demonstrated in front of the congregation, with one of the church members pouring petrol into a basin and igniting it to prove that it is flammable. Daniel tasted the liquid in front of the crowd.

Compliance to the prophet's instructions to partake in an almost unorthodox activity may be due to social influence, and the inability to come to sensible conclusions is partly to be blamed. According to Fischer *et al.*, (2013, p.43), "compliance can be likened to an error in judgement: vulnerability to persuasion is not directly linked to intelligence, but to mechanisms that momentarily suspend the rational decision-making processes." The statement by (Molobi 2018) said, the pastor took the (plastic) snake used for decoration on the Holy Communion table and pointed it at a congregant, who is referred to as Mrs.

Makhubela. “Instantly, the spirit inside Mrs. Makhubela was overpowered, and the lady was seen falling under the power of the Holy Spirit” (Molobi 2018). One cannot be astounded enough about the bizarre happenings at present-day churches; there are simply no limits.

3.11.2.2. The dangers of drinking petrol

According to Moore (2015, p1),

Fuel is a dangerous substance, and the effects after ingestion amongst others: is corrosion to the abdominal region; it affects the nervous system; causes excitement similar to drug upshot; and poses danger to the respiratory system, resulting in difficulty in breathing and pneumonia, among other issues.

On the other hand, eating grass requires a particular enzyme, such as those found in the digestive systems of herbivores, which humans do not possess (Matsena 2015).

3.11.3. CASE STUDY: 3.

Prophet Rufus Phala	AK Spiritual Christian Church
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Self-given title / iconic name:

Advocate general - ‘Advocate general’ double-barrelled name.

1. Advocate - One who holds the scales of justice.
2. General - A commander of the army, a high ranking officer in the army.

3.11.3. 1. A brief background

The Spiritual Christian Church in Makgodu Village is about ten kilometres outside Polokwane in Limpopo province. The South African prophet, Rufus Phala of AK Spiritual Christian Church in Makgodu, Limpopo, has stunned people with his unusual healing methods.

3.11.3.2. Healing method

Prophet Rufus, according to (Sebola 2016), told the congregation to drink the antiseptic liquid, promising them the healing of their sicknesses. Asserting that indeed, Dettol is harmful, but God instructed him to use it, and he demonstrated by first drinking it before giving it to his church to drink. Euphemia Annor, the regional legal director of Dettol South

Africa, said that they were against Prophet Phala using the product inappropriately (Sebola 2016).

On antifreeze Boshego (2017) wrote that Phala said, God told him Satan was challenging the ministry. For that reason, he had to use antifreeze to chase Satan's spirit from his church; to stop boozers from drinking beer; and when he drinks it, miracles happened in his life. He further asserts that "With God everything is possible, and He said miracles would follow those who believe," and whatever he does is a message from God.

To coerce the congregation to get on board (his radicalness), and acclimatise the people is (a strategic persuasion), to prepare them for what he was about to do by a positive declaration. For instance, in the situation of Jik, according to (Sebola 2018) Phala said "it was Jik before I made the declaration, however, after I declared it to be the blood of Jesus Christ, it means it is no longer Jik so it will not harm anyone who consumes it"

He likened his act to the Bible, where Jesus gave his servants' wine to drink but had said to them, "this is my blood" (Sebola 2018). People are complicated creatures; sometimes, they get into trouble consciously as a result of irritative persuasive situations. "The problem of human understanding is a two-fold one. Humanity knows and is also conscious that he knows. We acquire, possess, and make use of our knowledge; but at the same time, we are aware of our activities as knowers" (Toulmin 1972, p.1). A medical doctor, Dr Mabowa Makhomisane, said Jik's active ingredient, sodium hypochlorite, was used for cleaning purposes. "When this chemical is consumed it will undoubtedly cause corrosion of the oesophagus (the pipe that takes food to the stomach) and ultimately the stomach" (Sebola 2018).

3.12 Chapter summary

The target was to find out about the unusual healing ritual practices in present-day prophetic churches. The empirical chapter utilised the descriptive-empirical task of Osmer's 2008, p.4) method of practical theological interpretation that asks: 'What is going on?' This involved the gathering of information that aids us to distinguish patterns and dynamics in particular episodes, situations, or contexts (Osmer 2008, p. 4). The empirical task sought to investigate empirically, indirect non-participant observation (information that is gained by indirect observation). Indirect observation is based on data collected, documented data,

newspapers, the internet, books, among others. “Indirect observation consists of observing physical clues of past behaviour, an effect or an activity although not personally observed, indirect observation is non-reactive chiefly because the researcher is not physically present when the behaviour is occurring” (Baily 1994, p. 265; Crowther & Lancaster 2012, p. 110). The approach aimed primarily at gathering knowledge, i.e. descriptions and explanations, about the phenomenon of study but did not wish to tamper with it. The objective was to find out how things are or how they have been. A brief history of the people and prophets involved in the study: their culture, values, beliefs and where they are situated. This is the historic background of the communities where the research is taking place.

We cannot dispute the fact that with the emergence of prophets the audience has been captivated. There is a notion that contemporary prophetism, healing and deliverance have taken momentum everywhere in South Africa, and followers are attracted to it because the reasons illustrated on the schematic drawing below:

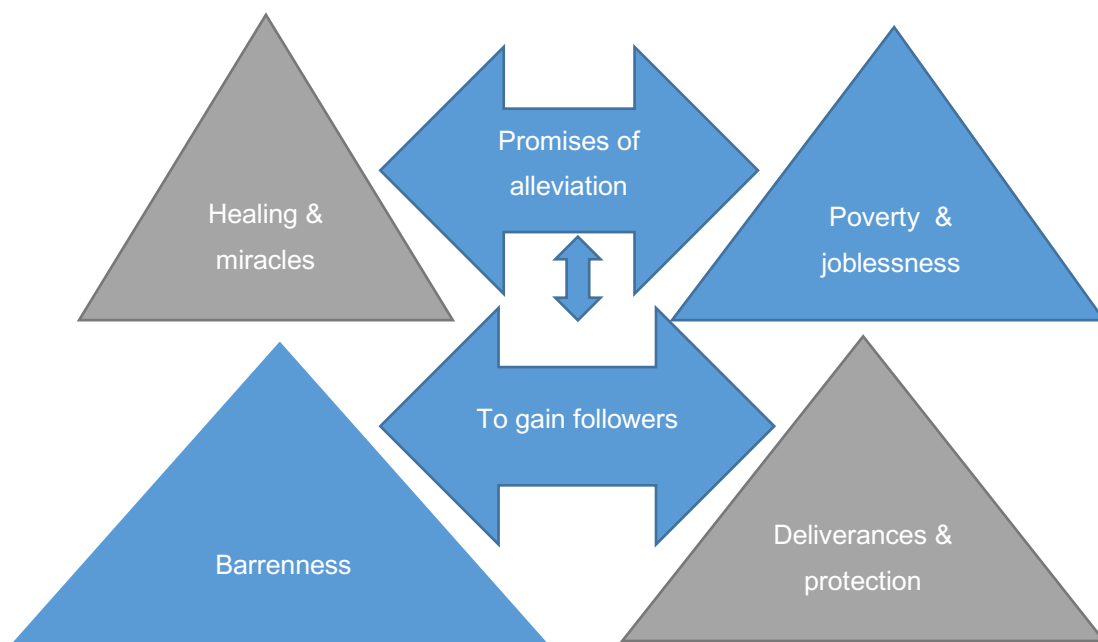


Figure 3. 7: The strategic pillars that function as a crowd – enticements in present-day prophetic churches

- The promise of healing and miracles
- The alleviation of poverty and solutions to joblessness
- Healing of barrenness
- Deliverance from maladies and protection from all evil

In short, these are some of the pillars holding the present-day theology. There is an over-emphasis of the miraculous, healing, and deliverance, amongst others. The types of methods used to get to the solution have proven to be a source of concern in South Africa; for instance: 1. The tools utilised for healing; and 2. How these healing tools were administered or were practiced concerning the phenomenon of study - how the liturgical ritual healing practise is accomplished.

Chapter 4

Liturgy

4.1. Liturgy

The liturgical expression, performance, participation, the structure, the elements and the dynamics, of contemporary liturgy, will be studied in this chapter from a variety of perspectives that will sanguinely contribute to the comprehension of present-day prophetic churches. The new brand popular in contemporary Christianity is predisposed to media hype, marked by prophetic ostentation and the exigency of the miraculous. Their liturgy is still in the making. Some of their distinctive practices have been recently developed, with their liturgy adopted from Pentecostal roots, therefore, taking on, to a small degree a 'new face'. This chapter will be examined according to the following framework:

- Firstly, a definition of liturgy will be explicated or clarified.
- Secondly, the origin and history of Pentecostals will be established.
- Thirdly, the introduction of the 'new brand', the present-day prophetic church trending in South Africa today.
- Fourthly, liturgical features inherent of Pentecostal DNA will be explored.

4.1.1. Definition of liturgy

Liturgy is a basic function of the church to proclaim the 'faith-principle', and the provision of service by the church to the people. The meaning of Liturgy originates from a Greek word *leitourgia* (from the verb *leitourgein*), which derives its meaning from two words, i.e. *ergon* (work) and *litos* (belonging to the people). Literally translated *leitourgia* means the "work of the people" (Zimmerman 2014, p. 20). It could also mean "worship of God" as in Acts 13:2 (Adam 1985, p. 3). It is derived from the life and ministry of Jesus himself (Luke 22:10). This means that Christ as the centre in the life of a Christian should be the focal point. "In him we live, and move, and have our being; as certain also of your own poets have said, for we are also his offspring" (Acts 17:28). Without Christ, there will be no salvation and no Christianity. Therefore, "liturgy is a joint action of Jesus Christ, and his church for the salvation of human beings and the glorification of the heavenly Father" (Adam 1985, p. 5).

According to Jones *et al.* (1992, p. 17-20), "The liturgy is always celebrated in the power of the Holy Spirit, just as prayer is made in the Spirit, (Romans. 8:26-27), so is the celebration

of liturgy. The vertical movement, is the outgoing of man to God; and the horizontal movement, liturgy is celebrated with others.” Below are different definitions of liturgy by different authors, and at the end of the definitions, the researcher will give a working definition.

Albrecht (1999, p. 132)

Liturgy is, “How the congregation and their alter space helps symbolically define the space, a place of meeting. Coming to the front, normally means to come metaphorically to a ritual centre of sacrifice. The sacrifice is made in prayer and in acts of spiritual commitment around the alter. The alter space is considered as a meeting place with the divine.”

Brogdon (2015, p. 79)

Liturgy, begins by encountering God in worship. The experience of divine presence during praise and during the reverence of God, people raise their hands, dance, sing, pray in tongues, weep and bow. Communal experience of divine presence provides the ground for new possibilities

Vonday (2018 pp.11-12)

Liturgical experience embodies practices, rites, and rituals. The worship is spontaneous, and rituals are playful because they are often improvised and unstructured, which emulate the day of Pentecost and invite miracles, signs, and charismatic activities encouraging theological curiosity, liturgical responsiveness, spiritual renewal, and personal transformation. Among these practices, the altar call and response stand out as the climax of traditional worship.

Cartledge and Swaboda (2017, pp. 5-9)

The liturgy seeks to construct a theological account of sung worship that invites God’s creative presence to be manifest among the worshipers. The believers expect that this is the moment in time and place when God will interact tangibly with them for the sake of their transformation and his glory. It is a Trinitarian event of revelation and of encounter (divine-human–encounter), as the zone/area set apart for the purpose of prayer and seeking God, and by means of this event God creates, establishes and sustains relationship with individuals in the community of the church. Liturgy can be

defined as the church's expression of worship towards the Triune God, who is the creator and redeemer.

Working definition

The liturgical meeting is an encounter between man and the Triune God, i.e., the unbounded redemptive act of the Triune God that extends to the receptive heart of man that also spreads horizontally. The central divine aim of redemptive-liturgy is the salvation and transformation of man through liturgical events to provide an eternal mutual relationship between the triune God and humanity while sustaining relationships between man and man. Moreover, while establishing the relationship with God, relationships between people are also enhanced. Having established the meaning of liturgy, what follows is the development of the origin and history of Pentecostal theology.

4.2. The origin and history of Pentecostal theology

Pentecost is an English word derived from the Greek word 'pentekostos,' which means fifty. Fifty comes from the ancient Christian expression 'pentekoste hemera,' meaning 'fiftieth day.' The fiftieth day refers to a 'Jewish holiday' known as the 'Festival of Weeks' or only weeks (Shavuot in Hebrew). The name comes from an expression in Leviticus 23:16, which instructs people to count seven weeks or fifty days from the end of Passover to the beginning of the next holiday (pentecosta hemeras), (see Roberts 2011, p. 2). The disciples were gathered on Pentecost, probably observing the fiftieth day, when the Holy Spirit descended on them. According to the Bible in Acts 2:1-4, this is what happened on the day of the Pentecost:

And when the day of Pentecost was fully come, they were all with one accord in one place. And suddenly there came a sound from heaven as a rushing mighty wind, and it filled all the house where they were sitting. And there appeared unto them cloven tongues like as of fire, and it sat upon them. And they were all filled with the Holy Ghost, and began to speak with other tongues, as the Spirit gave them utterance.

The Descent of the Holy Spirit or the birth of the church (Pentecostals) was marked by the manifestations of the miraculous spiritual gifts, i.e. speaking in tongues, prophecies, and healings. The name Pentecostals is from Pentecost in Greek, and the name 'Charisma' (Charismatics) is also derived from Greek, which means 'divine gift' (see Yong 2005, p. 19).

Historically the world has witnessed the emergence and phenomenal growth of Pentecostals and Charismatics in the 21st century; this is arguably the most important mass religious movement of this century. According to the statistics, “there are approximately two billion Christians in the world today. Two thousand seven hundred and nine million (279 million), that is (12.8%) of the world’s Christian population, identifying themselves as Pentecostals” (Fairchild 2018, p. 3). Hackett (2003, p. 413), states, “Pentecostal Christianity began at the beginning of this century and now has more than 30 million American adherents and worldwide following of 430 million. These numbers rank Pentecostals behind only Roman Catholics as the largest gathering of Christians in the world.” The Pentecostal movement originated at the beginning of the 20th century with believers receiving what they perceived to be the baptism in the Spirit, with the accompanying speaking in tongues (Walker 1993, p. 429). Pentecostalism is very broad.

There are three categories of Pentecostalism, namely:

- The first wave - Traditional or Classic Pentecostalism
- The second wave - New Pentecostalism or Charismatic Renewal
- The third wave - The Signs and Wonders Movements or the Vineyard Movement

4.2.1. The First Wave: The Classical Pentecostals

The concept of Pentecostals was adopted with great debate. The Pentecostal movement claims its roots in the holiness movement of the 19th century. One of these movements, known as Holiness (“holiness” as a doctrine of sanctification), was born in the Methodist tradition, its name showing the theological and practical line of the churches it reunited. Methodism gave the signal of searching for the personal sanctification as a new stage in the Christian’s life. After conversion, Methodists said, one needed to achieve growth in holiness ending up with the “entire sanctification”. John Wesley (1703-1791) has been called “the strenuous founder of Methodism and was also the spiritual and intellectual father of the modern movements and of Pentecostalism.”

According to (Synan 1997, p. 1), “to understand Pentecostalism it is necessary to grasp the ideology and theology of Methodism and the quest for holiness as understood in the doctrine of Perfectionism which was made possible by the “second blessing” of John Wesley.” He further refers to Wesley as “the spiritual and intellectual father of modern holiness and Pentecostal movements” (Synan, 2001, p. 13). Pentecostalism grew out of the Holiness

revival during the second half of the 19th century. This revival was an expression of both social and theological discontent among the nation's lower and middle-class groups. Holiness advocates disapproved of the impiety in mainline denominations and were alienated by the growing wealth and elaborateness of their churches. Not content to remain in mainline churches, they formed new religious communities committed to the theological doctrine of Perfectionism. Pentecostalism began among poor and disadvantaged people in the USA at the start of the 20th century. Hollenweger (1986, p. 5-6), contends that the phenomenal increase of Pentecostalism in the southern world is not due to its doctrine, but to its roots in the spirituality of 19th century African- American slave religion. Synan (1997, p. 28) attests to this when he says, "The holiness crusade enjoyed particular success in the Black Methodist churches, which had been founded on the basis of Wesley's second blessing teaching (the traditional teaching on entire sanctification)." Concerning the Wesleyan Holiness movement, Land (2010, p. 48) explained that:

The Wesleyan Holiness movement taught Christians the need to be transformed by a personal experience of the truth of Christ, through the power of the Holy Spirit. They embraced justification, sanctification, Spirit baptism, divine healing, as an integral part of the five-fold or full gospel on account of the positive experiences flowing from the atonement.

4.2.2. The Second Wave: Charismatics

The second wave occurred during the 1960s as the charismatic movement spread throughout mainline protestant denominations, as well as, the Roman Catholic Church. According to Faricy (1983, p. 91), "The term charismatic is derived from the Greek word *charismata*, which refers to spiritual gifts. The 'gifts' manifests itself through the baptism of the Holy Spirit, prophecy, praying for healing, speaking in tongues and other miraculous gifts."

After World War II, the Charismatic movement tried to change the name to "Neo-Pentecostalism", but many Pentecostals did not accept the term" (Synan 1975, p. 1-2). "The current charismatic movement is the offspring of Pentecostalism" (Culpepper 1977, p. 51). Moreover, "the charismatic movement is not schismatic in nature, it seeks to remain and operate from within traditional churches in order to bring about spiritual renewal" (Van Wyk 1986, p. 5). Regarding the Charismatic revival, Chantry (1973, pp. 22-23) says that:

The central theme of the charismatic revival, offers the Church a new approach that is distinct in the modern Pentecostal movement for instance: speaking in tongues, prophecy, dreams, and visions, that may not be conceived apart from the concept of an infallible revelation from God delivered to us through those who are experiencing the gifts.

4.2.3. The Third Wave: Neo-Charismatics

The third wave or Charismatic Renewal Pentecostalism is called the ‘Signs and Wonders Movement’. It was not long after the start of the Neo-Pentecostal wave, after 1985, that the Charismatic movement entered a new phase, known as the “Third Wave” or the “Neo-Charismatism” phase. The term was launched by Peter Wagner, (Lee 2001, p. 172). This wave emerged in the eighties of the 20th century. This movement focuses on the supernatural work of the Holy Spirit. The emphasis in this movement is on practical manifestations, which entails that the Gospel should be followed by demonstrations of the supernatural, namely signs and wonders.

These charismatic renewal movements took the world by storm through social media and mass crusades during which they continued to impact crowds with messages of divine healing and prosperity for example, the emphasis on the spiritual gifts i.e. prophecy, healing, health, and wealth. According to Ukah (2007, p. 14) the movement, “Found a fertile soil in the African context because cultural worldview, religion and healing are inextricably linked. An important function of religion is said to bring restoration in the face of brokenness or damage to man’s body, relationships and social and spiritual networks.” This movement has experienced enormous growth, especially among Africans. Tomberlin (2010, p. 37) says,

The elements of Pentecostal theology can be described distinctively as a necessitation that each member should be able to testify the conviction and forgiveness of sin leading to salvation and a personal relationship with God, leading to the experience of sanctification.

4.2.4. African Pentecostals

African Pentecostalism is directly linked to the Pentecostalism of the 20th century. The emphasis is on the holistic work of the Holy Spirit in all its potency. The spirituality of Pentecostalism in Africa has its roots in the spirituality of 19th century African American slave religion. According to Shorter (1975, p. 24), “The main attraction of Pentecostalism in Africa

is its ability to transform and adapt to the cultural context of the indigenous people.” This is largely because ‘freedom in spirit’ often allows them space to be more flexible in developing their own culturally relevant forms of expression (as noted in the introduction). Shorter (1975, p. 37) and Anderson (2000, p. 27), identifies the distinctions that can be made between the various categories of African Pentecostal churches, e.g.:

- Pentecostal mission churches, such as the Assemblies of God and the Apostolic Faith Mission. These churches were initiated by non-African missionaries, and are part of larger Pentecostal denominations with direct links to classical Pentecostals;
- The new Pentecostal churches with no connection with classical Pentecostals. These are churches that are more recent in origin like the Grace Bible Church and Praise Tabernacle Church in South Africa; and the African Initiated Churches, which for various reasons are defined as ‘Spirit-type churches’ and ‘Zionist’, ‘Zion-type’ or ‘Apostolic’ churches, like the Zion Christian Church in South Africa initiated and governed by Africans.

These churches are under the umbrella of the Pentecostal movement in Africa, and they all emphasise the working of the Holy Spirit. They differ from one another in terms of their approach, e.g. some use objects like holy water, ropes, and articles in their healing practices (the Zionists churches). This element is not common in the first two categories of the Pentecostal movement mentioned above. Anderson (2000, p. 27) asserts that “the ‘Zionists type’ still forms the great majority of African Pentecostal churches than the ‘prophet-healing’ churches.” Anderson (2000, p. 26) further maintains that “Pentecostalism has been successfully incarnated into a uniquely African expression of Christianity because of its emphasis on spiritual experience and its remarkable ability to adapt to any cultural background in the world.”

According to (Asamoah-Gyadu 2007, p. 128), African Christianity consists of a distinctive arrangement of narratives, beliefs, and practices. Religious groups in the continent range from mission churches, Pentecostals, to African Independent Churches (AICs). These churches are the fastest-growing, with Pentecostal roots. According to Anderson (2000, p. 43), these Pentecostal or Charismatic churches are rapidly emerging, with exclusively African leadership. Significantly, these churches are free of white control. The control of these churches indicates independence. They also thrive on empowerment, i.e. to bring transformation. “The core of the new experience is that it redefines personality and reinvents

identity as the born again person develops a new vision, life goals and ethics which constitute a rupture from a sinful past” (Kalu 2003, p. 92).

4.2.5. South African Christianity

Below shows how much Christianity has increased in South Africa. Christianity has the highest number compared to other religions. The number of Christian churches has escalated over the years, especially with the rising influx of foreign nationals establishing their churches, as well as the new breed of South African category of younger prophets, in their 30s, with their radical new approach in Christianity. The structural DNA of the present-day prophetic church approach is in overdrive.

Table 4. 1: The number of followers of each religion in South Africa

Belief system	South African Population
1. Protestant Christian n.e.s.	36%
2. Atheist or Agnostic	15.1%
3. Zion Christian	11.1%
4. Pentecostal or Charismatic Christian	8.2%
5. Roman Catholic Christian	1%
6. Methodist Christian	6.8%
7Dutch Reformed Christian6	.7%
8. Anglican Christian	3.8%
9. Muslim	1.5%
10. Hindu	1.2%
11. Traditional African Religions, and others	1% each

Table 4.1. An illustration of a number followers of each religion in South Africa ‘World Atlas’ by Sawe (2017 p. 6).

4.2.6. Present-day churches in South Africa

Present-day theology is perceived as ‘hyper,’ meaning that they take things to extremes. The latest, unusual liturgical practices are marked by a significant departure from traditional styles and values, toward the new hyper-trend. Although Pentecostal roots are inherent, in present-day theology, their liturgical practices are over the top or spectacular. According to Virgo & Rodgers (2013, p. 47); “we are living in exciting times.” These emerging churches have caused quite a controversial stir, generating tremendous interest at a time of political

and economic crisis in South Africa. In this research, we will call the recent movement 'present-day prophetic churches.'

This is a national challenge. Nevertheless, these churches demonstrate a form of Christianity that appeals mostly to the new generation. They consider the miraculous or 'signs and wonders' as an authentication of the presence of God, based on the scriptures stating, "And these signs shall follow them that believe..." (Mark 16:17). Present-day prophets present themselves as mediators or channels of God's grace. This assumption has culminated to people positioning prophets self-same as Christ. The situation has caused a significant reliance upon the prophets.

Present-day prophets believe in a pragmatic gospel that asserts to address practical societal needs like sickness, poverty, unemployment, prophecy, and protection from sorcery. Their varied forms of ritual healing practice, charisma and flexibility, is an added feature that attracts the masses. Their commiserating approach to local culture and the absorption of certain cultural practices heighten the dynamism of these new brands of churches and have become a significant element of society that has also attracted the focus of scholarly research.

Miracles have become the apex or the culminating point that has ushered in the issue of partisan migration or church changing. Many consider miracles as a validation of God's presence. As a result, people support these churches in spite of the controversy surrounding them. According to Hiebert (1994, p.218), "Prophets often emerge, proclaiming new worldviews which, they promise, will guide people to a better life... it is within this flux that we must understand the movements of today."

With this essential task being done, namely, to develop a working definition for liturgy, the origin, and history of Pentecostals, the following conceptual interpretation of the 'new brand' viz. the present-day church trending in South Africa today, will be unpacked. We now move to unravel the new trend that has webbed its way into contemporary culture, through social media. Individuals, institutions, and corporations are embracing social media, and in particular churches, as an indispensable tool for communication.

4.3. Liturgy and social media

We are living in a media centric society. Social media has introduced a new virtual space of communication and societal-lifestyle is increasingly commanding the use of social media. According to Nadella (2013, p. 2), “Contemporary social media have introduced a new reality in which each individual can create a threshold that works for him or her and move it as and when required.” This has created a platform for people to connect and communicate with hundreds of thousands of people, amongst others, the younger generation of contemporary prophets, who are conversant with technology.

This is indicative of how popular media culture is widespread in our postmodern times. Logan (2010, p. 22) says, “Anyone who would deny a relationship between technology and societal transformation would be hopelessly naïve and out of touch with social realities.” Concerning the popularity of the new technology that seems to bring societies together Clark (2012, p. 3) says,

While there are still plenty of churches debating whether or not they should use Facebook, 800 million people are already there including people from your church... And if you decide to ignore Facebook, you are missing out on a ministry opportunity. Facebook takes time and it may not be your favourite thing in the world, but it is a valuable tool for communicating with your congregation and reaching out to their friends.

The statement is indicative that if the Gospel is to be unfurled, then social media cannot be eliminated or even disregarded.

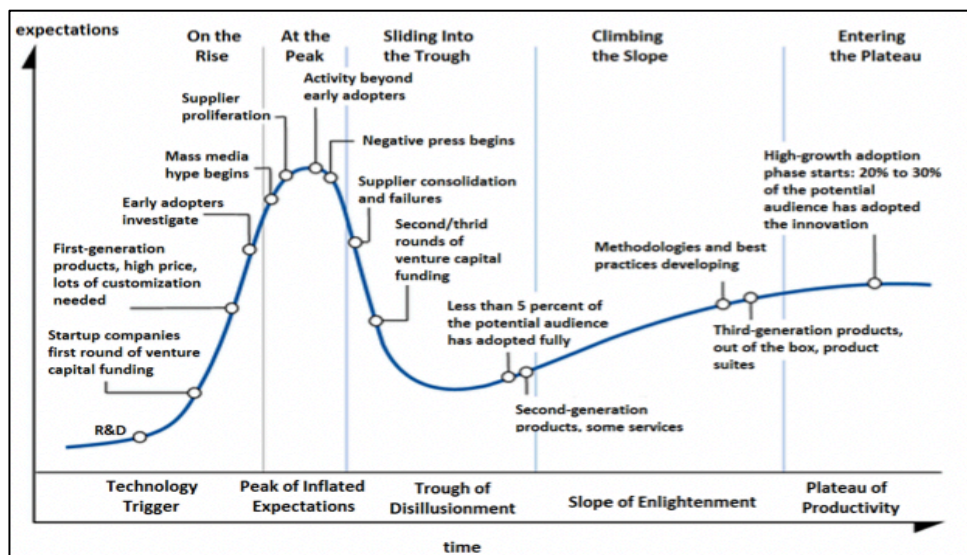


Figure 4. 1: A depiction of digital technology evolvement over time

Source: Brinker (2018, p.1.)

The illustrative Figure 4.1. as shown above displays the Gartner Hype Cycle as a visual aid to understand the maturity and adoption of emerging technologies and their current state of development and expectation. Facebook, e.g. is widely implemented worldwide; this signifies that it has reached the fifth phase, i.e. 'The Plateau of Productivity'. This conveys that the technology has become stable and its benefits have become widely accepted. The reason the researcher used the Figure 4.1 above, as an illustration of evolving technology, is that it depicts the popularity of Facebook in contemporary churches, and how the hype of social media has revolutionised society today. The use of Facebook as an evangelising tool has put most present-day churches on the spotlight globally for their controversial liturgical approach. This is indicative that we live in a globalised interconnected world. Campbell and Campbell (2011, p. 85), expresses his opinion about the theory of 'interconnectedness' of faith and worship systems through the network, saying,

The theoretical concept of networked religion, besides speaking to the form of spirituality that emerges out of online networked negotiations with traditional religion, shows how current religious narratives, practices, and structures are able to become increasingly flexible, transitional, and transitional as they are lived out both online and in information and technology-driven society. It helps explain the ways in which networked society creates new borderlands of interactions between the online and offline worlds, between the digital and embodied.

Liturgy is narrated as a 'public event or activity', whereby participants are expected to conform to its order and circumvent controversy. Rappaport (1979, p. 194) says, "Liturgical orders are public, and participation in them constitute a public acceptance of a public order, regardless of the private state of belief. Acceptance is, thus, a fundamental social act, and it forms a basis for public orders, which unknowable and volatile belief or conviction cannot." Any activity or event conveyed in social media is exposed to millions. Social media is a web-based communication tool; it facilitates sharing of information, including the word of God, although it is void of personal interaction, churches use it for evangelising and for marketing purposes.

4.4. The liturgy and the Word

God speaks through His Word to the church, and the church responds by communicating it to the community. The present-day prophetic churches perception of the Word in the Bible delineates the event, with the Holy Spirit's inspiration. The essence is that the proclamation of historical events of the Word in the Bible becomes a current animate occurrence for the believing community. Johns (2003, p. 50) says "The preaching of the word is expected to bring about the reality described in the text." Gospel of Mark 16:18, e.g. says, "And if they drink any deadly thing, it shall not hurt them." Some of the hyped present-day prophets are known to have given their adherents undrinkable and inedible substances to consume, claiming the intervention of divine counsel (Sebola 2018).

According to Bishop (1983, p. 27) "...preachers (prophets), therefore, believe themselves to be proclaiming an inspired message, given for a specific time and place, a Word from the Lord and that... neither study (preparing for a sermon) nor insight can give birth to a prophetic message." The Bible is constitutive of their spirituality, and it is utilised in conjunction with and within the context of the sovereign work of the Spirit. Jones (1975, p.106):

The Spirit stimulates the Word and establishes the community; the Word allows us to understand our encounter of the Spirit and teaches us the shape of our universal life; the community structures the context in which the Word is perceived, and the Spirit encountered.

Every preaching, in the present-day prophetic churches, is followed by an alter call, in order to lead others to Christ, as well as meeting the needs of the people, by praying for them. Enyinnaya (2008, p.146) says, "These signs serve as some kind of hermeneutical criterion for... preaching and teaching for them." In these churches, people are encouraged to be involved in the miracles of God, e.g. by testifying on their healing experience so that their testimonies will encourage others to partake in the grace available. "They may use 'hype' and emotionalism in order to get people to respond to the altar call, mass suggestion in order for people to be 'slain in the Spirit' or experience Spirit baptism (Samuel 2013, p. 213). The sermon is not just preached for the sake of preaching; it has to yield results, apparently to prove the power they possess from the mighty God, and not the other way round. The scriptures are used as a performative tool, and as a substantiation that they are mightily used by God. According to Ragoonath (2004, p. 37), "...the most important part in the act of

preaching lies in the results, including the experience of salvation, Spirit baptism, healing and other miracles, and the manifestation of gifts of the Spirit.” At the end of the day, the impression is that these prophets are the ‘sole- carriers’ of God’s power.

The next chapter deals with the relationship between liturgy and culture. Liturgy and culture depend on one another. Present-day prophets have identified the needs of the people, and what makes them famous is the strategic carrying out of these needs.

4.5. Liturgy, through the lens of cultural perspective

Liturgical celebrations are not limited to a particular culture or tradition or a particular cultural identification. According to Wepener (2008, p. 1), “Liturgy is dependent upon tradition, just as tradition is to a large extent a product of liturgy.” The good functioning of one’s whole life and that of a faith community depends on its liturgy and rituals, just as it depends on tradition. From a traditional African point of view, healing liturgies according to Omonzejele (2008, p. 120),

Health is not just about the proper functioning of bodily organs. Good health for the African consists of mental, physical, spiritual, and emotional stability of oneself, family members, and community; this integrated view of health is based on the African unitary view of reality. Good health for the African is not a subjective affair.

The African traditional outlook has managed to institute itself in Christian liturgy over the years. The notion of ancestors, bad-luck, and witchcraft, surface frequently during deliverance sessions.

The quest for overcoming perceived evil forces that initiate wickedness, e.g. ill health, poverty, adversity, ill fate, hardship and premature death. The dominant factor is the yearning to encounter the power of God to subvert wicked powers in order to necessitate victory. Another quandary concerning traditional cultural outlook is a misconception of impermanence in serving God. Crafford (1996, p. 11) says, “Religion is thus primarily aimed at human happiness and prosperity within the person’s own community here and now, rather than service of the Supreme Being or eternal bliss in the afterlife.” Instant gratification is a significant factor in their worldview. Therefore, “Christian ritual cannot retain its identity by jumping over culture. It is always incarnate in a particular culture and has a changing shape, and we in our culture are in search of a new shape for this ritual” (Lukken 2005, p. 524).

Present-day Christians are attracted to liturgical events, which are attributable to the promises of good health, prosperity, marriages, fruit of the womb, material blessing etc. Therefore, contemporary prophets are perceived as problem solvers, who hold spiritual authoritative-power to overcome opposing spiritual forces. Another significant factor is the prophetic, accompanied by signs and wonders. The emphasis on the prophetic ministry is usually characterised by predicting the future, accompanied by a resolve. “Prophetic abilities are closely connected to healing abilities because prophecy is directed at revealing the cause of the problem” (Wepener 2015, p. 7). Prior to Christianity people used to consult the spirit world for answers. “Sickness has to be established by careful examination and questioning by the medicine man” (Dime 1995, p. 30).

Healing, according to the African view is comprehensive or all-inclusive. The present-day contemporary churches appear to be relevant to the African traditional worldview because they seem to offer a ‘holistic-type’ of liturgical service. Kalu (2008, p. 263), says “healing...Is the heartbeat of liturgy and the entire religious life, therefore, bringing the community of suffering together, and ushering the supernatural power into the gathered community enables all to be together in its warmth. It releases the energy for participatory worship that integrates the body, spirit, and soul.” The following paragraph brings us to the quality of verbal communication of participants in liturgical events.

4.6. Orality in liturgy

All believers are called and empowered to be witnesses. According to the Scriptures, “Believers accept the invitation to become partners with Jesus Christ” (1 Corinthians 1:9). The contemporary movement places high esteem on such spontaneity (Spittler 1988, p. 804). According to Land (1993, p. 42), congregants are encouraged to participate in church activities by doing the following:

- by testifying in worship services and amongst friends,
- worshipping and singing in worship and other settings,
- ministering diverse gifts of the Spirit to the communion,
- creating an ethos of revivalist, participation,
- populist-oriented spirituality.

Those baptised in the Spirit witness the good news, leading to an oral spirituality formed by worship, witness, and work (Land 2010, p. 1). At times “The congregation worship and even

sing in tongues together; at other times, they sing and praise in their mother tongue, they pray for the sick and prophesy, perform miracles, laugh and dance, also when the thanks offering is given” (Pinnock 1996, p. 129). According to Hollenweger (1986, p. 6), “Orality... is demonstrated in the clapping and lifting of hands.” During the preaching, their “spirituality, is stirred by rousing sermons and participatory responses of ‘Amen’ and ‘Hallelujah!’” (Samuel 2013:215). The vibrancy of African spirituality of “fervent prayers, loud music, and shouting” (Harris 2016, p. 127). Prayer and worship are done corporately during liturgical celebrations.

According to Robeck (1988, p. 738), “Each is called upon to worship, witness, manifest the graces and gifts of the Spirit.” Hence, participation is key. In every meeting, time is set aside for participants to render some form of item. Present-day liturgy is altogether social as well as altogether personal. Full congregational participation is encouraged. Hollenweger (1986, p. 553) says, “Corporate participation through worship and witness and the practice of the gifts of the Spirit create room for an oral liturgy.” Liturgical leadership maintains community order, while encouraging faithful liturgical participation and commitment.

4.7. The importance of liturgy and worship

According to Zimmerman (2014, p. 31), “God is a spirit, meaning that all true worship must be spiritual.” Therefore, worship, according to present-day churches, is a spiritual transaction, that commands divine transaction; and the worshipper to be fully immersed in the act of worship. The perception is that worship should be allocated enough time to generate the ‘right atmosphere’ for the manifestation of the Holy Spirit. According to Zimmerman (2014, p. 109), active engagement and conscious surrender both take people beyond themselves and for God to work. Full participation, then, transforms. The worship event requires an openness and receptiveness to God for God to draw people more deeply into divine life that changes them. One may argue that full participation, according to the above, may mean that the Holy Spirit: takes people higher, transforms them and change them. Figure 4. 2: A depiction of a participation model Source: Zimmerman 2014, p. 1

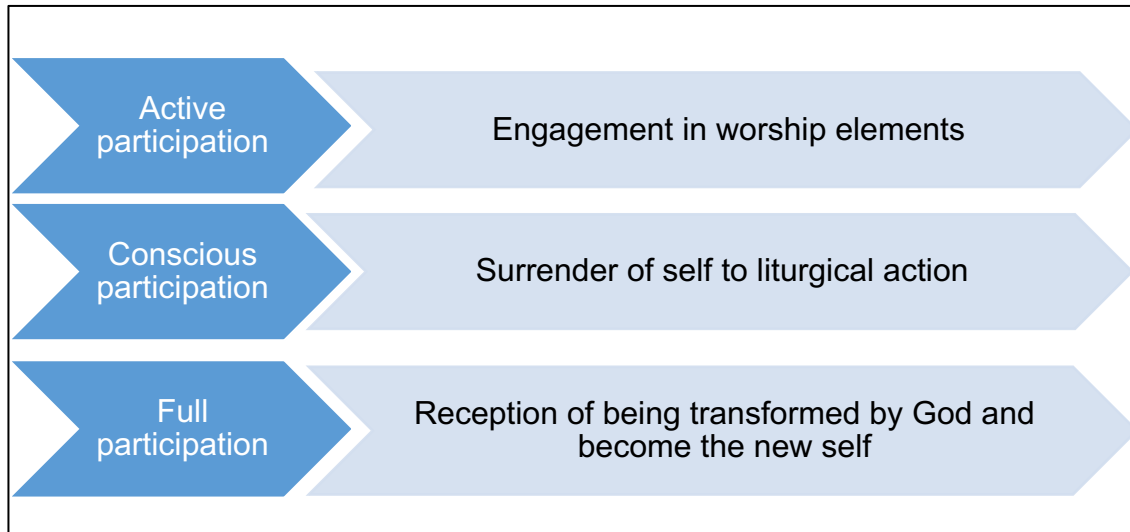


Figure 4. 3: A depiction of a participation model

Source: Zimmerman 2014, p. 111

The participation model of (Zimmerman 2014, p. 111):

- Active participation - Engagement in worship elements; singing, praying in tongues, praising amongst others, to commend God.
- Conscious participation - Surrender of self to liturgical action and surrender to God.
- Full participation - Reception of being transformed by God and become the new self (regenerated self).

Gathering for worship is a God-centred action that takes us beyond ourselves into the realm of God's presence and sovereignty. A Neo-Pentecostal pastor and writer, discerns points of distinction between praise and worship as noted by Redman (2002, pp. 37-38),

- God does not need our praise; he seeks worshippers.
- Worship is intimate and requires a relationship.
- Worship can be hidden to the observer; praise necessarily has external features.
- Praise is a horizontal and/or communal interaction, worship a vertical and individual interaction with God.
- Praise is often exuberant and expressive, whereas worship is more quiet and introverted.

Worship in present-day churches takes on the following shape:

- worship is emotional (deep emotion),
- raising hands (surrendering),
- physical (dancing),
- highly participatory,
- noisy (hollering),
- noisy musical instruments,
- clapping,
- kneeling,
- lying on the ground,
- speaking in tongues,
- Characterised by a praise team.

Redman (2002, p. 39) asserts to this, “Worshippers are expected to sing, clap hands, raise their hands in adoration, and even sway and dance, we worship and adore God, and he meets with us, he lavishes his love upon us, conveys his purpose and releases his Spirit and power.” Sorge (1987, p. 2), concurs with Redman saying,

Worship in contemporary churches is jubilant, somehow extravagant both emotionally and physically. Most people who go to there, are blessed with rhythm, and they fancy joyous music, with rich sounds of Africa. Nearly the whole church is really involved, as if music is innate in their DNA. One distinctive of praise concerns its extroverted nature. It is characterised by celebration and exhilaration and is expressed through singing, shouting, speaking forth, playing of musical instruments, dancing, and other external forms. In a most fundamental sense, praise could be defined as ‘raising much to do about God’.

The manifestation of the gifts of the Holy Spirit takes place when there is a tangible and spontaneous atmosphere. “Worshippers respond to the Spirit’s presence and activity in their midst by exhibiting the whole range of manifestations” (Neumann 2012, p. 99). During all this pandemonium, the whole church is spiritually and physically involved, corporately.

4.7.1. The importance of corporate worship

These encounters explain why present-day churches emphasise corporate prayer, comprising not only on Sundays but also several times during the week. The prophets set aside one or two days during the week to pray and perform deliverances, as central to their beliefs, for God to respond to their requests. Albrecht (1999, pp. 237–251) says that

It accounts also for corporate worship that is participatory and celebrative, inviting spontaneous and tangible expressions incorporating the human being in a holistic way. Spirituality involves the entire human person in all its dimensions – physical, emotional, mental, and social, as exemplified in the corporate ...worship setting.

According to (Pinnock 1996, p. 129), “At times the congregation:

- worship and even,
- sing in tongues together; at other times, they sing and praise in their mother tongue,
- pray for the sick and prophesy,
- perform miracles,
- laugh and dance, also when the thanks offering is given.”

Therefore, surrendering to the sovereign power of God and His presence is somewhat synonymous to leading a victorious life. Present-day worship secures and celebrates the healing – both in the supernatural and natural, psychological, physical, and social that God discharges. According to scriptures in, 2 Corinthians 3:17 it is written, “Now the Lord is that Spirit: where the Spirit of the Lord is, there is liberty.” The idea of the verse is that worship liberates, meaning that God inhabits worship. Worship, praise, and music play a big role in most churches, in particular; contemporary corporate worship meetings.

4.7.2. Liturgy and Music

Music plays an important role in their celebrations. The rhythmic and repetitive nature of African music invokes much singing and clapping that reflect the joyful celebration that is encouraged in church meetings and out of church meetings. The perception is that it enables believers to further utilise the songs in their daily walk in order to practice ‘the presence of God’. “The sentimental value of some songs allows participants to express deeply felt emotions for God and their fellow believers. The movement also uses contemporary worship songs and songs of revivalism. These songs are still used to wake up fervour for lost souls” (Spittler 1988, p. 807).

Many songs contain the following concepts:

- a testimony,
- an exhortation,
- a lament for God's grace,
- the journey to heaven,
- victory over Satan,
- thanksgiving.

The body is also incorporated in the act of worship. The perception and the goal of worship in these churches is to experience the presence of God's life-transformation and the personal spiritual growth it carries. All these actions are not void to the awareness of the supernatural.

4.8. Emphasis on the supernatural

The emphasis on the supernatural is unmistakably perceptible in present-day churches. The entire liturgical ritual narrative assumes an awareness of the supernatural. The expectancy is heightened, as the congregation approaches certain church activities (ceremony) that are charged with anxious anticipation, for instance, prophecy, healing, and deliverance rites. The anticipation is stimulated by previous experiences (testimonies), and the expectation of the supernatural since present-day theology emphasises the supernatural. Their realm envisions a world subject to invasions by the supernatural element. Mazur's perspective in supernatural invasions has a collation of movies and religion.

The religious portrayal of extra-terrestrial battles between good and evil has a modern parallel in films that depict aliens as malevolent invaders on a celestial scale, such as 'Independence Day' (1996) — portraying embattled humanity amalgamating to wage war against a superior adversary. This physiognomy immediately gives a notion of a creature that has threatening wickedness and senseless violence aspect, (Mazur 2011 p.388).

The adherents are innately conditioned to expect supernatural encounters. The experience may be almost likened to a (Pavlovian conditioning), – the learning that occurs when a neutral stimulus becomes associated with an unrelated stimulus, in order to produce a behavioural response. As shown in Figure 4.3 Pavlov (2003, pp. 17-19).

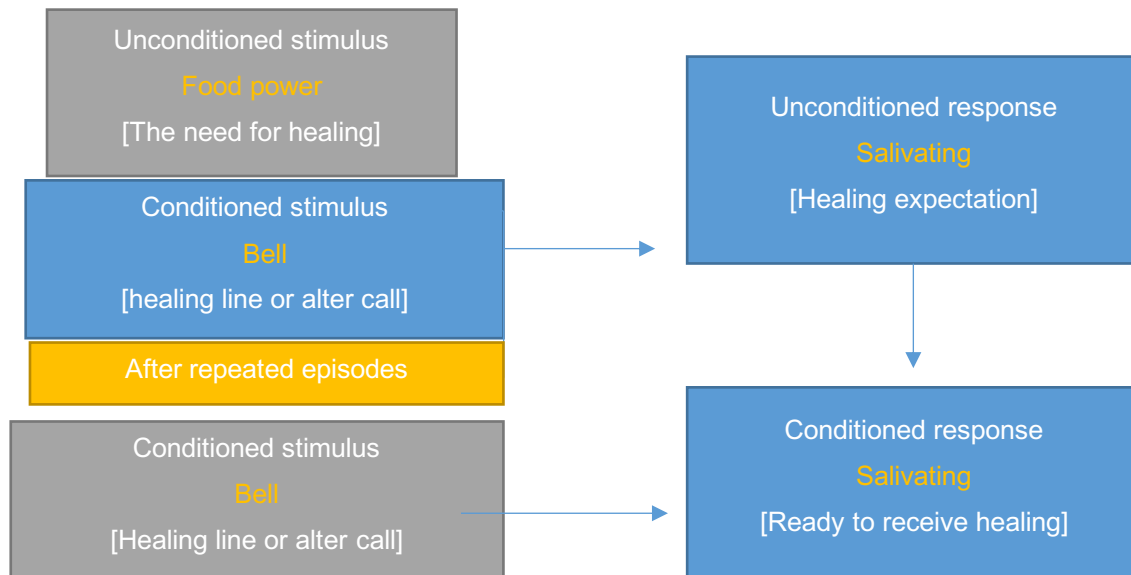


Figure 4. 4: An illustration of a Pavlovian model of classical conditioning
Source: Pavlov 2003, pp. 17-19

The application of classical conditioning (Pavlov 2003, pp. 17-19):

- Unconditioned stimulus – the need for healing.
- Unconditioned response – healing expectation (a stimulus).
- Conditioned stimulus – a repeated condition of healing lines or alter calls, slows the pace of forgetting.
- Conditioned stimulus – healing time or alter call increases the association between the conditioned and the unconditioned stimulus.
- Conditioned response – the strong internal stimulus condition that impels the action of readiness to receive. A healing outcome that acts as an incentive or as a reinforcement.

Most people migrate to churches that have attributes of prophecy, healing, and deliverance. One may say that most African adherents, go to church with a 'high expectancy' for a 'holistic solution' and mostly an encounter with the supernatural. The yearning for the supernatural may have its roots from the upbringing of the individual. For the contemporary miracle seeker, the line between natural and supernatural is permeable. According to Albrecht (1999, p. 125),

The events of 'healings', also shape their life cycle. A majority of members claim to have been healed by God at some time in their lives. These healings make up a part

of the overall life cycle of the congregation and the individual congregant. The sacred time, and with it the reality, is shaped by divine healing as part of the cycle.

A significant factor why most people go to deliverance churches is to receive their miracle. This kind of expectation generates an enabling atmosphere for miracles. Most miracle seekers have a sense of expectancy when embarking on a quest for miracles. Below, in Figure 4.4, is an example of what happens in the process of expectancy. Vroom's (1964, p. 331) expectancy model explains what really happens:

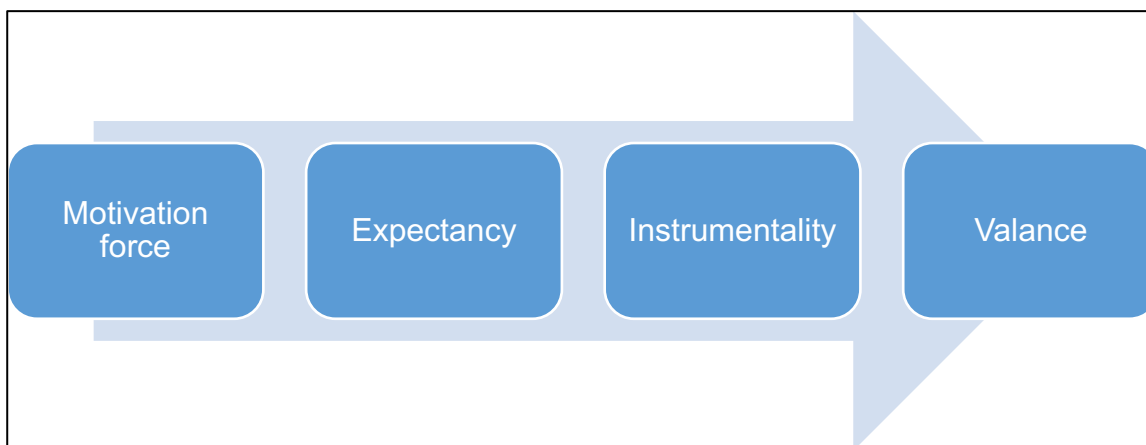


Figure 4. 5: Motivation (force) = $\sum$ Valence x Expectancy

Source: Victor H. Vroom 1964, p. 331.

The 'Vroom Theory', works well with what I call 'Faith Motivation Model', e.g. Motivation (condition or affliction) → Expectancy (faith: hoped for) → Instrumentality (prayer: laying on hands) → Valance (an instant receipt of a miracle or the assurance of a guaranteed miracle). This means that it may be possible that the mind-set of the individual determines an outcome. 'Vroom's Expectancy Theory' is based on a cognitive concept. Vroom (1964, p.331), believed that people are motivated to do activities in order to attain aims and that certain actions on their part would help them to achieve their aims. The theory is built around the concept of: Expectancy, Instrumentality and Valance, called the 'VIE Theory':

- Expectancy: refers to the probability that a particular action will lead to a particular outcome, i.e. thus expectancy is the probability that a particular action will lead to a particular first level outcome. Great expectations always lead to positive outcomes.

Thus, if an atmosphere of a positive outcome is generated, there is a great probability that the expected may happen.

- Instrumentality: the degree to which the first level leads to the second level of outcome. For example the expectancy of a miracle or healing, and taking a step to partake in prayer, will generate faith for a positive outcome.
- Valance: refers to the value that the individual places on a particular outcome for example the adherent will have a positive valance, i.e. expecting a positive outcome.

Faith is a spiritual capability by the grace of God. The physical manifestation comprises of results. Liturgical gifts denote to liturgical actions that function because of empowerment by the Holy Spirit. Spirit baptism and divine gifts are a framework of eschatological moments. “Eschatological event symbolises God’s reign and divine presence” (Albrecht 1999, p. 126).

4.9. Spiritual gifts

Paul said in 1 Corinthians 12:1, “Now concerning spiritual gifts, brethren, I would not have you ignorant.” The controversy over spiritual gifts is a nation-wide problem, owing to the fact that, between authentic and spurious gifts is a thin line. Schreiner (2018, p. 3) argues, “We have to beware of false teaching, but we also have to be on guard against rigid fundamentalism.” Spiritual gifts are translated from the word ‘pneumatika’, identified as the manifestation of the Spirit or coming from the Holy Spirit.

According to Schreiner (2018, p. 12),

Spiritual gifts are gifts of grace granted by the Holy Spirit, which are designed for the edification of the church. The gifts designate ministry functions and roles people are to fulfil. These gifts are given to believers so that they will serve others and not focus on their own abilities. They are used wrongly if they are turned into platforms for self-admiration.

The following table is a brief definition of some of the spiritual gifts from the New Testament, Schreiner (2018, p. 13-14):

Table 4. 2: Table of spiritual gifts in the New Testament

Romans 12: 6-8	1 Corinthians 12:7-10	1 Corinthians 12:28	Ephesians 4:11
Having gifts that differ according to the grace given to us	To each is given the manifestation of the Spirit for the common good	And God has appointed in the church	And He gave
		Apostles	Apostles
Prophecy	Prophecy	Prophets	Prophets
			Evangelists
	Ability to distinguish between spirits		
Teaching	Word of wisdom and word of knowledge	Teachers	
Exhorting			
	Working of miracles	Miracles	
	Gifts of healing	Gifts of healing	
Service		Helping	
Leading		Administrating	
	Various kinds of tongues	Various kinds of tongues	

Source: Schreiner 2018, p. 13-14

The practice of gifts, particularly in healing rituals, reveals that the gifts function as symbols of empowerment and edification, mainly for the benefit of the whole, so that the church might be edified, strengthened, and built up.

4.9.1 Liturgy and Healing

Present-day prophetic churches healing serve as a marketing action. According to Bomann (2011, p. 194), "Healing plays a pivotal role in drawing non-believers to the church service." Signs and wonders have always been a tool for accelerated church growth. Healing experienced by non-believers leads them to salvation. Most believers attending these churches, because of their cultural outlook, believe that healing should be holistic. The

cultural worldview is that every area of a person's life is expected to be whole. According to Brown (2011, p. 5),

For many practitioners divine healing, the amelioration of physical or emotional illness is not perceived in isolation, but as one of many divine gifts included in the full salvation, alongside forgiveness from sin, deliverance from demonic oppression, and baptism with the Holy Spirit; healing is understood holistically as one component of the kingdom of God, which also includes prosperity, abundance, wholeness, and reconciled relationships with the human spiritual worlds.

Present-day churches believe that healing can be imparted or transferred through:

- laying on hands,
- prayer; declarations,
- fasting,
- declarations of scriptures,
- believers assume that God's power can flow through objects, for example; petrol; pesticides; disinfectants; etc. they deduce that as long as the tool is commanded by prayer, it ceases to be harmful.

Present-day prophetic churches draw to themselves a number of people (miracle seekers), always in motion, progressing to places perceived to be powerfully anointed for miracles. The main factor is for the prophet to alleviate the various types of afflictions. Divine healing is a gift from God. According to (Brown 2011, p. 5), "Divine healing is understood to proceed more rapidly than usual or under circumstances in which healing would not otherwise be expected." Divine healing is perceived as an important feature and promulgation.

Healing, in present-day prophetic churches, therefore have a significant signature. They distinguish themselves in attributes of prophecy; healing; and deliverance. The liturgy of healing, not only encompasses the miracle seeker's attempts to deal with pain and suffering. The liturgy of healing also, "Confirms their deepest convictions about the nature of reality, it solidifies social ties through ritualised expressions of compassion and concern, and it serves as a recruiting tool drawing individuals hungry to see – and experience – tangible manifestations of the supernatural" (Williams 2013, p. 2).

Some prophets also reflect metaphysical tendencies in their methods; hence, the belief that God's healing power could animate and flow through physical objects. "Divine healing is actually practiced in specific cultural contexts or reflect and shape the interplay of local and global processes" (Brown 2011, p. 4). Brown (2011, p. 4) testifies that healing practices are closely connected with practices oriented toward deliverance from demonic oppression (Brown, 2011, p. 17). Healing and deliverance activities are considered to be influenced by the empowerment of the Holy Spirit. Consequentially, healing and deliverance is a spiritual manifestation and not a physical effect.

4.9.2. Liturgy and deliverance

The phenomenon of healing and deliverance has become very common and central in the modern liturgy. Deliverance is considered to be an avenue, as well as the practice that employs pneumatological liturgical activities with the purpose of responding to human existential needs. According to Asamoah-Gyadu (2005, p. 165):

The ...intervention of the Holy Spirit - to provide release for demon-possessed, demon-oppressed, broken, disturbed and troubled persons, in order that victims may be restored to 'proper functioning order', that is, to 'health and wholeness', and, being freed from demonic influence and curses, they may enjoy God's fullness of life understood to be available in Christ.

Pneumatological liturgical activities for deliverance and healing, in contemporary churches, are believed to be an inspiration and the outcome of the 'gifts of the Spirit'. According to Sandford & Sandford (2008, p. 21), "Christians who believe in the gifts of the Holy Spirit for today have had little difficulty "re-believing" what the Bible has always said was real." They further states, "psychologists have sometimes considered deliverance ministers naïve witch-hunters" (Sandford & Sandford 2008, p. 22). The purpose of deliverance in present-day church liturgy is based on the traditional cultural background; so that they may be set free from evil manifestations in their lives, to enable them to walk in victory provided by Christ. Asamoah-Gyadu (2004, p. 399) maintains, "Deliverance has a specific purpose, it seeks to: let people free, i.e. physically, emotionally, economically and spiritually."

It is alleged that deliverance should first take place in the heart to ensure that the heart is freed and transformed before the body can receive deliverance. Transformation is a process

that the Holy Spirit carries out, to bring forth change in the life of an individual. Sandford & Sandford (2008, p. 23), further outline the need for a follow-up after deliverance to make sure that the heart is transformed: “Complete transformative healing is from the inside out.” Spiritual gifts in present-day liturgy include ‘glossolalia’ or speaking in tongues.

4.9.3. The liturgical ritual of speaking in tongues ‘glossolalia’

Baptism in the Holy Spirit is a significant additional power for life and ministry given by God subsequent to salvation. “Spirit baptism is seen... as the primary paradigm for... experience” (Richie 2005, p. 109), based on the biblical description of the disciples being filled with the Spirit and speaking in tongues (Acts 2:1–4). This is an experience which equips believers to witness effectively (Land 2010, p. 84). Spirit baptism, as perceived by hyper-modern contemporary liturgy, is characterised by God’s presence. Being filled with the Holy Spirit is perceived as being accompanied by the supernatural. Speaking in tongues does not require cognitive abilities because the communication is directed to God. Comprehension is inessential because God does not need regular words from one’s language.

The awareness of God’s presence in the life of the believer enhances the believer’s experience. According to Crapps (1986, p. 351), “In Pentecostalism, salvation is perceived to come in three stages, namely; regeneration, sanctification, and baptism with the Holy Spirit. The last stage happens when the Holy Spirit comes down, takes up residence with a person, and generates a blessed state of unimaginable ecstasy.” “Speaking in tongues becomes the means to express the inexpressible in the eschatological language of the human heart and heaven” (Land 1993, p. 106). Present-day churches believe that the manifestations of speaking in tongues, healing, prophecy, deliverance, and prayers offered to the church are spiritual gifts that they need to flow in.

4.10. Liturgy and prayer

Prayer involves communicating with God. Prayer as a communication tool aids the believer to make affirmations. Constable (2003, p. 8) says, “We can divide prayer into two groups, those in which we ask God for something and those in which we tell Him something. Our spoken communication is divisible into these two aspects: we ask questions, and we make affirmations”. Present-day church prayers comprise of different types of avenues within the church, amongst others, prayer line, mass prayer, and prayer mountain.

4.10.1. Prayer line:

Present-day church liturgy includes the prayer line. Prayer line: is where people queue up, at the front, to receive on-the-spot prayers for specific needs. The people in the prayer line are prayed for by laying on of hands, a channel which the supernatural gift of healing operates. Church-ushers work hard to control the lines. The church-catchers position themselves behind the person receiving prayer. The prophet proceeds by laying hands on each person on the prayer line, whereby the healing virtue is transmitted.

The power of God is transferred to the recipient through the hands of the 'prayee' the one offering prayer, and very often the recipient testifies of actually feeling the manifestation of the supernatural power of God. Usually, the hands are laid on the recipient's head/forehead, chest, and palms or on a particular place of concern. The impact or force associated with this liturgical ritual action, occasionally causes the recipient to fall down, usually backwards (under the power). Laying hands on the sick involves the presence of the Holy Spirit to heal. It is encouraged that for a smooth flow of the divine power, both the 'prayee' and the 'recipient' should have faith, otherwise the liturgical rite of healing will be futile.

The perception is that every person who attempts to minister healing, to others, should be fully endowed by the 'Holy Spirit power'. More than sixty years ago Desert Weekly (1950, p. 613) wrote the following:

Some persons have the gift of healing, and their very touch is soothing to the sick. Healing virtue seems to flow out of them when they lay their hands on the afflicted. Others have faith to be healed. It is easy for them to obtain relief, even if no special gift of healing is possessed by those who administer to them the ordinance appointed for the sick.

The recipient should be receptive of the whole liturgical act so that the 'liturgical rite of healing' should actualise. Not everyone receives at the prayer line. According to Akinnifesi (2005, p. 199), "Doubt and wavering is the reason why many do not receive healing from God despite the long prayers, series of fasting and multiple laying on of hands. Such believes return to the prayer line whenever the preacher ascends the podium and makes an alter call."

4.10.2. Mass prayer:

Mass prayer is a form of audio-corporate-prayer comprising of prophetic declarations. The central part of the narrative of this kind of prayer is authoritative speech and specifics. Declarations are issued in the form of an intransigent command. For instance, it may be this type of command characterised by specifics:

- In the name of Jesus, I am healed! I command health in this body! Now!
- By the blood of Jesus! I am made whole, from head to toe!
- You demon of infirmity, leave my body now! in the name of Jesus!
- You ancestral covenants be broken now!
- You curse of bareness be broken! Be reversed!
- You deaf and dumb spirit I command you out! And never come back!
- You spirit of poverty I uproot you! Go! In Jesus name!

According to (Nixon 2019, p. 1),

The word *declare* comes from the Hebrew *achvah*, meaning “to make known” or “to set forth an accounting.” It is commonly used by customs agents who ask international travellers, “Do you have anything to declare?” The agents are asking for specifics of what you have, what you are carrying. As it pertains to us spiritually, declarations are what we speak into the atmosphere.

These prayers have become tools in the hands of the believers. Relevant scriptures that negate tribulations or maladies are declared. The perception is that the power of declarations carry the authority likened to that of a divine court order. According to Hyer, (2016, p.1), “Decreeing prayer is conceived as an authoritative command or law issued by a believer to cause something to happen. Moreover, decreeing prayer is spoken of and used in conjunction with a declaration.” Declaration prayers are issued corporately and simultaneously by the congregation and are inherently authoritative.

Nixon (2019, p.1), elaborates on this,

The biblical context of decrees is the same as the will and purposes of God. Scriptures are the basis for decrees. In Hebrew, a decree means to divide, separate,

and destroy. This definition reveals more of what happens in the spiritual realm. The German word *diktat* is the equivalent of the decree, which means - a harsh judgment imposed on a defeated foe that cannot oppose. The spiritual ramifications of decrees are: God speaks blessings; institute His will and purposes; separate and destroy the plans of the enemy and impose a judgment the enemy cannot oppose.

A will is a testament; it has the properties of an inheritance, a divine bequest from God, meaning that the weight of a declaration carries the transfer of divine power.

4.10.3. Prayer mountain:

Prayer mountain is when intercessors or prayer groups go on a retreat particularly to the mountain to fast and pray, in order to circumvent secular influences. Present-day churches encourage believers to take time off, from all distractions to pray. Mostly they embark on these retreats on weekends or public holidays, to accommodate the working-class group. Attention is drawn on the importance of uninterrupted communion with God. Supplicatory prayers, war-type prayers (spiritual warfare), intercessory prayers, as well as intense praise and worship are offered. There is a perception that as present-day Christians humble themselves, much grace is bestowed upon them for; miracles, clarity of vision and every anticipated panacea.

They consider themselves as enabled watchmen with greater vantage points in the realm of the spirit. According to Warrington (2008, p. 215), "The emphasis on prayer has resulted in prayer mountains being designated as places for extended communal and individual prayer. The phenomenon and the significance of the location is to a degree, based on the fact that Jesus prayed in mountainous areas, apparently, for peace and absence of distraction."

Mountains may seem important to the narrative of present-day faith, though alluring, to a wide variety of religious pilgrims. There is a perception in particular from the Scriptures that, whatever deities people worship, they build altars to them in high places, the prophet Isaiah assured Israel that their holy Mount Zion would be unlike any in the history of the world (Isaiah 25:6). According to Okyere (2012, p. 137),

The relevance of prayer mountain... is that, it has an integrative function of bringing pilgrims and other people together... which promotes social cohesion and social solidarity. This integrative function of 'prayer mountain' is also thought to be aptly

theological in orientation, given the view that the God whom the pilgrims seek to interact with, through various prayer rituals, is believed to be a communal God.

Most prayer mountain pilgrimages undertaken by present-day churches, are believed to be accompanied by fasting.

4.11. The liturgical ritual of fasting

Fasting is one of the significant liturgical ritual practice undertaken by present-day churches regularly, to lead them into divine intimacy with God. Most prophets contemporary churches lead a fasted lifestyle; the perception is to attain great power for divine manifestations in their ministries. Fasting is abstaining from food. According to, Sherron (2010, pp. 56-57), “fasting can be defined or placed in three basic categories: abstaining from eating all foods; some foods; or eating sparingly. Some abstain from solids completely, and drink fluids only.”

Present-day churches do the following fasts:

- one day fast or half-day fasts,
- intermittent fasting for a week,
- bi-weekly,
- three days and three nights fast each month without food,
- or the Daniel fast, thus eating fruit and vegetables.

There is a general consensus that fasting will bring them closer to God. Some believe that fasting will empower them to repel devils (Lk 9:49). The ability to cast out devils through the name of Jesus Christ is vital to the Christian theological concept because it demonstrates the power of God. Some believe that the ability to cast out demons from a person requires fasting, supported by Mathew 17:21, “howbeit this kind goeth not out by prayer and fasting” (KJV). Franklin (2014, p. 3), says, “Fasting has the ability to open doors, miraculous provisions, favour, and the touch of God.”

According to Warrington (2008, p. 218), “Fasting, provides more time to pray though it is also increasingly recognised that fasting is best undertaken when the Spirit has motivated it.” The purpose of fasting for spiritual reasons is to devote the time and energy normally spent eating and drinking for ‘Divine’ purposes. This phenomenon shows how strongly

present-day churches feel about praying and abstaining from food. They assert that the activity enables them to focus with unusual fervency to 'Divine' endeavours, while some believe that fasting enhances the gift of the prophetic.

4.12. Liturgy and prophecy

4.12.1. Prophecy

Prophet is from a Hebrew name, *nabi*, from the verb *niba*: to proclaim, announce or speak out (Lindblom 1962, p. 65). According to Nissinen (2004, pp. 18-19), a prophet is "a mouthpiece of God, who is capable of receiving and transmitting a message from a deity." Prophecy is not about a human being's perspective or understanding of the world, rather, it is about God's understanding and perspective on what is occurring in the world. "Prophecy is a miracle of knowledge of events before they transpire. It is history in reverse. The Lord knows the end from the beginning. Prophecy is neither speculation nor guessing, but it is a divine disclosure of future events through inspired instruments" (Skousen 2014, p. xi). It is about the prophet's understanding of the divine perspective. The prophet conveys to the people the power of God through a divine message, the understanding of what is happening, and what is to happen.

The prophetic nature in hyper-modern contemporary churches is diagnostic. They identify the source of affliction, then pray for people or conduct a deliverance. The goal is to do away with evil and suffering. The commitment of the prophet is to ensure victory through God's power. This nature of ministry is always a perpetual crowd-puller. Bickle (2008, p. 58) says, "If you can heal blind eyes in just one out of ten attempts, you would gather crowds of hundreds of thousands of people everywhere in the world on twenty-four-hour notice. If you could heal ten out of ten as Jesus did, you would be the most powerful person in the nation."

According to Bickle (2008, p. 40), "Those in the prophetic ministry will receive words and dreams on a regular basis and will have open visions on occasion (i.e. angelic visitations, audible voice)." In present-day churches, individuals are given prophecies such as:

- their location, street name and house description,
- cell phone number,
- names of children or parents, names of co-workers,

- future events,
- date of birth, ID and passport numbers.

According to Bickle (2008, p. 40), “They will sometimes receive detailed information such as names, faces, dates, and future events. They occasionally operate in other sign gifts of: healing, miracles, and deliverance.”

4.12.2. Prophecy base upon a scientific principle (metaphysics)

Skousen (2014:8), says that; “The Lord has a complete and detailed blueprint for this earth’s function.” Creation is likened to a scientific-formation of the visualised material – influencing the functioning of the cosmic universe. Skousen (2014, p. 8) confirms this, when he says that, “God, who is familiar with every influence in the cosmic universe, finds no difficulty in predetermining what will happen at any time or with any set of circumstances.”

4.13. Limitation of Liturgy

Although the Pentecostal liturgical practice has the potential to transform spiritual lives of believers, it is still a challenge for the church today. It is evident that extensive research, articles, books written, and consistent collocation of seminars on the subject signify that much is still to be unravelled. The complexity, the sacredness, or mystery in the elements of liturgy necessitates a comprehensive understanding, and discernment of what is acceptable and what is inappropriate in liturgical practice. According to Boselli (2014, p XI),

How believers experience the liturgy, in fact, it depends on how they live from the liturgy, and how they will experience the liturgy differently, because it bears, within its spiritual energies that are essential for the growth in the spiritual life. The liturgy, in fact is the specific way the church lives from Christ that enables believers to live through Christ.

4.14. Chapter summary

In this chapter, core concepts of liturgy were explored. The understanding is that God, Christ and the Holy Ghost are the main focus of liturgy. The Triune God encompasses and directs liturgical action. God initiates blessings through His Son, the redeemer, by the power of the Holy Spirit. Jesus Christ is the passage through which salvation is experienced, passing

through death to eternal glory. Liturgy has a broader application, for it embraces all liturgical actions of the church. Through the liturgical actions, we are reconciled to God through salvation, in order to be transformed. The church is created by the actions of those who profess the name of Christ in particular Pentecostals and its culture. “The local church creates its own Christian culture, its own set of values and ways of looking at the world, its own hopes and dreams, which, because they are corporately held and practiced, become normative” (Chan 2006, pp. 12;21). The church is seen as an instrument to accomplish God’s purpose in creation, or the expression of God’s ultimate purpose itself.

For Pentecostals, the most important part in the act of preaching lies in the results, including the experience of salvation, Spirit baptism, healing and other miracles, and the manifestation of the gifts of the Spirit (Ragoonath 2004, pp. 3). Hyper-modern contemporary churches are fond of signs and wonders. They acknowledge the idea of preaching being accompanied by the supernatural, meaning that in preaching the Bible text should be realised. “The pressure on Pentecostal preachers to produce supernatural results in line with the passage that they preach from leads in some instances to the manipulation of the context of preaching in order to gain the desired results from the preached word”(Johns 2003, p. 50).

The unique feature of the present-day prophetic churches is a quest for the supernatural. The perception in these churches is to target the well-being of the whole person, prophesying to diagnose the source of the problem. “To see beyond the cure, to what it communicates” (Bomann 2011, p. 194). The perception is that healing is supposed to cover every area of the individual’s life, extending to family, immediate environment, as well as socioeconomic issues. The healing received by the individual, serves as an evangelising tool, in the family and the environment. The cessation of the physical ailment or affliction is an encourager to the onlookers. According to Nkemnkia (1999:166), “For Africans the whole brings about the unification of the parts... and equally impossible to think of the parts without having the idea of the whole.”

Chapter 5

Inculturation

This chapter is important because inculturation covers broad and profound sections, including structural or doctrinal, theological and liturgical issues that are sensitive and intricate parts of the study. Inculturation largely explains the expansion of the church, by evangelising or spreading the Gospel, as part of the human experience. The introduction of Christianity is a process whereby the Gospel encounters people within their culture. This inquiry seeks to uncover the dynamicity of the inculturation processes by describing, interpreting, and analysing the challenges of present-day Christianity. In attempting to understand the process of inculturation, the research will commence by expounding on the following concepts:

- the meaning of society,
- the meaning of culture; theology of culture; and enculturating culture,
- the difference between acculturation; enculturation; inculturation; intercultural and intracultural; transcultural and cross-cultural.

5.1. The meaning of society

According to Walia (2008, p. 44), the term society is derived from the Latin word *socius*, which means an association or human interactions. Mayers (1987, p. 122) says that society implies the social order within which individuals or groups interrelate. It is an association of a larger group of people. Society can also relate to a group of people sharing the same physical area (Walia (2008, p. 44).

5.1.1. Society as a system

Society functions as a unit of a larger whole comprising of individuals existing within the group or community. According to Mayers (1987, p. 94), society forms a complex whole that functions and move in unison to comply with regulations that form an active system. Society is influenced by culture, though distinct, allows expression of a larger whole. Therefore, society is an interaction of people who share a common culture in a particular location. Societal grouping is a pattern of human behavioural control, but with a sense of independence within the society.

5.1.2. Society as a network

Societal interactions resemble a social-web that possess a common feature beyond the extent of individualism. According to Sharma (1997, p. 162), Society is a network of social relationships with mankind living in a communal setting, in reciprocal action with others. According to Weber (1949, p. 81), humankind are social beings. Societal relationships spread as they are spun and patterned by daily interactions. “This acquisition of social values and norms is known as the process of socialization” (Crisogen, 2015, p.1).

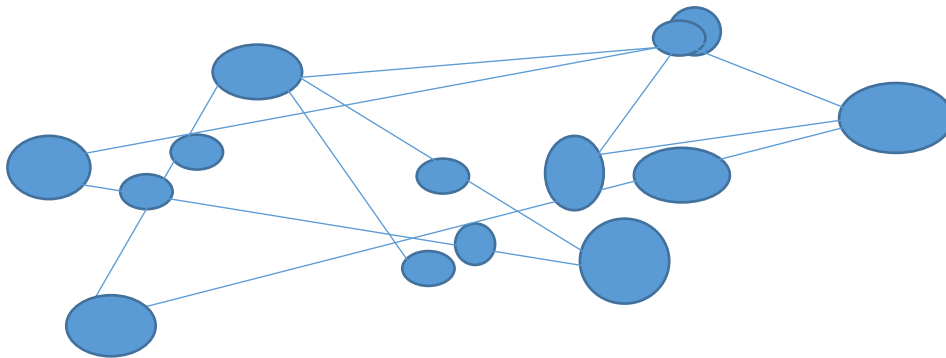


Figure 5. 1: A depiction of society: a web of social relationships

Source: (Sharma 1997, p. 162)

5.1.3. The relationship between culture and society

There is no society void of culture, and visa-versa, but society and culture are not similar. Almost a decade ago Park (1921, p.171) wrote, the following,

Society is composed of people, with instincts of habits and tradition called human nature. Society is a combination of people living collectively with culture imposing its patterns upon the natural man, which gives him that particular individuality that characterizes the members of groups. Nationalities and classes have marks, manners, and patterns of life that are infallibly recognized and classified.

5.2. The meaning of culture

Culture comes from Latin colere, which means to cultivate. According to Geertz (1973, p. 49), human nature is not void of culture. People give significance to the culture. “Culture is

a reflexive concept – except for its abstract category its definition is always contingent on its historical location, contemporary understandings of the relationship between culture and nature, politics of the moment, the uses within social theory to which it is being put, and its own inherently local and grounded nature” (Clammer 2013. p. 25). For instance, culture involves the community, including what they know, their language, traditions and rituals, mechanical knowledge and skills, the arts, what they eat and drink, as well as values, etc.

African world-view permeates religious beliefs – most African world-view is inherently abstract. The belief in the supernatural is a learned behaviour from an early age. Individuals are exposed to stories about God, deities, ghosts, malevolent spirits witches and wizards, that are ready to issue punitive measures for transgressors of natural or spiritual laws. In order to survive, families must have a backup in the form of witch-doctors or someone powerful to protect the family. For this reason, people throng supposedly influential churches for deliverance, healing breakthrough, protection, fruit of the womb to name but a few. For this reason some are subject to types of unusual liturgical healing practice in a quest to reach their desired objectives. Culture is designed and preserved through cultural components that influence behaviour and beliefs that can be transferred and formed within a cultural context. The worldview in a cultural context affects the conception or understanding of the self, society, and the environment in which one lives. The underlying factors and fundamental aspects that are rooted in culture are influential to society.

Culture is deliberately passed on, shared, or exchanged through cultural elements. According to Hutcheon (1999, p. 7), the basic unit of culture is either beliefs or social customs transmitted to an individual or group. The development of a cultural process can be inherited, formulated, or adopted. Van der Walt (1999, p. 71) distinguishes three ways by which culture develops i.e. culture can be invented, inherited ‘enculturation’, and taken over or adopted ‘acculturation.’ The acquisition of culture is a process that resembles structural layers of an onion. This means that culture is a complete whole with distinct structural layers that affect the textural quality of each element.

According to Van der Walt (1999, p. 13), as shown in Figure 5.2 below, every layer of a construct represents the following:

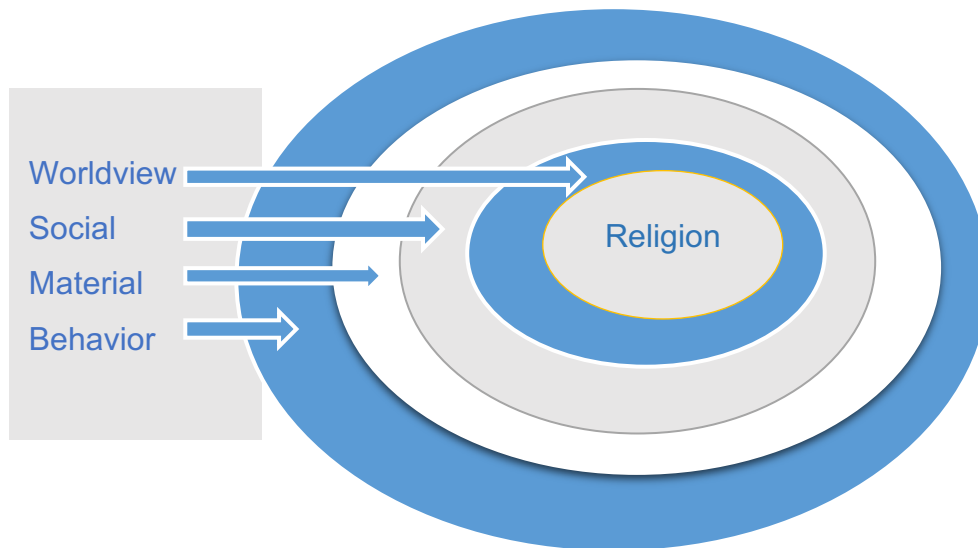


Figure 5. 2: A depiction of layers of culture

Source: Van der Walt 1999, p. 13):

- First: Religion - is at the heart of cultural influence.
- Second: Worldview - represents values and norms.
- Third: Social – language; art; relationships; science; economics; politics etc.
- Fourth: Material – material objects.
- Fifth: Behaviour – socially and religiously influenced.

The structural layers though distinct affect one another. Culture, according to Keesing (1981, p. 68) and Bailey & Peoples (1998 p. 23), refers to the acquisition of gathered experiences of socially transmitted knowledge and conduct shared by the community or a particular social group. Skills or experiences can be transmitted intentionally or unintentional to young learners, for instance, in simple prayers, Sunday school, amongst others.

5.2.1. Inculturating culture

As the Gospel comes into contact with culture, it is enriched by the insights of the people who live that culture, besides itself. The incarnation of the Christian life and the Christian message in a particular context, in such a way that this experience not only finds expression through elements proper to the culture in question (this alone would be no more than a superficial adaptation) but becomes a principle that animates, directs and unifies the culture,

transforming it and remaking it so as to bring about a 'new creation' (Shorter 1988:11). Inculturation is not only about the introduction of the Christian faith into a culture, but it is an ongoing interchange between faith and culture; it the relationship between the Christian faith and the culture into which the faith enters.

The fundamental world-view or belief system of the culture in question should be taken into consideration. Nürnberger (2007, p. 97) says that when the Gospel enters a cultural situation, it does not enter into an unoccupied space. The Gospel enters into an existing framework of notions, values, and norms and changes it from within by proclaiming the Gospel through the power of the Holy Spirit.

Bosch (199, p. :454), further points out that inculturation involves the principle of localising the Gospel in every culture. The Holy Spirit makes the introduction of the Gospel possible. To be local means that the church has to be embedded in a particular cultural, natural, and social place, characterised by life, values, and thoughts of the people involved Njoroge (2013, pp. 242–243). Contemporary Christianity places primary emphasis on being mandated or sent by the divine to bring transformation to people's lives. Duncan (2014, p. 6) observes that,

The inculturation process begins with an in-depth missional perception of God. God has always been in discourse with the people, not only for transformational purposes by the Gospel, but also coming into contact with the local culture.

In this exchange, the church does not blindly adopt the features of the local culture but rather let specific values compatible with the Gospel develop (Winters 1997, p. 34). The process of integrating cultural values with Christianity through the process of inculturation makes the Gospel real to humankind. Below is an example of the inculturation process Christianity into a culture:

An illustration of inculturating culture by (Geffré 1982, p. 482).

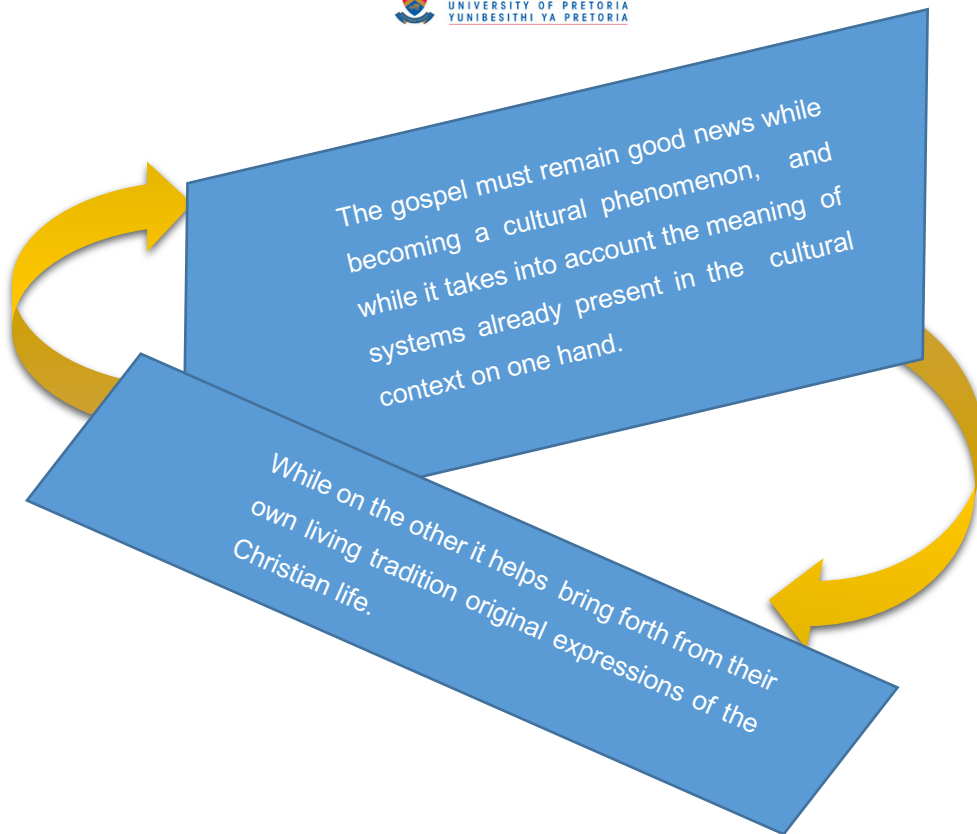


Figure 5. 3: A depiction of inculturating culture

Geffré 1982:482 & Schreier 1985:12f.

Inculturation can be viewed as a two-way interaction between local culture and a church culture - into a new culture. Inculturation implies a double movement i.e., the introduction of Christianity and the Christianizing of culture. The Gospel remains Good News while becoming a cultural phenomenon, (Geffré, 1982, p. 482), taking into account the significance of structures already present in the context (cf. Schreier 1985, p.12f). The following are definitions of inculturation from different authors and a working definition.

5. 2.2. The definitions of inculturation

Wepener (2009, p. 42)

Liturgical inculturation is a continuous process of critical – reciprocal interaction between cult (liturgy) and culture, resulting in a new entity coming into being, namely an inculturated liturgy. Inculturation is understood to be the process whereby the faith already embodied in one culture encounters another culture. In this encounter, the faith becomes part and parcel of this new culture. It fuses with the new culture and simultaneously transforms it into a novel religious cultural reality.

Bosch (1991, p. 454)

Bosch suggests a double movement - inculturation of Christianity and Christianisation of culture. Where there is already comprehension of the local culture as it relates to world views, ways of thinking, group solidarity, understanding of history and of modernity and its impact.

Working definition

Inculturation is a liturgical process that introduces the Gospel as the embodiment of Christ in human form. This process takes the shape of dialogue between the Gospel and the culture it encounters for the reason that both cultures undergo change. Hence, the Gospel (of Jesus) serves as a blueprint in incarnation and servanthood as it is translated into culture or cultures. The Holy Spirit facilitates the process by making the Gospel understandable and animate, therefore making the nature of God and the entire religious belief system more comprehensible to humanity. As the Gospel encounters culture by Christianising it, a new culture comes into being. Transformation takes place when culture is Christianised or inculturated by the Gospel. Therefore, Christianity is a necessary aspect to make the religious belief an integral part of church culture. The following are differences between acculturation, enculturation, inculturation, inter-culturation, intra-culturation, trans-culturation, and cross-culturation.

5.3. The difference between acculturation, enculturation and inculturation, inter - culturation, intra-culturation, trans-culturation, and cross-culturation

5.3.1. Acculturation

According to Shorter (1999, pp. 6-7), the word acculturation is closely associated with the theological concept of inculturation. Acculturation is a necessary condition of inculturation and a distinct sociological concept. The encounter between cultures is a consequence of change. Berry (1988, p. 3) quoting Redfield, Linton & Herskovits (1936, p. 149) stated that "Acculturation comprehends those experiences which result when groups of individuals having different cultures come into contact, with changes in the existing cultural patterns of both groups." Adjustments may include the following reasons noted by Shorter (1999, pp. 6-7):

- an encounter between two different sets of symbols and conceptions,
- two different interpretations of experience,
- two different social identities.

The acculturation activity refers to the operation of being attuned to the host- culture. Social Science Research Council (1954, p. 974) noted the following: “the dynamics can be seen as the selective adaptation of value systems, the processes of integration and differentiation, the generation of developmental sequences, and the operation of the role determinants and personality factors.” The developments mentioned above by the Social Science Research Council bring about the adaptation of a new cultural setting for the individual or group. The process of acculturation includes the adaptation of individuals or groups as they settle into a new socio-cultural environment Ra (2014, p. 8). The acculturation process takes place before habitat. According to Ukpong (2015, p. 35), the initial communication between the announcer and the recipient of the Gospel takes a pattern similar to acculturation. During the initial stage of inculturation, an acculturation stage takes place whereby Christianity seeks expression through element that are proper to the particular culture.

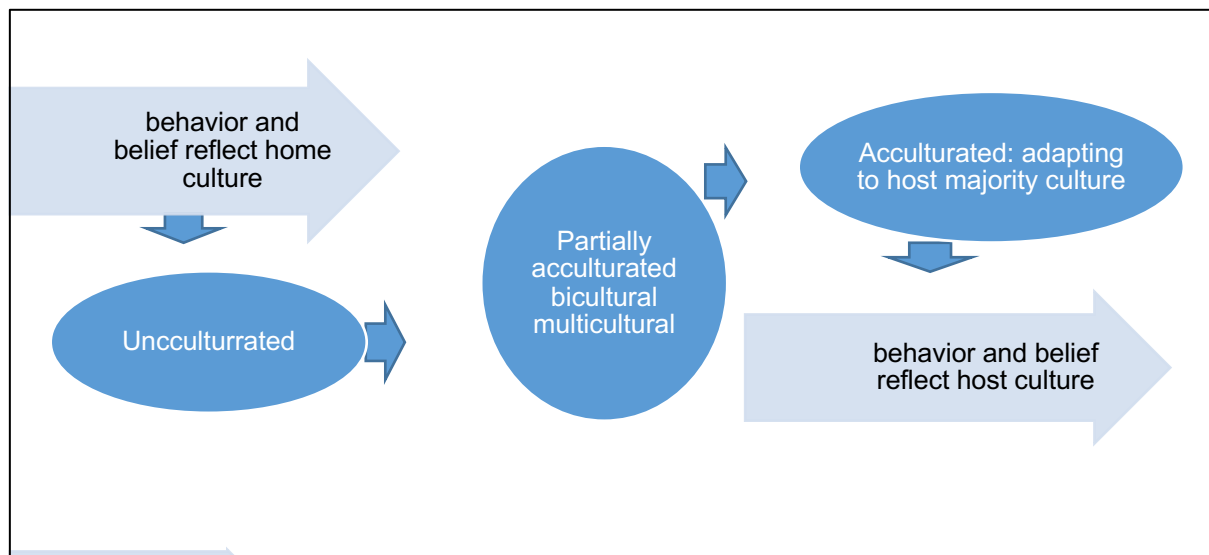


Figure 5. 4: A depiction of acculturation process

Source: Peter L. Hoag 2016, p. 11

5.3.2. Enculturation

According to Shorter (1999, p. 5), enculturation is a sociological concept that has been used comparably by theologians for the theological concept of inculturation. Enculturation, then, refers to the process whereby an individual is inserted into his or her culture. According to Shorter (1999, p. 5):

The individual learns by adapting to cultural forms or symbols having moral instruction in themselves, educating the individual to formulate their categories, and by the very act of surpassing them, they are formulated. Moreover, how the individual becomes conscious experience is vitally culture-bound.

Shorter (1999, p. 5), continues by saying that learning may be intentional or unintentional; formal or informal; conscious or unconscious, through cultural interactions. Acculturation is closely related to socialization, and social scientists say - society educates an individual. While the process includes formal teaching and learning, it is mostly informal, and even unconscious, experience. The process of socialising may concern direct or indirect learning to gain culture. Cultural connections are specified as enculturation. Enculturation is a process of acquiring culture, local or foreign, by an individual (Ukpong 2015, p. 35). Ojeda *et al.* (2012, p. 210) says, "Enculturation, refers to maintaining aspects of one's culture of origin while living within another culture." Figure 5. depiction of the enculturation process:

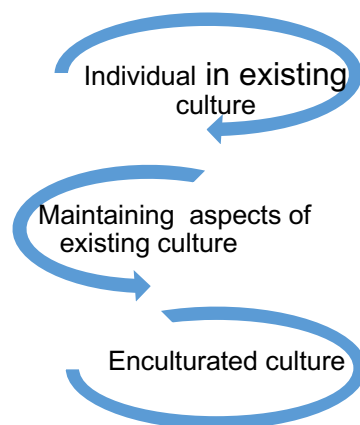


Figure 5. 5: A depiction of enculturation process

Source: According to Crollius & Nkeramihigo (1991, p. 6).

Enculturation in cultural anthropology means the learning experience in which an individual meets and grows into a culture while reserving the term inculturation when the church is inserted in a given culture. Acculturation has an anthropological significance synonymous with cultural contact, and is not confounded with inculturation.

5.3.3. Inculturation

According to Shorter (1988, p. 5 &10),

Inculturation is a new theological word derived from the academic fields of sociology and anthropology. It is derived from the sociological word ‘enculturation,’ which “refers to the cultural learning process by which a person is inserted into his or her culture.

Inculturation is the insertion of Christianity into various cultures. The definition of inculturation can be viewed from different perspectives; however, the theological content remains the same. Jesus’ incarnation is the primary motivation and the perfect pattern for inculturation. (Schineller 1990, p. 20). The primary purpose of the Gospel message is to transform cultures. The inculturation process takes on the shape of dialogue between the Gospel and the culture it encounters. Ukpong (2015, p. 34) says inculturation is faith in discourse with a culture, in order to convert the culture and become an essential part of it.

Sachari (2004, p.84), e.g., highlights the following factors, on the subject of cultural discourse:

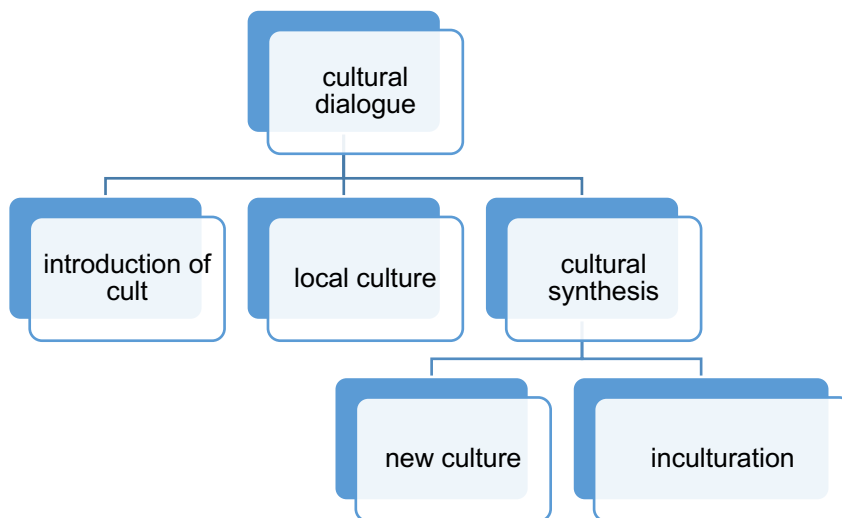


Figure 5. 6: A depiction of Inculturation process chart

Source: Sachari, 2004, p. 84

Factors, of cultural discourse:

- the new cult (Gospel) is introduced to the local culture,
- cultural dialogue ensues in order to convert, the culture and become an essential part of it,

- cultural synthesis occurs,
- a new culture comes into being, due to the outcome inculturation occurs.

5.3.4. Intercultural process

The intercultural process occurs between different cultures. Hiebert (1999, p. 383) states that the intercultural process is complex, and, if we fail to comprehend it, we shall be unsuccessful in expressing the Gospel adequately because the primary purpose of intercultural communication is the spreading of the Gospel. The intention of spreading the Gospel is to bring change to cultures. According to Saayman (1990, p. 316) intercultural is a process through which both the evangelist and the evangelised are influenced mainly by communicating the Gospel.

Communication takes a dialogical and transformational stance between cultures. The presenter of the Gospel and the recipient both communicate and receive in a dialogical process (Kgatlana 2002, p. 53). Saayman (1990, p. 316) further says that the mission is centered on communicating God's Gospel of reconciliation to the world through Christ Jesus. The intercultural process may also occur between two or more different cultures. Moreover, the concept of cross-cultural and intercultural are often regarded as interchangeable but different. Below is the illustration of an intercultural process:

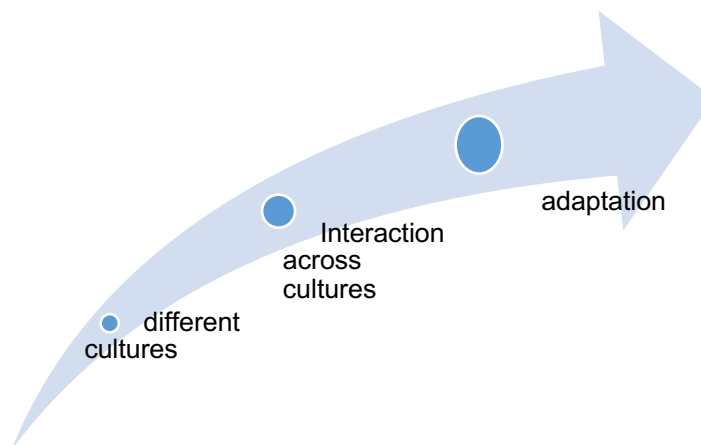


Figure 5. 7: Aids in the illustration of an intercultural process

- intercultural process involves different cultures
- interaction happens across cultures
- adaptation occurs

5.3.5. Intracultural process

All interactions involve processes of interpretations, those processes are different where participants interact between cultures. Moreover, Intracultural communication necessitates that people interact with their cultural groups or communities. Communicators understandably share the same ground rules of cultural codes. The individual turns to be culturally skilled (Molefi et al. 2014, p. 82) describes,

Intercultural communication as a form of communication that happens between people from the same country, although they may have distinct cultural backgrounds in terms of; race, gender, ethnicity, ethnicity, and socioeconomic status.

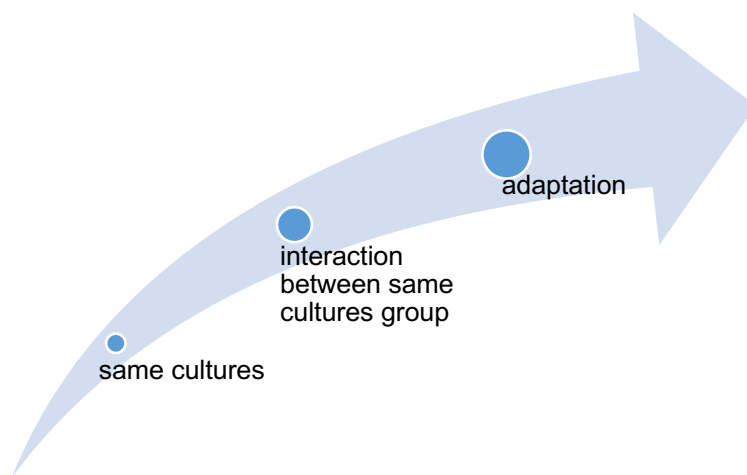


Figure 5. 8: Aids in the illustration of the intracultural process

The illustration of the intracultural process:

- intercultural process occurs between same cultures
- interactions happens between same cultures group
- adaptation of culture

5.3.6. The Transcultural process

The transcultural approach occurs across cultures. The approach incorporates an existential worldview and cultural identity of diverse cultures. According to Ibrahim (1991, pp. 13-19), this approach makes knowledge of culture a notable consistent experience that extends across cultural margins. Historically the Gospel has always been communicated to different cultures universally. Ansari (2008, p. 183) stated that from altered elements emerge new

composite and complex reality. Alternatively, it is seen as an ideal balance between the two cultures. Moreover, the transcultural process involves a competent strategic approach in conveying a liturgical message. The transcultural competence model by Campinha-Bacote (2002, p. 183), can effectively work within the transcultural context of transmitting the liturgical message to diverse cultures. The model views the five constructs of cultural competence in a transcultural process.

An illustration of cultural competence below in Figure 5.9. Campinha-Bacote (2002, p. 183).

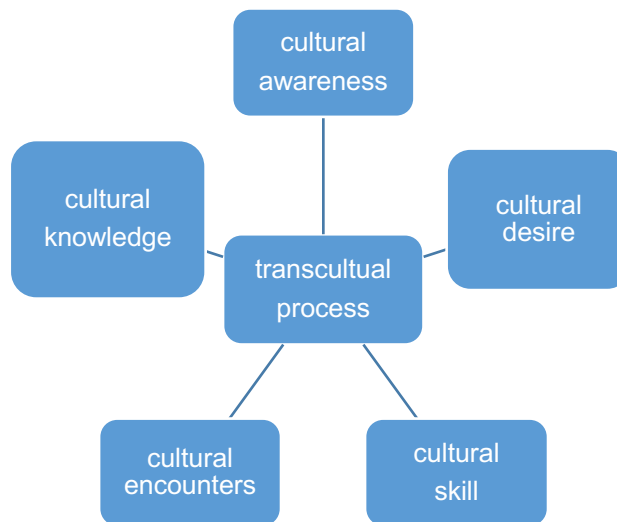


Figure 5. 9: An illustration of cultural competence

Source: Campinha-Bacote (2002, p. 183)

- Cultural awareness – being aware of your biases to diverse cultures.
- Cultural skill – to conduct a cultural assessment in a skilled manner.
- Cultural desire – the motivation and desire to engage in the process of cultural encounters.
- Cultural knowledge – to obtain knowledge regarding the worldview of different cultures.
- Cultural encounters – concerns a process that engages in cultural interactions with a diverse cultural background.

5.3.7. Cross-cultural process

According to Gertsen (1990, p. 99-100), cross-cultural is, “The ability to function effectively in another culture.” The following definitions of cross-cultural competences are related constructs that suggest components that are necessary for the achievement of effective cross-cultural process. Johnson *et al.* (2006, p. 109) state that efficacy requires an individual’s potential for knowledge, skill, and characteristics suitable to work with people from other nationals, which requires cognition of cultures for an effective cross-cultural process. The following figure illustrates the factors necessary for achievement for an effective cross-cultural process:

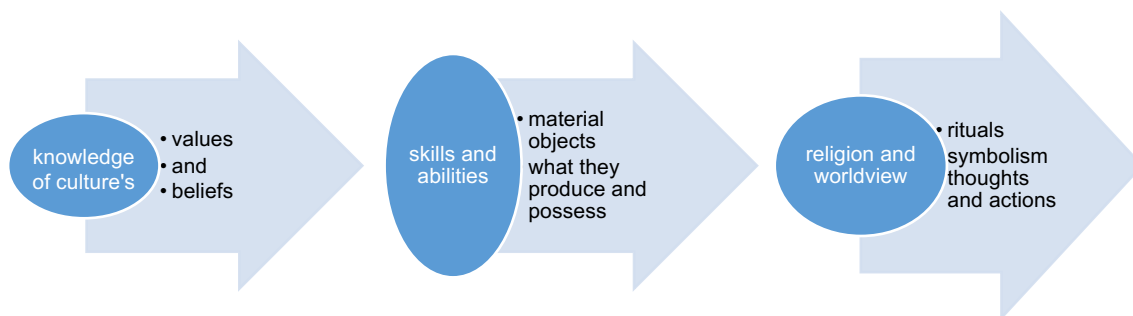


Figure 5. 10: A depiction of cross-cultural knowledge of cultures

The ability according to Leiba-O’Sullivan (1999, p. 97-98) requires:

- knowledge of cultures,
- skills, abilities, and
- other attributes as “stable” or “dynamic” competencies.

Factors necessary for achievement for an effective cross-cultural process:

knowledge of cultures -> beliefs and values, skills and abilities; material objects-> what they produce; and what they possess; religion and worldview -> rituals -> symbols, thoughts and actions.

Now that we have explained what society, culture, theology of culture, media culture, as well as the differences between acculturation; enculturation; inculturation; intercultural and intracultural; transcultural and cross-cultural, we will proceed to the following: mediatisation: the interplay between media, culture and society.

5.4. Mediatisation: Interplay between media, culture and society

The network society, is influenced by information and communication technology, van Dijk (2006, p.19). They enjoy the experience and exposure that the media presents — the exhilarating experience. Excessive media exposure of some present-day prophets in South Africa gives the impression that they thrive on being idolized. For this reason, the prophets' liturgical ritual practices are often displayed on Facebook and some on YouTube to showcase 'Divine' attributes. van Dijk (2006, p.19) distinguishes three main forms of modern society as follows:

- Information society – a modern type of society the information intensity based on science.
- Mass society- with all values and sectors based on tasks of information processing requiring knowledge.
- Labour market - a culture dominated by information processes requiring knowledge.

Present-day churches utilise their Facebook or websites for promotional purposes, for spreading the Gospel or recruit new members by advertising miracles. Campbell (2011, p. 85) says it helps explain how networked society creates new margins of communications between online and offline worlds, between the digital and the personified. Sermons are conveyed to appeal to the crowds through dramatic displays of power in the public eye. The use of modern communications is to put the prophet in the spotlight. Anderson & Hollenweger (1999, p. 190) explain that the plan of action has been faced with disapproval, but has had the effect of promoting a type of Christianity that attracts a contemporary popular culture.

The reality of digital religious practices has recently sparked a revolution in our country. The modish vision on liturgical rituals, which appear to bypass both biblical and theological authority, has left people questioning the authenticity of these ritual practices. Woodhead (2011, p. 134) stated, "Religion shows where power is based, in good or evil whereby humankind enters into this relationship, by comprehending it, reverence it, drawing upon it, handling it, protest against it, arbitrate, to it and falling in love with it."

5.5. Inculturation in African churches in particular Pentecostal churches

According to Moreau *et al.* (2000, p. 475),

Inculturation is the incarnation of Christian life and of the Christian message in particular cultural context, in such a way that this experience not only finds expression through elements proper to the culture in question but becomes a principle that animates, directs and unifies the cultures, transforming it and remaking it so as to bring about a new creation.

The Christian message in present-day churches is preached in such a way that it fits the design makeup of the culture appropriate to transform and accomplish the desired result. "Inculturation means the honest and serious attempt to make Christ and his Gospel of salvation ever more understood by peoples of every culture" (Waliggo 1986, p. 11). Inculturation in an African context is an attempt to spread the Gospel befitting to the African; the Gospel that touches every area of life consisting a holistic narrative. Africans are innately spiritual, and their liturgy takes on a form of vibrant or animate vibrancy. It is also a confrontation with the indifference of traditional western worship (Cox 1996, p. 14). On African inculturation, Tutu (1997, p. 38) explains that White man's mostly intellectual religion was hardly touching the inward African soul; he was being given answers, often excellent answers, to questions he had not asked. This perspective rejects the fragmented, abstract approach. The African approach is holistic and inclusive of the whole man.

The liturgical approach of African churches, as well as, the present-day churches' standard features are: reverberating worship, wide-ranging music and dance, intense prayer, prophecy, words of knowledge, freed from bondage, intense prayer for healing, totally immersed believers, all leading to the edification of God's people and to the restoration of 'wholeness and balance in life, (Magesa 1997, p. 195). Liturgical inculturation in present-day churches is like a strategic campaign to draw more followers. Kwabena Asamoah-Gyadu (2005, p. 389) defines the direction of liturgical inculturation as the stream of Christianity that emphasises in-person salvation in Christ as a converting experience by the Holy Spirit; and in which creative force influences the following:

- speaking in tongues,
- prophecies,
- visions,
- healing,
- miracles,

- signs and wonders.

In general, these phenomena are sought, accepted, valued, and consciously encouraged among members as evidence of the active presence of God's Spirit.

One cannot deny that the main purpose of African spirituality being compatible with the pneumatic theology is attributed to the supernatural manifestations. According to Wulffhorst (2005, p. 170), the experience of the Holy Spirit moving in communities is life-giving and life-affirming. Such spirituality is an enjoyable activity of songs, rituals, and symbols that show the spiritual vitality. The Holy Spirit brings to life the community to move together in response to God.

The main concern in present-day churches is to ascertain individual safety, to recover that which is lost, to resolve problems or difficulties, to gain divine protection, as well as to predict the future. The movement becomes a balm in Gilead, suitable for the local transcendental spirituality. African spirituality is interested in health and healing, freedom from demonic oppression, freedom from witchcraft activities, and to be free from affliction of poverty (Kalu 2007, pp. 153-154). The holistic approach of treating the whole person is a relevant outlook in an African context. Hollenweger & Dempster (1999, p. 10) contends that what distinguishes these churches is the spoken liturgy, narrative theology, the witness, compatibleness, the inclusion of visions and dreams in worship. There is also an understanding of the harmonious connection between the body, and the mind that is evident in healing by prayer and dance-worship.

According to Theuri (2002, pp. 193-194), the community is holistic and inclusive with essential values of generosity, unanimously guided the community to be hospitable to all. This is based on egalitarianism. Individuals work together as a group, as parts of a consistent whole. Zulu (2001, pp. 6-7) states that most Africans identify with a cohesion type of existence. This means that every person is responsible for working towards a harmonious whole. The dominant factor that sustains the community is unity and collective function (Hendriks 2004, p. 147). Inculturation in present-day churches takes on a fourfold approach. The Holy Spirit inspires the prophet to proclaim the Gospel, signs, and wonders flow in to instil the inculturation process.

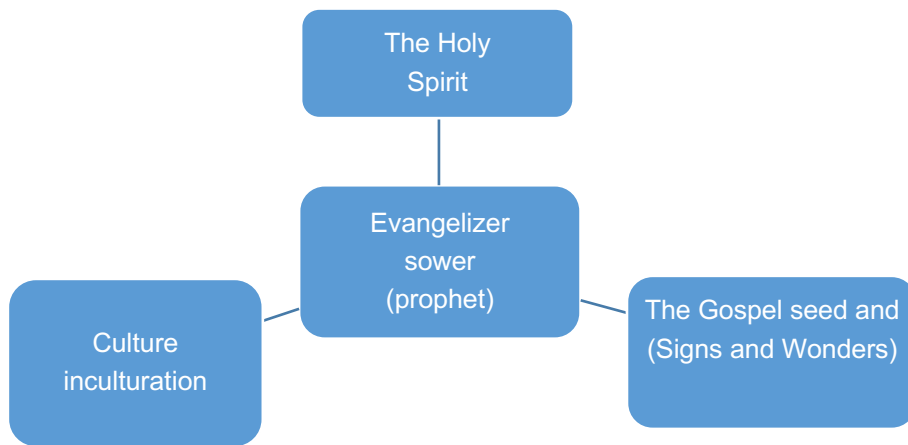


Figure 5. 11: A depiction of Inculturation: a fourfold relationship

Arbuckle (2002, p. 4).

5.6. Theological foundations of Inculturation

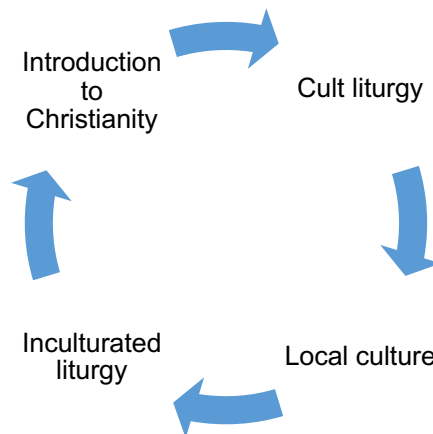


Figure 5. 12: A depiction of an inculturation process

Source: Wepener (2009, p. 42)

Liturgical inculturation is a continuous process of critical – reciprocal interaction between cult (liturgy) and culture so that a new entity comes into being, namely an inculturated liturgy. Inculturation is understood to be the process whereby the faith already embodied in one culture encounters another culture. In this encounter, the faith becomes part and parcel of this new culture. It fuses with the new culture and simultaneously transforms it into a new religious, cultural reality. The insertion of the good news into cultures and the adoption and integration of the local culture is understood to be inculturation.

In addition to being a reciprocal integration, the process is critical. Hence, the church does not blindly assume the characteristics of the local culture but instead calls on the latter to

grow according to all its particular values, as long as these values are compatible with the Gospel. There are sure discernment and discrimination in the process of dialogue. Through the given and crucial reciprocal action of the church and culture, then, culture is transformed by meeting with the Gospel, (Winters 1997, p. 34). Inculturation is a process that has components of conversion:

- the insertion of the gospel;
- faith;
- salvation;
- transformation; that leads to;
- inculturation.

5.7. Essential theological components in the process of inculturation



Figure 5. 13: A depiction of essential theological components in the process of inculturation

5.7.1. The Gospel as a component of the inculturation process

The Gospel offers hope between the church and cultures, because of its characteristic of possessing transformative properties. Through its inception, cultures are transformed. In this view, the proclamation of the Gospel leads to the salvation and transformation of culture necessary in the unfolding of God's adoption of that specified culture (Winters 1997, p. 36-38). The progress towards the connection between the Gospel and culture is indistinguishable to the contextualisation of the Gospel (cf. Bate 1991, p. 88-97).

5.7.2. Faith as a component of the inculturation process

Faith, as a component of the inculturation process, means that faith unites culture with Christ through grace. Faith, in this sense, is described by Shorter (1988, p. 59) as a spiritual practice, as biblical truth, and tradition as expressed when making a profession of faith.

Inculturation is a process whereby faith becomes a culture, thereby combining humanity's whole existence around Christ (Bate 1991, p. 13).

5.7.3. Salvation as a component of the inculturation process

Personal salvation has a message of hope that claims that for man to find peace in God's love, one has to experience individual transformation (Gmeindl 1980, p. 50). Men need not only know about God's inescapable judgement of sin upon them but that to enjoy life in its fullness, there has to be a conversion through God's wondrous transforming grace (Woodward 1976, p. 68). This message has found particular expression in the spreading of the Gospel.

Evangelising is seen primarily as the attempt to entice non-believers into a situation where they will be provided with the Gospel message of personal salvation. The primary aim of salvation is to convert souls and to increase membership in the kingdom of God. Humankind needs transformation or conversion for moral reform achievable through repentance to be reconciled to God." Gmeindl (1980, p. 54), says that that the primary aim is the revitalisation of souls and salvation, for the transformation of the individual, for the individual to be relieved from some of the stress and disappointments of life.

5.7.4. Transformation as a component of the inculturation process

A conversion is an event where transformation to faith occurs. "Conversion is a process that happens again and again as the patterns of humankind's relating to the world gets transformed and placed under the power of the gospel" (Droege 1992, p. 20). On the view of inculturation as a key to transformation, Magesa (2004, p. 138) says that the desired aim of the Gospel is to transform cultures.

5.7.5. Inculturation as a component of the process of change

Inculturation is a middle ground between liturgical values and cultural values; through their integration, a new liturgical culture comes into being. According to Bate's (1998: 1) inculturation consists of the ultimate transformation of accepted cultural values through their encounter with Christianity in the various human cultures. The reciprocal interaction of liturgy and culture produces a new inculturated culture. Wepener (2009, p. 42) confirms this when he says that inculturation is a constant process of crucial given action between the cult and culture so that a new distinct inculturated liturgy comes into being, (sub-heading 5.6, above explained in full).

5.8. The church's mission in inculturation

According to Bate (1994, p. 7), through inculturation, the Church becomes a more effective instrument of mission. The mission of the church, which is the mission of Christ, besides being inclusive of people it also incorporates cultures and religions (Winters 1997, p. 43). It was noted earlier in Wepener (2009, p. 42) that there is a reciprocal quality to the process of inculturation in that not only is the culture transformed by the redemptive presence of the church, but the church itself is affected by its encounter with culture. For the church to be true to itself, it must identify, accept, and combine customs or beliefs, ethical, and the spiritual values of diverse people and their cultures (Winters 1997, p. 43). The models below are missionary tools in inculturation:

5.8.1. The Trinitarian model:

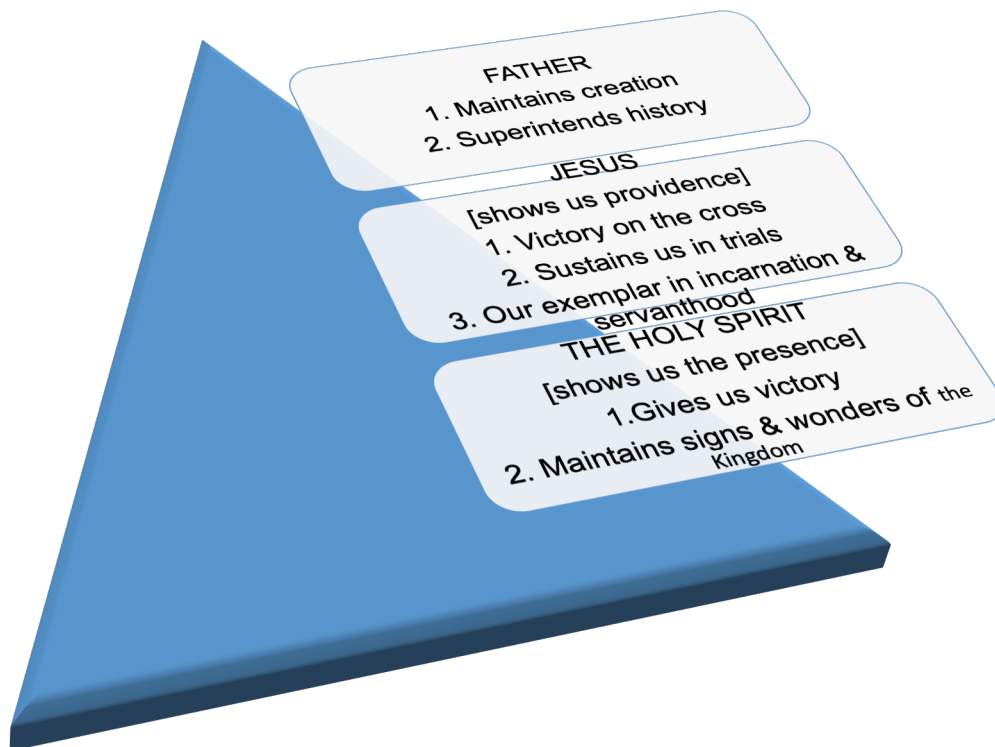


Figure 5. 14: An illustration of a trinitarian model.

Source: Hiebert (1989, p. 122).

Trinity in Latin is Trinitas, or trinus, which means threefold. Trinity symbolizes the union of the three divine persons into one Godhead, namely, God the Father, Jesus, and the Holy Spirit Hiebert (1989, p. 122),

- The providence of the Father: - maintains creation; oversees history.
- The presence of the Son, Jesus: - attained victory on the cross for humanity, sustains humanity in trials, an exemplar in incarnation and servanthood, the salvation of humanity, and the church, which is his body.
- The Holy Spirit: - gives victory, manifests signs, and wonders. The Holy Spirit also gives the assurance of salvation. Romans 8:14, "For as many as are led by the Spirit of God; they are the sons of God." According to Hiebert (1989, pp. 122-123), a theology of God's work in human affairs must begin with an understanding of God himself as Father, Son, and Holy Spirit. Moreover, new movements in the church should not focus their attention on one person in the Godhead and so lose sight of the work of the others. Within the care of the Father and the presence of Christ, we need to experience the power of the Holy Spirit.

5.8.2. The Incarnation model

The word incarnation is from the Latin caro, 'flesh', the pre-existent word has been embodied in the man Jesus of Nazareth. Jesus of Nazareth is presented in the Gospel according to John 1:14, "And the word was made flesh, and dwelt among us, (and we beheld the glory, the glory as of the only begotten of the Father,) full of grace and truth." The incarnation of Christ is indicated in Philippians 2:7b. Dawson (2004, p. 6), said, Jesus, came to live as our representative the life of a faithful response to the Father, as it is essential for us to go beyond our power. The identity of Jesus as Lord (God), and taking on human nature were both preserved in the propria persona of Jesus Christ. "He leaped both the breach in our communion created by sin and the fissure gaping with our mortal frailty and decaying form," (Dawson 2004, p. 6). His oneness with God and with humanity was manifest while maintaining the oneness of His person. God did not only send the word but embodied the truth in human flesh. According to Dawson (2004, p. 5), "The incarnation, is the news that Jesus became what we are, fully entering our lost and forsaken condition, taking up into himself our very humanity. God crossed the gap between himself and us."

5.8.3. The model of 'skenosis'

The word 'skenosis' is used by John Pobee (1996, p. 3), as referred to in John 1:14, "the 'tabernacled' of, God's word which is active and involved among his people the outcome should be able to bring about the process of inculturation that will make Christ and the gospel of salvation to be more understood by the people of every culture." This is presented with a fourfold image:

- First, it holds us to a non-negotiable word of God, which transcends time and place but must nevertheless be translated to become comprehensible in new times and contexts.
- Second, whatever validity a construct coming out of this struggle has is essentially and necessarily temporary; like a tent-dwelling, it cannot be for all time.
- Third, it cannot, therefore, live in isolation but must be attentive to the living stream of the tradition of the living communities of faith.
- Fourth, because the word of God is the key, it will make a critique of the culture of the particular community. Like all true prophecy, the word of God contains words of hope as well as of condemnation (Pobee 1996, p. 3).

5.8.4. The model of 'kenosis'

Kenosis (Greek: κένωσις, kénōsis, lit.) is the act of emptying - it is the 'self-emptying' of Jesus' own will and becoming entirely receptive to God's divine will. There is already a self-annihilation in the Incarnation, Philippians 2:5-11. The kenosis (the model of kenosis) in which the Son of God empties Himself, taking the form of a servant, but having become like us in all things. He humbled Himself by submitting to death on the cross, and is raised up by the Father's will and power. Jesus is constituted Lord of the universe and of human destiny. According to Mcleod (1998, p. 218), this mystery is at the heart of the Good News,

The Gospel proclaims and that the messenger of the Gospel must carry the good news to the ends of the earth. However, in this process both the messenger and the message must not only become incarnate in the lives of the people to whom Christ brings new life; they must also die and rise in these people.

Practical patterns of inculturation in present-day churches' put emphasis on immediate personal experience of God's power by His Spirit, and is more intuitive and emotional, and

its patterns are recognisable wherever they arise. In African communities, preaching a message that promises solutions for present felt needs, like sickness and the fear of evil spirit is readily accepted by ordinary people. Therefore, churches are rapidly planted as a result. The experience and practice are usually more important than the preciseness of principles. Healing and protection from evil are among the most prominent features of the contemporary Gospel and are probably the most important part of their evangelism and church recruitment.

The problems of disease and evil that seem to affect the African contemporary Christian community nationally require a solution. Cox (1996, p. 228) observes,

African Pentecostals provide a setting in which the African conviction that spirituality and healing belong together is dramatically enacted. African communities are, to a large extent, health-oriented communities.

Their traditional religions, rituals for healing and protection are prominent in contemporary churches, radically declaring a message that reclaims the theology of healing, deliverance and protection from evil and demonstrate the practical effects of biblical traditions. Therefore, meeting the physical, emotional, and spiritual needs of African people, and offering solutions to life's problems, as well as a way to cope in a threatening and hostile world, is perceived as a complete package.

5.9. Inculturating by evangelism

It is perceived that divine healing is an evangelistic door-opener for contemporary churches. Ordinary people in the street are attracted to signs and wonders. This evangelistic endeavour by the prophets makes it possible for the message of the kingdom to be actualised, coupled with their outreach undertakings of crusades. The expectation of miracles is potent. Present-day Christianity seek the spectacular display of the supernatural, signs and wonders, healing, and deliverance from the evil influence and satanic bondage. The supernatural display of divine power validates the man of God, and the testimonies lead to faith in the word. The signs and wonders promoted by prophets have led to the rapid growth of contemporary churches everywhere, seldom without controversy. This emphasis on healing is a part of evangelising, especially in African communities. It is a tool for divine campaigns. Crusades or outreaches are preceded by great publicity, in the form of posters or social media. They advertise themselves with the promise of the miraculous. Anderson (2000, p. 3) says,

Their efforts, and the result was that many were persuaded to become Christians. This emphasis on healing is so much part of Pentecostal evangelism, especially in Africa, that large public campaigns and tent crusades preceded by great publicity are frequently used in order to reach as many 'un-evangelised' people as possible.

People are becoming critical of ministries that lead to self-veneration for financial gain, at the expense of those who have very little at all to give. This could even be seen in cases where they deliberately set out to encourage indigenisation, as in the celebrated case of the three selfs as the aim of (self-government, self-support, and self-propagation), formulated classically by Rufus Anderson and Henry Venn almost a century and a half ago. These were the criteria according to which the younger churches were judged (Bosch 2011, p. 381).

5.10. Spiritual gifts

5.10.1. Spiritual gifts as a tool for inculturation in contemporary Christianity

The role of signs and wonders is an indispensable part of the contemporary approach. Spiritual gifts, baptism in the Spirit, Prophecy, healing, and deliverance have been a significant part of the attraction to the present-day movement. Their aggressive manner of spreading the Gospel in the form of crusades or outreaches sometimes thrusts them out in the face of stiff opposition among themselves or other denominations. These outreach initiatives are motivated by a compelling need to display power by prophesying, healing, and providing solutions to all of life's afflictions. Their outreach approach is flexible and successful. They claim that the rapid growth of contemporary churches is because of the Holy Spirit that brings them the ability to perform signs and wonders in the name of Jesus Christ. They perceive the role of healing as good news for the poor and afflicted, whereby the message of the kingdom is actualised. Most contemporary churches are person-centred ministries or independent churches seldom without controversy. To emphasise this point, Möller (1983, p. 6), wrote: "The ultimate and full purpose of spiritual gifts stands revealed. They are to bring men to face to face with the reality of the Invisible God... to make the unbeliever equally conscious that God cannot be forgotten and that sin dare not be trifled with."

5.10.2. 'Spirit baptism' as a subject of inculturation

Baptism in the Holy Spirit refers to a second blessing or spiritual experience, following conversion, in which the believer is empowered by the Holy Spirit to enjoy a deeper and more profound Christian walk. The special endowment of power by the Holy Spirit to individuals, in particular, contemporary prophets, is to convey power and authority to them, so that they can carry out the divine mission. Black (1991, p. 107) says that Pentecostals see baptism in the Holy Spirit as discrete from being born again, and quite discrete from the baptism in water. This endowment by the Holy Spirit is an enabler mostly to spiritual gifts.

5.10.3. Prophecy as a subject of inculturation

The prophetic, on this view, is the conveyance of the power of God through the divine message for the sake of understanding what is happening. It is a miracle of knowledge of events before they become known, a divine disclosure of future events through inspired instruments of God, the prophets. Skousen (2014, p. xi), confirms that the prophecy is a miracle of knowledge of events before they happen. It is history in reverse. The Lord knows the end from the beginning. "Prophecy is neither speculation nor guessing, but it is a divine disclosure of future events through inspired instruments." This resonates well with local communities because they are inherently inclined to the prophetic. Traditionally the local communities used to inquire about family matters, good or bad, so they are fascinated by the prophetic. When prophecy is part of the evangelical tool in local communities, a favourable outcome is guaranteed.

5.10.4. Healing as a subject of inculturation

Divine healing, in particular, is an indispensable part of spreading the Gospel. Anderson (2000, p. 2) points out that in all cultures in the world, particularly African cultures, a notable enticement for Pentecostalism, has placed importance on healing. In these liturgies, the religious specialist - the Holy Spirit has the power to heal the sick and ward off evil spirits and sorcery. Some may argue that present-day churches have restored a conventional, holistic approach in healing and in providing solutions successfully. The local communities see this religion and are convinced that it meets their needs. Some have moved away from traditional healing methods to embrace the divine approach, evidenced by the crowds thronging to these churches. According to Maluleke & Nadar (2007, p. 1), healing has become a promising church-based industry. Healing pastors go to and fro in the African

continent to big events. These events are sometimes called healing campaigns, with television channels, displaying recorded and live healing events, and testimonies from both local and global sources.

5.10.5. Deliverance as a subject of inculturation

The phenomenon of deliverance is central to the liturgy of West African Pentecostalism. This phenomenon has been under the influence of T.B. Joshua of 'SCOAN'- Synagogue Church of all Nation in Nigeria, and others in West Africa. South African prophets are deemed as a sequela of West African liturgy. Deliverance is considered to be an avenue and practice that employs spiritual gifts in liturgical activities, to respond to human existential needs. The deployment of divine power and authority in the name or blood of Jesus is perceived in pneumatological terms as the intervention of the Holy Spirit to provide a release for the demon-possessed, demon-oppressed, broken, disturbed and troubled people. In order for the victims to be restored to 'proper functioning order,' of 'health and wholeness,' and free from demonic influence and curses, that they may enjoy God's fullness of life understood to be available in Christ (Asamoah-Gyadu 2005, p. 165). The perception of restoration is surmountable in diverse communities. Therefore, the proper order of functioning is indispensable. Deliverance is perceived as a powerful and influential evangelical tool for inculturation.

5.11. Inculturation and present-day Christianity

The role of a new and rapidly growing form of present-day churches are increasingly being recognised. This movement is fast becoming one of the most significant expressions of Christianity, especially in African communities. These newer movements and present-day prophets claim that they are offering a personal encounter with God through the power of the Holy Ghost, to effect, healings, deliverances, prophecies, spiritual, social, and structural. The self-proclaimed prophets and their churches are self-ruling, self-proliferating, and self-sustenance, and usually, they have no structural or institutional covering with any church body or denomination. The churches may be deemed, the provosts of their organisations. Asamoah-Gyadu (1998, p. 56) explains that in the spiritual churches, members are the consumers, and the prophets are proprietors of powers to defeat maladies. In the present-day churches, believers are equipped through the power of the Holy Spirit to overcome.

Anderson (2000, p. 9) points out, “In the spiritual churches, any person is entitled to become a prophet and to be a steward of spiritual power.”

Some of the main methods employed by contemporary prophets are preaching at places of public concourse, e.g., community halls and stadiums held provincially or nationally or even pitching tents adjacent to taxi ranks, bus terminals, markets, or shopping centres. Their perception of spirituality is Christ-centred, of course but while the movement puts Jesus at the centre, it is in fact the ‘prophet’ who gets all the honour and glory. Jesus is used as a ‘brand’ that sells the powers of the ‘prophet as a healer. They believe in a personal encounter with Christ - being born again, and the operation of the power of the Holy Spirit. They give attention to long periods of prayer for healing, unemployment, and poverty, deliverance from demons and witchcraft, and give importance to speaking in tongues and prophecy. These attributes characterise most present-day churches (Anderson, 2000, p. 10). Present-day Christianity is also media centric based.

5.12. Chapter Summary

Present-day Christianity asserts to proclaim a practical Gospel that seeks to address practical needs like sickness, poverty, unemployment, evil spirits and sorcery. Their approach appears to enable them to offer solutions to some of life’s fundamental issues. Present-day Christianity’s approach to local life, culture, and the retention of certain indigenous religious practices, make them the point of attraction, especially for those overwhelmed by difficulties. At the same time, present-day Christianity are cognizant of the fact that present-day believers need protection against sorcery and healing from sickness in churches, more than cultural-traditional rituals previously offered to the locals. Present-day prophets promise healing, protection from afflictions, prosperity amongst others, as practical benefits offered in their church liturgy.

The enormous and unparalleled infamous contribution by present-day prophets is changing the face of South Africa, in its ongoing task of unusual demonstration of the power. Their pragmatic approach lies in the emphasis of signs and wonders that are sometimes peculiar. Although the church is responsible for carrying out the commission, it should remain reliable as long as it continues to embrace a diversity of cultures in the world. The challenge for the church is to remain truthful to biblical tradition, to communicate and remain faithful to the true Gospel, giving birth to a genuinely inculturated local church. Inculturation is a necessary

operation that allows the presence of God to unfold to its fullest, transforming culture in the process. Therefore, it should remain authentic as it continues to be inclusive of cultures.

Chapter 6

Ritual functions

6. Ritual functions its nature and ceremonial rites

This chapter examines the religious phenomenon of ritual functions and its nature in the context of healing ritual practice, given to unusual ritual healing practice in South Africa. Generally, rituals are indispensable elements in the nature and essence of humankind apart from regulating and controlling a social situation for the sake of social order. Since rituals are perceived as features of all known human societies, this article will assist in clarifying, explaining, analysing, and unravelling the ritual activity and ceremonial rites.

6.1. The study of the history of ritual

To understand rituals, we will first go back in history to follow routine according to early studies. Cope (1973, p. 171) stated: "A ritual is a present act which historically recalls the past for reordering, even predetermining, the future." Steve Jobs substantiates this in his commencement address on the 114th graduating class at Stanford University, when he said, "You cannot connect the dots looking forward; you can only connect them looking backward. So one has to trust that the dots will somehow connect in one's future" (Naughton 2011).

E.g., a schematic illustration of dots connecting backward:

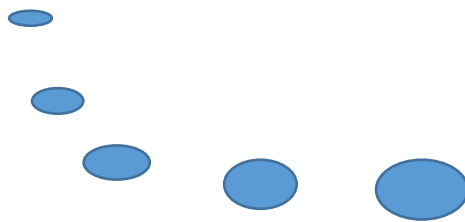


Figure 6. 1: Connecting the dots looking backward

Source: Steve Jobs on June 12, 2005

The term ritual comes from the Latin word 'ritus.' The word 'ritus' refers to strengthened, ritualistic, and repeated activities that have a religious character, including external forms of worshipping deities within a given religious community (Mazurkiewicz 2012, p. 317). Rituals

have an element of conformity to the traditional system, and they tend to be a repetition over time.

According to Fogelin (2007, p. 58), although particular rituals may remain unchanged over time, their meaning for society is always re-defined by transferring and transforming them from one context to the another. People always choose to remember, forget, or recreate elements of ritual practices. In trying to unpack the ritual process, myths will also be delineated to comprehend the ritual practice.

6.2. Rituals and myth

The word myth is derived from the Greek word *mythos*, which means speech, thought, story, and the myth of unknown origin. In Latin, *mythus* which means speech, narrative, or fable. In Homer's poetry, the word means boasts, threats, invectives, laments, prophecies, and prayers (Alhaidari & Bhanegaonkar, 2012, p. 1). Other authors believe that there is a relationship between rituals and myth, some have their reservations about the very concept. Fontenrose (1971, p.2) agrees with those who say that all myths are written works of a ritual, and that all intricate myth-ritual goes back to a single ancient ritual. Furthermore, Fontenrose (1971, p.2) refers to a legend or folktale as a myth that was broken-off from its original ritual.

6.3. Myths, rituals, and social relation

There is a fundamental awareness that claim a relationship between rituals and myths. According to Zhuravlev & Zhuravleva 2017, p. 163), the dualism of awareness seems to mark the relationship between a ritual and a myth. A pre-existing cultural environment often shapes myths and rituals. Myths and rituals share the same sanctity as indicated by, Kluckhohn (1942, p. 78) when he mentions that myth and ritual have a typical psychological basis. The ritual is all-consuming, consisting of a reiterative action, often accompanied by a symbolic dramaturgy relating to the basic needs of the community, whether economic, biological, social, or sexual. Besides the sacredness of rituals/myths, they tend to change peoples' statuses, roles, or positions; and also possess similar functions with rite of passage. Rituals play a substantial role in religious and non-religious culture. The following are ritual definitions.

6.4. Defining ritual

Ritual is a broad concept. Ritual denotes the cultural meanings of different ethnic groups that may be quite different, considering they have ongoing meanings or symbolic cultural meanings that are the core element of rituals. Tambiah (1979, p. 119), observes that a ritual is a socially formulated system of figurative communication. It comprises of an intricate system of words and acts, often expressed in multiple media. According to Lafontaine (1972, p.16), rituals are mental concepts dominant of the milieu, motivating individuals towards actuating the social engagement of a group, and promoting the awareness on the necessary condition of unusual situations. The following are ritual definitions by different authors and a working definition.

6.4.1. Definitions of ritual by different authors

Firth (1951, p. 222)

More than sixty years ago Firth (1951, p. 222), formulated a useful ritual definition, he stated that ritual is, “a kind of patterned activity oriented towards the control of human affairs, primarily symbolic in character with non-empirical referent, and as a rule socially sanctioned.” The sentence has adherence to prescribed forms, the symbolic, a hint of sacredness and social conformity.

Wepener (2009, p. 36)

Rituals are often repeated self-evident, symbolic actions, that are always interactive and corporeal, sometimes accompanied by texts and formulas aimed at the transfer of values in the individual or the group, and of which form of content are always culture, context, and time bound, so that the involvement in the reality which is presented in the rituals remain dynamic.

The sentence incorporates symbolic, and interactive bodily actions with aphorisms directed at conveying cultural values, that encompass the past, present and future.

Albrecht (1999, p. 22)

Ritual connotes those acts or actions dramas and performances that a community creates, continues recognizes and sanctions as ways of behaving that express appropriate attitudes sensibilities values and beliefs within a given situation. The Pentecostal service (ritual) lies at the heart of the Pentecostal spirituality and with its attending rites (referring to a portion or phase of the service) and practice constitutes the most central ritual of Pentecostalism (,e.g. the sermon the song service) a particular practice or specific act or enactment (,e.g. laying on of hands and prayer, taking an offering, receiving water or Spirit baptism). Alternatively, or a set of actions (,e.g. various types of alter/responses) recognized by Pentecostals as legitimate part of their overall ritual.

Ritual actions express and transfer values and beliefs, through service, sermon, songs, Spirit baptisms, alter calls etc.

Post (2015, p. 7)

Ritual is a more or less repeatable sequence of action units which take on a symbolic dimension through formalisation, stylisation, and their situation in place and time. On the one hand, individuals and groups express their ideas and ideals, their mentalities and identities through these rituals, on the other hand, the ritual actions shape, foster, and transform these ideas, mentalities, and identities.

The first part of ritual is defined as repletion, enactment, symbolism, formalisation, and stylisation. The second part of ritual is portrayed as a sequenced pattern of behaviour that allows for individuals and groups to express themselves, at the same time be shaped, be encouraged and transformed, psychologically and emotionally.

Working definition

Rituals are often sequential symbolic actions, patterned toward transference of values and beliefs within a given situation, place and time aimed at shaping, fostering and transforming individuals and group constituting ideas, mentalities, and identities, that are socially validated and regulative. Rituals are broad. Some embody the sacred and some secular. It is impossible to derive a single definition or experience (practice) on ritual since it encompasses a notably large variety of interpretations due to its broadness, variedness, and complexity.

6.5. The complexity of ritual practice

Rituals are intricate. Rituals consist of different connected parts that are entangled. The segments are knitted into a complex nexus. Complex nexus in ritual practices is a complex entity, where each part interacts with all the other parts in complexity. Haslberger (2005, p. 162) describes complexity theory as a new possible method for describing and creating a theoretical premise. Mackay (2014, p. 8) theoretical review starts with an intact ordering of perspectives and endeavours to establish operative theories explaining specified activity in dealing with complexity.

The schematic diagram below is a depiction of a complex nexus:

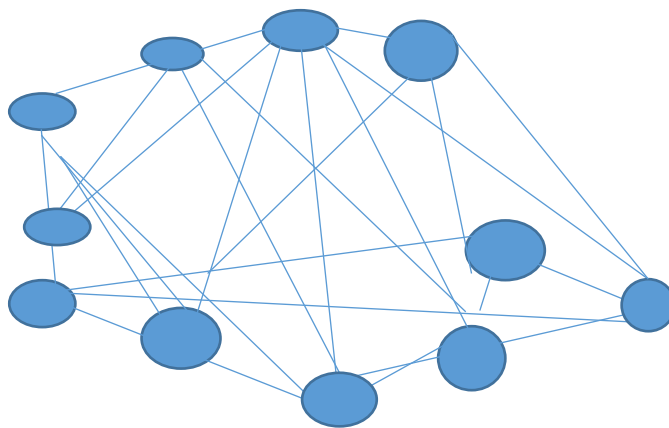


Figure 6. 2: A depiction of complex nexus random graph

Source: Zenil *et al.* 2018, p. 3

Ritual practice is like an algorithmic theory. The theory is measured in bits for any finite set, or step by step calculation in solving a problem (i.e., studying ritual practice in parts to arrive at the whole), and is only successful to the extent to which it compresses the compression. In the random graph above, nodes and links require more information to be specified, because there is no simple rule connecting the nodes (Mackay 2014, p. 8). Therefore, the perception of compression in the concept of dots on a blank sheet to treat each node separately is (needed to communicate a message) to simplify the complexity. According to Barnard, Cilliers & Wepener (2014, pp. 53-54), this means that the dots are interpreted as instances of liturgical ritual awaiting different levels of clarification.

According to Barnard, Cilliers & Wepener (2014, pp. 54-58), the concept of the dots on a blank sheet – refers to different angles of interpreting the ritual phenomenon that can also lead to other vistas of analysis. (One may start the research, e.g., from a preliminary understanding of rituals proceeding to several viewpoints to unravel the nature of the phenomenon of rituals). Through connecting the dots, either from the angles of various research rituals, other disciplines or just from different practical points of view, is to understand the whole/nexus. The ritual processes are verified through ritual elements of a particular ritual, leading to the ontological process of the rite, and the conception of the ceremonial ritual. The following is a schematic drawing of a blank sheet with dots splashed on the sheet to interpret character dots according to Barnard, Cilliers & Wepener (2014, p. 59-60):

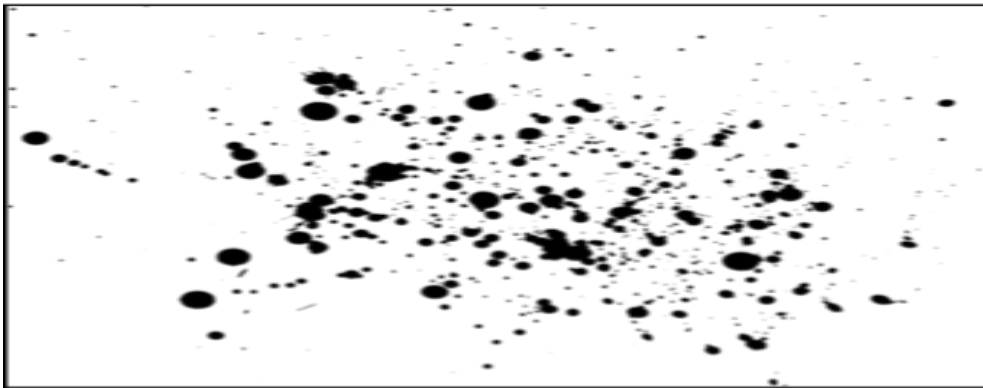


Figure 6. 3: Depicting the work of Barnard

Cilliers, and Wepener (2014, pp. 59-60)

6.6. Ritual healing practice in South Africa

Repeated examining of ritual episodes, through different vistas aids the researcher to perceive the object of scrutiny. For instance, the exploration of unconventional or unusual ritual healing practice has added to the ritual complexity. Ritual healing practice in South Africa has taken a posture of complexity to be unravelled.

The following schematic diagram is an illustration of orthodox and unorthodox healing ritual practices:

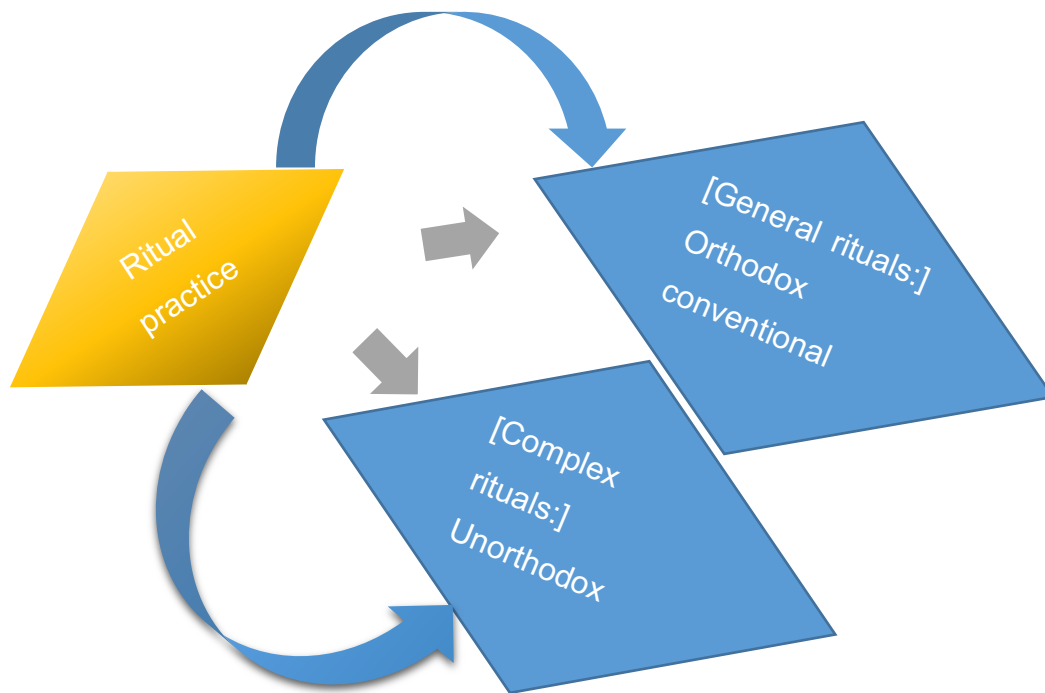


Figure 6. 4: An illustration of conventional and unconventional ritual practice

Ritual practice resembles two viewpoints

- Complex rituals are unorthodox and unconventional. They conform to what is not normal - or the (unknown), comprises of strange healing practices.
- General rituals are orthodox and conventional. They conform to the generally accepted or (known) ritual healing practices.

Therefore, healing is perceived through the 'eyes' of wholeness, inclusive of the environment. Thus, Christianity adopts the 'African worldview' in healing (Wepener 2014, pp. 14-15).

6.7. Media rituals

6.7.1. Digital religion: social shaping media

A new concept of digital religion has sprung up, indicating the advancement of digital media and the inclusive portrayal of religion, (Campbell 2013, p. 3) . In particular, Facebook has taken South African prophetic churches (and prophets) by storm. Campbell's term, 'broad notion,' includes covering a fuller scope of online religion. Campbell (2005, pp. 9-10) points to the distinctive nature of digital and non-digital religion that connects communities. Campbell (2005, pp. 9-10) explains how digitised religion is a spiritual means of

communication enabling religious experience. Digital media facilitates sacred space appropriate for religious use, an instrument advancing religion or religious practice and technology for affirming religious life. Religion has, thus, become individualised within a global picture, generating digitalised communities. Ministries cover a full area (of an audience) by extending to online spaces. According to Helland (2004, p. 30) online religion is appropriate. Therefore, the doctrine, and preaching that was once concentrated and controlled can now be openly challenged, asserting the opposite, or ignored through media that is viewed by a large number of people every day. The following dynamic model is the relationships between media production, interpretation, and the religious community.

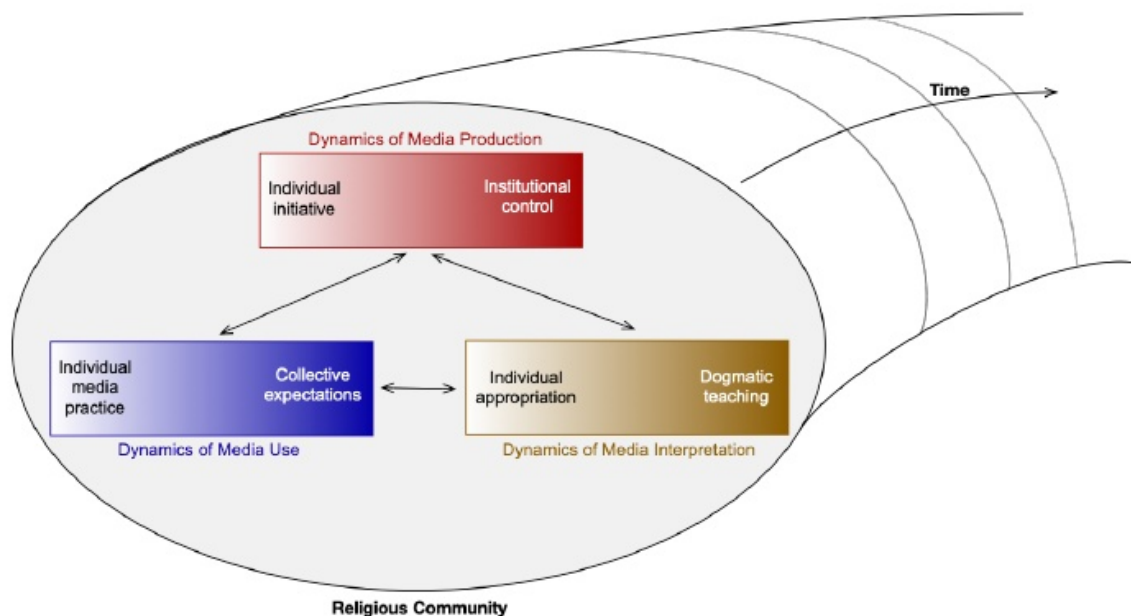


Figure 6. 5: The dynamics of religion, media, and community

Source: Rota, A. & Krüger, O, 2019, p. 12

According to Rota & Krüger (2019, p. 12), "religious community cannot be understood as something static, but be rather envisioned as a process of continuous (re)production:

- The first dynamic dimensions are dialectic relationships between media production, media interpretation, and media use that characterise a religious community.
- The relations between these three aspects can evolve.
- There is an integration between the second dynamic dimension and time.
- The virtual inevitability is of such diachronic evolution, and the model emphasises a third dynamic dimension inherent to each aspect (in itself), namely the interplay of individualistic and collectivistic modes of interaction.
- The relationship between these modes of interaction can – not necessarily – lead to tensions to the development, within a community, of various strategies designed to manage divergent needs, practices, and attitudes.”

6.7.2. Media rituals and liminality

Concerning the state of *communitas* proposed by Victor Turner, as rites of passage, Helland (2000, p. 2) concurs: “Because of its acts as a great leveller once people have gone online, participation forces the same form of liminality upon its users.” Helland means that a posting on social networks does not indicate the user’s social standing; neither is there any distinction in the treatment of different categories of people nor discrimination. It is evident that the digital age, is at a great rate, subsequently preceding a traditional religious locale. Couldry (2000, p. 41) writes, “between sacred and the profane: it cuts across everything in the social world; anything can be ‘in’ the media, through continual usage, is constructed as natural.” In Couldry’s view the distinction between sacred and secular media sometimes follows a route of indistinguishability. On Limen and the element of the transformation process McKenzie (2001, p. 94) writes:

Limen remain sites of passage and transformation, but these sites are now themselves in passage, their transformation becoming networked over many different borders: geopolitical, societal, institutional, paradigmatic, general... At the turn of the twenty-first century, the citationality of discourses and practices is passing across an electronic threshold, a digital limen. Words and gesture, statements and behaviours, symbolic systems, and living bodies are being recorded, archived, and recombined through multimedia communication networks. Liminal and liminoid genres are becoming cyber spatial, flighty, liminautic.

Liminoid genres are becoming cyber spatial. Myths (widely held fallacies and exaggerated conception of prophets) are taking media-space in South Africa today.

6.7.3. Media rituals and myths

This perspective suggests that media rituals are a social construct that communicate information about moral lessons that link common beliefs of the dominant ideology in society. There is an inherent fascination of the supernatural (myth) by contemporary society (in particular, young radical prophets in South Africa), and media is the best platform to display this notion. Present-day societies are necessitated by their significant developments to become more and more mythical (Laclau 1990, p. 67). Myths have always been tangled with the unreal. “Through myth, the underlying text of society is in a sense completed by the media’s imaginary plenitude” (Foucault 1981, p. 58). Deities and heroes are characters featured in myths. Similarly, it appears as if South African prophets are media icons, who display dramatic miracles viewed by many in digital media, in particular, Facebook.

“Symbolic power is a socially sanctioned power of constructing reality, and media rituals draw upon and, in turn, reinforce the assumed legitimacy of the media concentration of symbolic power” (Bourdieu 1991, p. 166). Symbolic interactionism, and metaphorically prophets are conveyed as online forces of power acknowledged in the media’s sphere, due to their suave demeanour, idealised by thousands of wannabes, in the community.

On media providing story forms that resonate with society’s culture, Alexander & Jacobs (1998, pp. 29-30) writes that:

Media operate as a cultural space where actors and events become typified into more general codes (e.g., sacred/ profane, pure/ impure/ democratic/ antidemocratic, citizen/ enemy) and more generic story forms which resonate with the society’s culture. As a result, the mass media ...provides the cultural environment from which collective identities and solidarities can be constructed.

Mass media contributes to the social domain from which identicalness (identity) and unanimity are formed.

6.7.4. Media rituals and Facebook

Facebook images are idealised, imaginatively desirable, but not likely a reality, thus the picture is not real; it only exists in mind. “Facebook images are ideal, leaving little space for

inspiration towards recognition, performance, and Narcissism, which is not unfamiliar for the Facebook community” (cf. Carpenter 2012, p. 483). Facebook in present-day churches in South Africa may, at times, reflect other identities (false identities), and the display of symbolic or code names, (in particular code names of prophets), e.g., advocate, detective, or professor, amongst others, to impress. These code names signify their role or type of service they offer. On media rituals, Lundby (2013, p. 225) states that the structures of mediation should be viewed as an essential part of the meaning of religion. In present-day churches, Facebook posts show how they conduct their healing.

Furthermore, online religion informs and allows connectivity (Young, 2004, p. 93). Occasionally, the audience may be encouraged to take part in prayers that are projected on the programme. Also, social networks are evidence that social entanglement mechanisms shape present-day worship (Lim & Putnam 2010, p. 914). Social media, in particular, Facebook, is used as a tool to reach more people. Facebook also functions as a link to religion and is presented as the largest and most popular social media site employed by prophetic churches (and prophets) in South Africa today. Young people have exceptional expertise in manipulating digital media devices. Digital media appeals to young people; hence, the new individual forms of religiosity. In this view, Luckmann (1993, p. 140) says, “Striving towards autonomy is one of the characteristics of a modern human.” Humankind has always strived for independence or a condition of self-governance. In this case, virtual space offers the notion of freedom of speech and freedom of choice, in the absence of subjection.

According to Hackett & Soares (2015, p. 2), “Facebook reinforces traditional hierarchies and positions of authorities, as well as strengthen and expand their communities and to gain public recognition for their organizations.” This statement refers to the Facebook posts with elements of prayer posted by prophets. Virtual space does not exist physically; it is accessed over the network. Spiritual space or ritual space (metaphorically is not static nor physical) is considered as abstract. It relates to the human spirit; therefore, space in religious terms could mean a (spiritual) place where one feels a strong sense of belonging.

6.8. Ritual space

Ritual space is perceived as an ideal location of meaning. Space is more abstract (theoretical) than the place. According to Smith (1987, p. 28), what begins as the same

space becomes a place as we get to know it better and provide it with value. If we think of space as that which allows movement, then the place is a pause; each pause in motion makes it possible for a locale to be changed into place.

Space can refer to an individual's intimate and meaningful worship that becomes the locale of value and worth. Abstractly, an individual may experience a spiritual expanse within the collective. "The catalyst that converts any physical location – any environment if you will into a place is the process of experiencing deeply. A place is a piece of the whole environment that has been claimed by feelings" (Smith 1987, p.30). Religious places are characterised by a dedicated space (sacred space), for veneration, connected with God.

6.8.1. The sacred and the profane

Concerning the theory of the sacred and the profane, Tuan (1977, p. 235), has this theory of the relationship between the sacred (space) and the horizon (place).

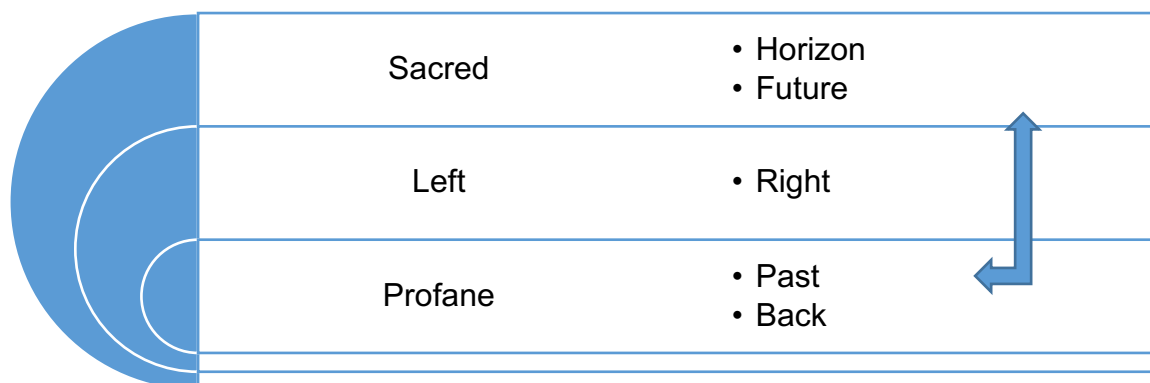


Figure 6. 6: Sacred and profane

Source: Tuan 1977, p. 235

The future is ahead and up; the past is profane:

The illustration demonstrates the recognition of an isomorphism between 'sacred place' and 'eternal life' (the horizon). Furthermore, humankind has continuously sought to understand the 'Divine' and the world beyond it. The ultimate prize in Christianity is the fantasised places

of heaven (the sacred place) - and something to be worshipped (God), something to be achieved, therefore eternal life (the horizon). The past represents the (previous life, before salvation) that is described as 'profane.'

6.8.2. Celebrations

According to Ferreira 2014, (pp. 70-71), celebrations are frequently associated with anniversaries – birth dates, and weddings. African communities hold the following celebrations:

- Baby celebrations: Three months after the baby's birth, a party is held – to signify the baby's first time out of the house.
- Lobola event: The dowry, is presented to the woman's family as a form of appreciation – in the form of money or livestock.
- Thanksgiving party: Acknowledging and appreciating one's parents.

Adherents attend worship services on Sunday, lasting longer than three hours or more; the service. According to Kouega (2016, pp. 125-127), the programme consists mainly of the following:

- prolonged singing, music, and clapping,
- opening prayers (praise and worship),
- tithes and offering,
- followed by healing reports, reports from prayer and fasting, and salvation testimonies,
- then a sermon; Bible reading and prophecies,
- healing service: Alter call; prayer for healing, and deliverance,
- announcement,
- closing prayer and final blessing.

6.8.3. Calendar cycles

The symbolic reliving of life of Jesus:

- Christmas: divine service: commemorating Jesus' birth or celebrating Jesus' birth,

- Good Friday: commemorating Jesus' crucifixion,
- Easter Sunday: commemorating Jesus' resurrection.

6.8.4. Ritual Ceremonies

Rituals are actions performed according to standards acceptable to a religious rite suitable to a particular community and religious beliefs. Ceremonies are rituals performed on a special occasion. According to Markey (2017, p. 1-3,) ceremonies involve the following:

- Holy Communion is a symbolic remembrance of the sacrifice of Jesus Christ.
- Water baptism (complete immersion) and Spirit baptism (filled by the Holy Spirit).
- Baby dedication (Christening) infant – 1 year.
- Anointing oil is a symbolic representation of the work of the Holy Spirit.

Since ceremonies belong to special occasions, other rituals belong to daily activities that seem normal or natural, but some may be conceived as automated activities that are considered as ritualised behaviour.

6.9. Ritualisation

The degree of ritualisation of consumption experience is likened to a model of routinised behaviour. According to Smith (1977, p. 328), "In the course of ritualisation, particular changes occur in the original behaviour pattern so that the resulting signal becomes prominent, distinctive, and unambiguous, and consequently is not confused with its precursor." The ritual behavior is patterned according to the information it conveys. Collective rituals exist because certain ritual actions are regarded as culturally suitable for transmission or passing on for the sake of continuation and belonging.

6.10. Collective rituals

Rituals affirm or give a sense of value to the individual within a given societal group. "Through successful participation in collective rituals, individuals reaffirm their relationship to others in the group performing the ritual, to associated institutions, and shared beliefs" (Etzioni 2004, p. 11). The following ritual concepts will be explicated:

- rituals of communication,

- social cohesion,
- social collaboration.

6.10.1. Rituals of communication

Rituals involve conveying or providing factual details to participants. Rappaport (1968, p. 192) says that ritual symbols are the special conventional display, which distinguishes ritual from other modes of communication. Ritual communication is acted by participants within specific ritual actions, and symbolic meaning significant to participants. According to Markovic (1984, pp. 172-173), “meaning can also be borne by symbols, pictures, musical tones, movement of dance or ritual, all signs whether artificial or natural can convey meaning and mean something.” Ritual, drama, and performance affect communities and create notable transformative experiences. According to Albrecht (1999, p. 23),

Ritual by nature dramatizes and affects the life of people. Spirituality is a lived experience that actualises a fundamental dimension of the human being, the spiritual dimension, namely: The whole of one’s spiritual experience; One’s beliefs; Convictions; One’s patterns of thought; One’s emotions and behaviour in respect to what is ultimate, or God.

Events are essential units for emotional motivations, events like birthdays, weddings, graduation ceremonies, as well as funerals, have different communicative effects (Saville-Troike 2008, p.23). The concept of communicating a ritual message in a church or any ritual event indicates that executors and recipients are in one accord. Pederson & Rytter (2018, p. 2609), explain that the ritual is in dialogue with those who take part and also the spectators as well as those nearby. The ritual message is communicated to participants and those worthy of attention, even if performers err, or a ritual becomes fallible. In this case, togetherness is inculcated through ritual actions for the fact of forming a united whole or (group cohesion).

6.10.2. Rituals of social cohesion

Social interaction is further motivated by virtue of togetherness, by a group focused on achieving a particular aim or result. For instance, a church group, with a desire to attain their objective - to be rescued in consequence of the status of various perniciousness. According to Durkheim (1995, p.p. 212-213), “social interactions become much more frequent and

active, individuals seek one another out and come together more.” Societal groups, need each other to engage in meaningful ritual practice; the ritual process influences the collective. Due to circumstances society finds itself in, individuals need support groups to help comprehend complex situations. Individuals join pertinent prayer groups, resulting in essential group cohesion and for the sake of extrication from undesirables. According to Durkheim (1995, pp. 212-213,) “Individuals seek one another out and come together more.” The following illustrative figure further explicate the Durkheim theory of co-presence and belonging:

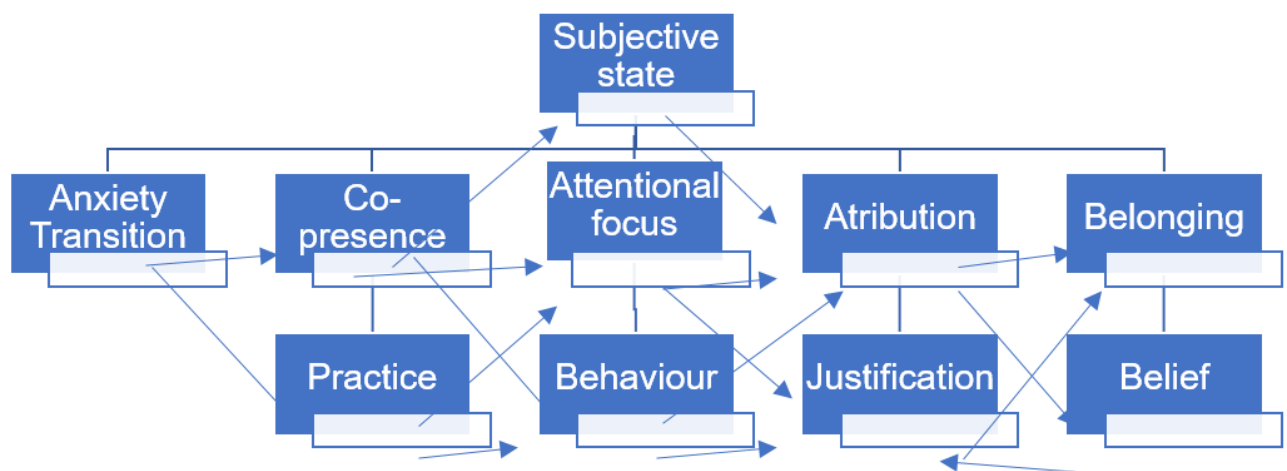


Figure 6. 7: The direct effect of co-presence and belief

Source: Durkheim 1995, pp. 212-213

The emphasis is (to commune) the coming together, of the church community, for worship and spiritual activity. Central to their worship (behavioural-type) is healing, deliverance, breakthrough, etc. “Rituals are indications of one's behavioural – type, facilitating affiliative and cooperative interactions” (Boyd & Richerson 2003, p. 127). Collaboration is similar to cooperation; it is a process whereby individuals with similar intentions come together, aimed at realising desired outcomes beneficial to individuals or social groups.

6.10.3. Rituals of social collaboration

Social collaborations are ritual processes concerning individuals and the ritual context. In this sense, Frankl (1966, p. 97) argues, “It is, therefore, a severe and grave

misunderstanding of man to deal with him as a closed system.” Religious beliefs are essential to the nature of group rituals. According to Rappaport (1999, p. 3), “Religious beliefs are part of many group rituals, yet ritual action is the ground from which religious conceptions spring from.” Concerning the strengthening of group cohesion, Rappaport (1999, p. 26), argues that “rituals are the social act basic to humanity.” Leach (1976, p. 35), says, “In all human societies, the great majority of ceremonial occasions are ‘rites of transition’.” Rituals of healing are a transformational-processes. This understanding is significant to the phenomenon of the study, namely, unusual healing practice. The next section will delve in ritual healing practice approaches from possible avenues, namely religion, science, psychology, anthropology and sociology.

6.11. Transition rituals: rites of passage and healing rituals

Transition rituals mark the passing from one condition to another, communicating a change of status to another. From here to there (a point of no return), proceeding through liminality into a new status. In trying to understand the phenomena of unusual healing, ritual comprehension of transitional-processes are necessary, the following concepts will be expounded upon:

1. Rites of passage

2. Healing rituals:

- Holistic health; and healing;
- Religion ritual and sickness;
- The concept of a miracle: signs and wonders;
- Miracles and the contravention of natural laws;
- Symbolic acts and healing.

3. Psychological and scientific explanations:

- psychology and religion/faith
- placebo effect
- parapsychology
- metaphysics.

6.11.1. Rites of passage

The rite of passage in this chapter will refer to transformation; from sickness and disease to restored health. For example: Figure 6.9 an illustration of van Gennepe's rite of passage:

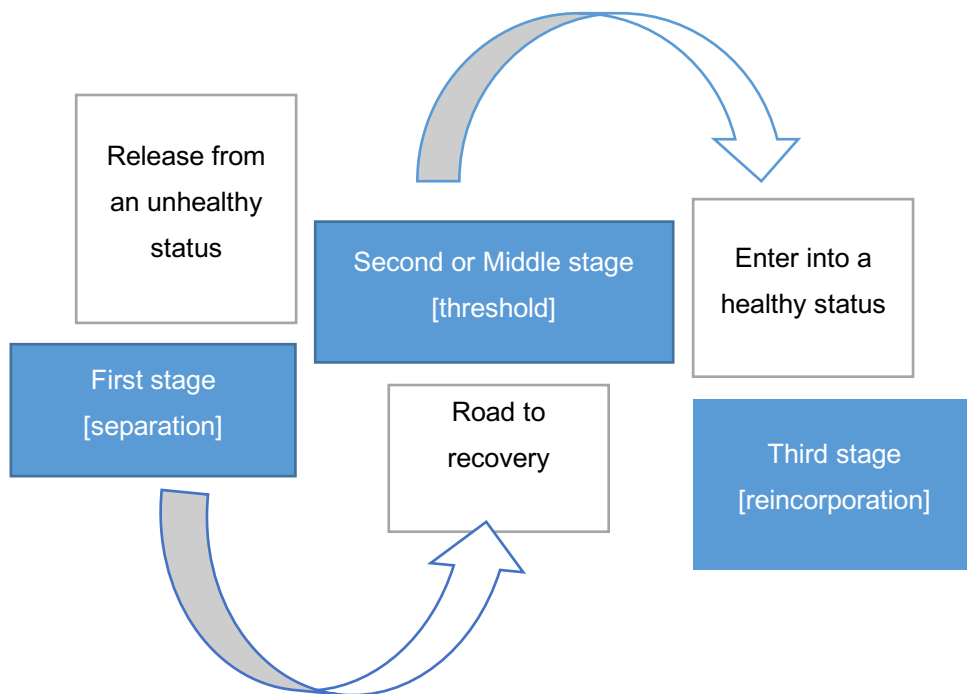


Figure 6. 8: An illustration of Rite of passage

Source van Gennepe (1960, p.3).

This transition state involves three stages, e.g.:

- The first stage (phase) could be: being sick or have an unhealthy status;
- The second stage (phase) or middle stage could be: would be the road to recovery;
- The third stage (phase) could be: is in sound health or healthy status.

In this view transitional ceremonies would be: different rites and rituals performed in church, amongst others: laying on of hands, anointing with oil, anointing with water, saturated worship, decrees and declarations on (scriptural - directives), fasting and deliverances. Rites are transitional ceremonies performed by a particular group of people (van Gennepe 1960, p. 3). Rituals are multidimensional, rite of passage may occur in a healing process; in the

perception that healing is transformational. An individual is moved from one status to another. Healing rituals are significant in this chapter because the research needs to unravel the phenomenon of unusual healing ritual practice in South Africa. Healing rituals will address every level of recovery concerning the whole person, i.e., spiritual, emotional, psychological, physical, and environmental.

6.11.2. Healing rituals

Healing operations are comparative to ritualization. According to Kwan (2007, p. 744), “healing activities, relative to the religious dimension are obviously ritualised, e.g. prayer, meditation, Christian charismatic healing anointing with oil, laying on of hands, being slain in the Spirit, etc. and that, ritual has the capacity to trigger the process of self-healing.” Healing ritual activities involve the following: prayer, in particular laying on of hands, employing anointed oil or anointed water, deliverances, prayer declarations, and decrees; fasting coupled with prayer; night vigils; amongst others. Besides prior symbolic items mentioned, South African prophets also employ the following amongst others: pesticides to spray afflicted areas of adherents, ingestion of car liquid lubricants, ingestion of antiseptics, and bleach.

6.11.2.1. Religion, ritual, and sickness

Concerning religion, ritual, and modern medicine, Levinson (2004, pp. 168-169) has this to say:

One reason why religion and ritual play a major role in the treatment of diseases is the widespread belief that at least some diseases are caused by supernatural forces. Societies most illness to supernatural forces, including witchcraft and sorcery. Supernatural explanations of disease across cultures fall into three categories: mystical, animistic, and magical. In the contemporary world, the use of religious belief and ritual to heal is often labelled ‘spiritual healing’ or ‘faith healing’. Modern medicine recognizes that physical well-being, emotional well-being, and spiritual well-being are interrelated and that the use of ritual to enhance spiritual health may therefore also benefit emotional and physical health.

The narrative of health among African communities is interpreted as causative due to, including amongst others: supernatural forces, black magic or the use of spells, and occultic activities that require spiritual or supernatural intervention. Since “disease is a deviation

from a biological norm” (Boyd 2000, pp. 9-10), the demand for reprobates, i.e. divine healing or medical intervention, is a necessary requisite. Other maladies demand a higher degree of God’s interposition (i.e. the miraculous). This view is important to understand the phenomenon of unusual healing ritual practice by prophetic churches.

6.11.2.2. The concept of a miracle: signs and wonders

Healing - miracles have been in existence throughout history. The word miracle (wonder), connotes to the uncommonness of the occurrence, even the state of awed admiration or respect on a given experience. According to Tillich (1963, p. 111),

Miracles ...are events which have a particular significance to the person who experiences them. That is the one fundamental statement. Miracles are subjective-objective, subject-object-oriented, always in correlation, and never comprehensible in any other way. Not merely subjective, they are not merely objective, either.

At the most, people who pursue the supernatural, due to blind-faith (a distinctive feature highly esteemed supernaturally), are taken advantage of. The miraculous event transcends or goes beyond the limits of nature or the usual. The miraculous may even demonstrate a spiritual quality that suggests the presence of a divine nature or divine power of God. Miraculous events, sometimes function as provisional instruments for essential needs such as: provision, comfort, and healing. The following schematic drawing is an illustration of miraculous healing process.

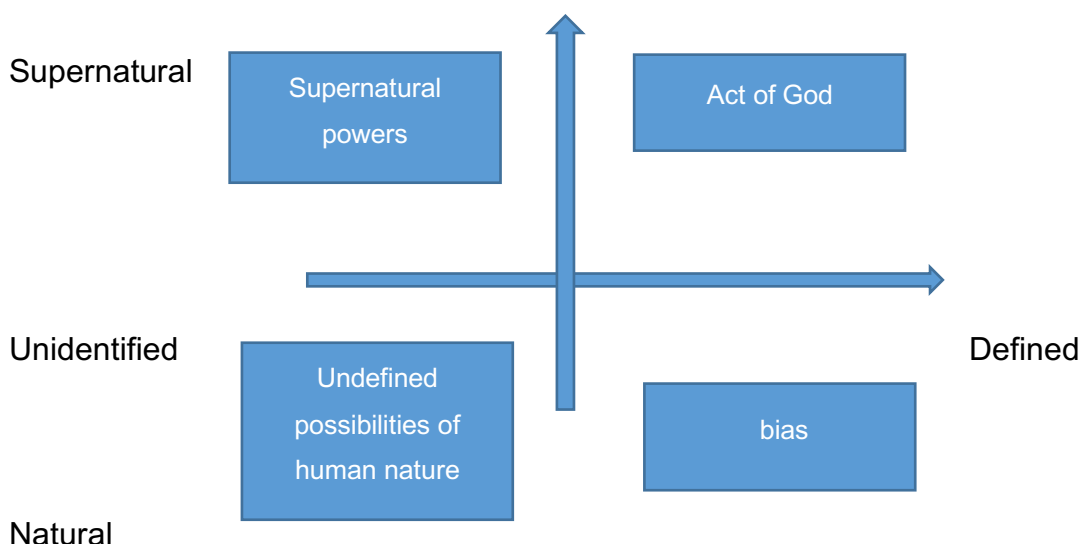


Figure 6. 9: An illustration of a miraculous healing process

Pawlikowski *et al.* (2015, p. 1116)

The miraculous healing process

- Miracles are supernatural
- Miracles are acts of God
- Through supernatural powers

Natural healings are difficult to define, specify, or identify.

6.11.2.3. Miracles and the contravention of natural laws

Miracles are a contravention of natural laws by a higher power, and a consequence of an override of natural laws by divine laws. Miracles occur beyond the margins of natural laws of reality, which denies all human logic. Larmer (1988, p. 6) says that miracles are “beyond the ability of nature to produce.”

6.11.2.4. Symbolic acts and healing

Every culture transfers or passes down a model form or discernible sequence of meaning embodied in designated cultural symbolic forms (that are socially recognisable and comprise of meaningful communicative messages). McGuire (1987, p. 369) recognises that nonverbal symbols affect healing power:

Christian healing groups and movements use language and other symbolism; This belief in the power of ritual language may be central to understanding one of the ways healing was accomplished, coupled with their emphasis upon extensive use of symbolism. Nonverbal symbols also can embody or represent power - in this case, the power to heal. Christian healing groups drew from rich traditions of symbolism: Bibles, candles, blessed oil, salt, water, crosses, religious pictures, etc.

The belief lies in the power of the subjective symbolic meaning of the ritual, and its ability to invoke a mystical realm, that transcends its domain, presenting the claim of multiple realities. According to Turner (1969, p. 52), “a key characteristic of symbols is their multivocality, i.e., their capacity to represent many different meanings, indeed many different levels of meaning, at the same time. Thus ritual symbols can link the order of one sphere of reality with that of multiple other spheres.” Historically rituals usually, promote symbolic meaning comprehensible to culture and achievable in religious beliefs. Wallace (1966, p. 102) says, that, ritual actions are instruments that achieve successfully what religion sets out to do.

Certain actions are attributable to specific rituals and symbols, within the perimeters of the ritual language. "Ritual embodies language as much as they embody symbols" (Walker 1998, p. 296). Rituals also possess symbolic language as a distinctive feature that carries a faculty of codification and change. McGuire (1987, p. 366) writes that "Another key factor in healing illness is the ability of language to produce a sense of order, for example, by naming the illness and its causes. Some of the ritual symbols used in alternative healing produce a sense of order and transformation." The power lies in specificity or narrowing down the range of the immaterial substance (by identifying it, naming it and expelling it). The next section concerns additional delving of ritual healing practice through the eyes of psychology and scientific explanation.

6.11.3. Psychological and scientific explanations

6.11.3.1. Psychology and religion/faith

According to McNamara (2009, p. 11), "Religious experiences are realized via the brain in human beings, and knowing how the brain mediates religious experiences can tell us something about potential functions of religious experiences." The perception of the religious encounter is a precursor to the consequence or sequela. Beliefs are abstract, and they possess a cognitive character, a consciousness - of being aware of a higher power - a necessary feature in religion. In the process of perception, psychological functions govern intra-mental and extramental factors significant to mind and body interactions within the affective functioning of healing. According to Levin (2009, p. 90),

Psychological theory and research from the mainstream of the field suggest several avenues of connection, and explanation, for an observed healing effect of faith. It is attributed to what has been termed behavioural/conative, interpersonal, cognitive, affective, and psychophysiological mechanisms. That faith can be a powerful force mobilized in the service of physical healing is not an unreasonable conclusion.

Therefore, faith is a powerful force comparable to analgesia - a beneficial effect operable in a placebo effect.

6.11.3.2. The placebo effect

"*Placebo* in Latin means 'I shall please' to give hope or to trigger some innate healing capacity within the patient" (Bingel *et al.* 2011, p. 1). The word 'placebo' has been used

extensively in the medical field. A placebo effect in a ritual healing procedure may signify that a psychological effect, precedes a physiological transformation. Verbal scriptural utterances, testimonies, euphoric-atmosphere, loud music, and a hyped-up prophet, eager to pray for the masses is plausible analgesia, a contrast to an emotionless (unenthusiastic and improbable atmosphere) void of inducing expectations. Placebo responses are illustrated below:

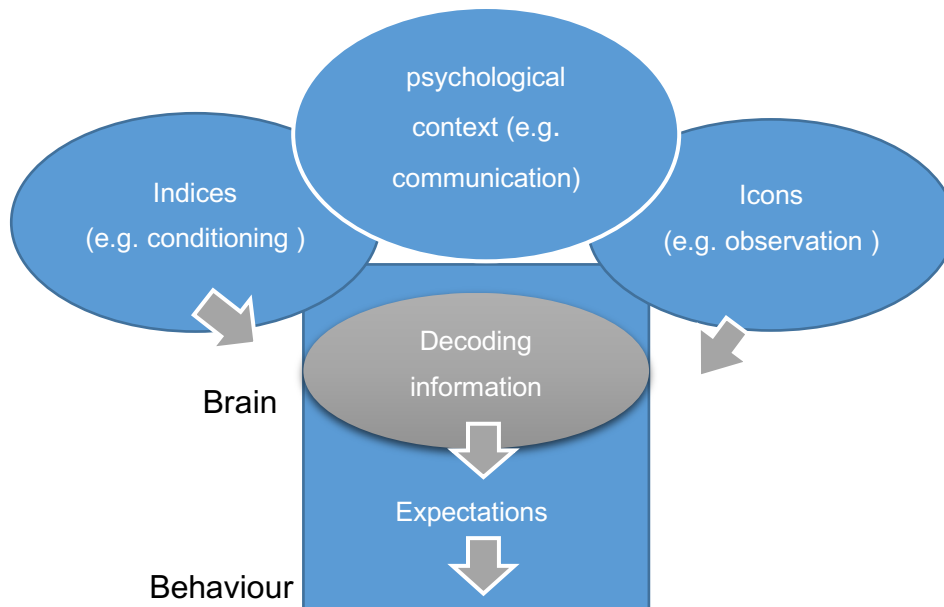


Figure 6. 10: Illustrating perspectives on placebo responses by

Colloca & Miller 2011, p. 5

“These factors are crucial because the individual’s experience of having their expectations and beliefs stimulated while being the focus of a healing ritual may excite their capacity to self-heal” (Kwan 2007, p. 745). The expectations and the belief that people have, in healers and remedies are crucial placebos that trigger therapeutic responses. Humphrey (2002, p. 274) states, “that when it is known that the threat posed by the cause of the pain is soon to be lifted, there is much less need to feel the pain as a precautionary defence.” A syndrome is a metaphoric precautionary defence whereby the threat posed by pain is lifted the moment an individual sets foot in the doctor’s consulting room.

6.11.3.3. Parapsychology

According to Thalbourne & Storm (2001, p. 2), “paranormal phenomena are so ubiquitous despite a lack of scientific evidence, to support them.” There is limited empirical evidence to

support this strange scientific happening. Supernatural influences such as magic, paranormal, and supernatural beliefs are regarded as irrational beliefs that are consequential to a higher degree in extreme misuse of power. Many people take a spiritual ontology or worldview very seriously, they believe in devils, magic, supernatural (paranormal), and often with indistinguishable boundaries between the real and the unreal. Irwin (1990, p. 195) says that believers, "...had more difficulty than others in distinguishing real from imagined events." The perception is that there is a mutual relationship between a paranormal belief and fantasy proneness. Besides psychological beliefs in rituals of healing, there is also a scientific outlook, namely metaphysics.

6.11.3.4. Metaphysics

"The word metaphysics is from a Greek words *meta*, meaning - beyond, upon or after; *physiká* means physics. The prefix *meta* means after indicates that these works come after or from physics" (Masih 2016, p. 1). The metaphysical group's understanding of healing was almost mentalistic, so they tended to concentrate on the use of words and imagery. According to McGuire (1987, p. 366), "metaphysical groups, deemphasised use of concrete symbolism." Physical objects were recommended only to aid visualisation for people who had difficulty producing imagery unaided. An image is created as a visual representation of a situation (3D visualisation whereby you see yourself healed) to help in the healing process or in achieving one's dream. This visualisation is based on the saying that: if you can see it, in your 'mental picture' you can have it. In this view healing originates in the mind (an abstract condition), and extends to the physical body (a concrete condition). Making use of visualisation exercises or guided memories can aid in healing the subconscious. McGuire (1987, p. 371) writes,

It helped in distinguishing between received images (such as dreams and visions) and created images (such as guided visualizations or conscious use of imagination). Visualization (such as healing guided memories) of a past situation that is evocative of problems that need healing. E.g., visualizing Jesus walking through these experiences, enabling to break down barriers between the problem and the individual.

When in correlation with a higher power, and the power is transferred into a clear oral language (for example, 'be healed, in Jesus' name), the discharged energy or sound vibration affects the yielding of results. This section was an attempt to inquire and explore,

ritual healing practice, by taking various routes to arrive at an understanding of unusual healing practice in South Africa.

6.12. Ritual failure

Ritual failure is imputed to the inability to transmit the ritual correctly, therefore, precipitating adverse outcomes. A technical failure in ritual performance renders the ritual unusual, unconventional, or fallible, e.g., the performance of a ritual that is unknown to the community. According to Hüsken & Schieffelin (2007, pp. 8-9),

Applying the term failure, to any event or happenings that alter the course of a ritual or make it look particularly unusual or unconventional, regards to the causes of mishap in practical contingencies. The ritual performers and their constituencies usually have their corresponding to success and failure, and the appropriate cultural domains to which they may be applied.

Furthermore, “some ritual failures might also interestingly be interpreted as innovative moves within the ritual performance” (Hüsken & Schieffelin 2007, p. 11). Innovation is critical to continual learning, apart from inappropriate processes that render the ritual non-functional. According to Hüsken & Schieffelin (2007, p. 16),

Ritual failure has been used to describe many different kinds of assertions, technical errors, irregularities, mishaps, internal competitiveness, and oppositional criticism in rituals (with very few unusualnesses) that seem to be completed without losing their practicalness, power or plausibility.

Based on ritual failure, defective ritual actions may lead to cultural ritual alterations. According to Bell (1992, p. 196), “Rituals themselves are the very production and negotiation of power relation.” Rituals are a series of actions that effect cultural renewal.

A further ritual failure may be due to a blunder, individuals or group perpetrators, bypassing valid biblical counsel, or contravening necessary traditional ritual procedures. According to Kwan (2007, p. 747), ritual depends more on how it is performed than the meaning of how participants understand it. However, the performance approach to ritual is more than that; it gives insight into why ritual participants still adhere to the healing ritual that fails them

repeatedly. This view gives credence to less error-free ritual performance. Others protect their viewpoint even if there is an indication for incorrect judgement.

When charges are brought against present-day prophets about mistreating their congregation, followers protest against the charges. Failed prophecies that have not achieved their aim are harmful to religious movements, from this view. Stark (1996, p.137) asserts, "Although prophecies may arouse a great deal of excitement and attract many new followers beforehand, the subsequent disappointment usually is more than offsets these benefits." Failed prophecies may interfere or dissipate a belief system to the point of dispersing a group.

6.13. Chapter summary

The researcher started with a preliminary understanding of the ritual practice → viewpoint A → viewpoint B → viewpoint C → viewpoint D → deeper understanding → and reflection. The process was repeated for further knowledge to the point of employing other disciplines and theories for the interpretation of rituals. Below is a schematic drawing of the spiral indicating several viewpoints employed by the researcher in the unravelling of the ritual practice phenomenon.

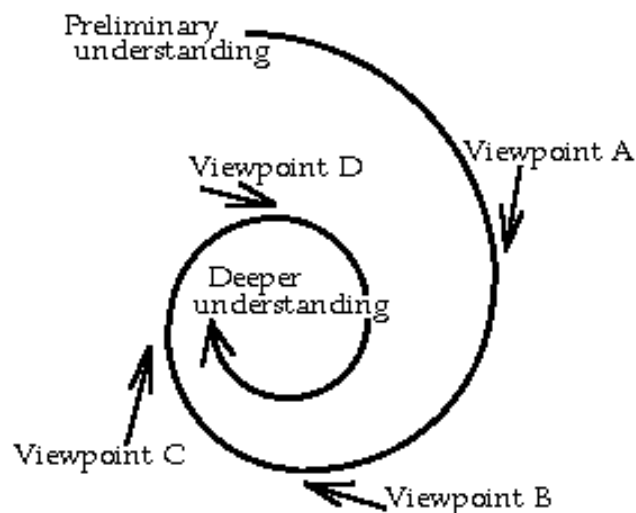


Figure 6. 11: The spiral approach with several viewpoints

Source: <http://www2.uiah.fi/projects/metodi> (2007)

To aid us in understanding the phenomenon of unusual miracles, the study has approached the phenomena from different perspectives employing theories, from psychology, science,

religion, anthropology, and sociological perspective. The framework was to understand the parts that contribute to the whole, by understanding how each part interacts with all the others to emerge into a new entity, thus having a more comprehensive and complete understanding of the whole.

Chapter 7

African worldview

7.1. Introduction

The main objective of this chapter is to examine the African worldview according to social behaviour and belief systems, since culture posits itself as a composite of oddities. In discussing African worldview, we are cognizant of the fact that African societies virtually possess indistinguishable perspectives or interpretation of life. This chapter endeavours to unravel the African worldview according to all its elements and to understand the underlying factors (to establish the mind-set) concerning the phenomenon of unusual healing. This chapter will focus on the following concepts of African worldview: cosmological; ontological; and all conceptually necessary elements. The following conceptual issues will be delineated: existential issues, moral values and their effect of actions, perception on individuals and groups and the meaning they provide in life, as well as, established systems: traditions, rituals, and ideals on life.

7.2 General assumptions of worldview

A worldview is based on presumptuous concepts that are philosophical truths or untruths that are held in people's belief systems in a cognizant or incognizant manner. "A worldview is a set of presuppositions (assumptions, which may be true, partially true or entirely false) which we hold (consciously or subconsciously, consistently or inconsistently) about the basic makeup of the world" (Sire 1997, p. 16; Miller 2001, p. 38). A worldview provides a foundation for behaviour, aspirations, and assumptions that influence people's meaning of existence. A worldview is an underlying set of ideas that enables people to cope with life in a given culture (Kraft 1999, pp. 385-387). The anthropologist Paul Hiebert (1997, p. 85) gives three sets of assumptions involved in his construction process:

- Essential assumptions: These provide fundamental thought-process people use to make reality clear to them.
- Affective assumptions: Affective basic assumptions that influence lifestyle: aesthetic, food, music, and architecture.
- Evaluative assumptions: These provide moral code people use to form an opinion of right and wrong.

7.3. Sub-Saharan worldviews

The worldview of sub-Saharan Africa is characterized by cohesiveness, a unique aspect that exists throughout the continent - a collective or common attribute that forms a united whole. Gehman (2005, p. 24) substantiate this when he writes: "All African peoples are united on the big picture - the individual expressions may be different, but a general similarity prevails throughout the continent, so that we may speak of African Traditional Religion." The traditional African worldview is deeply entrenched within the lives of many African people, regardless of their geographical location.

7.4 Metaphysics

7.4.1. African Metaphysics

The etymological combination, meta - physica, means 'after physics,' or 'beyond nature.' Metaphysics is portrayed as an act of transcendence, an act of going outside the range of things in order to uphold things (Unah 2006, p. 2-3). The reality commands the comprehension of the universe in an abstract level of perception. It is the principles of going (outside the parameters of the known) over and above the usual activities in the universe. The metaphysician tries to find out fundamental truths of the reality that controls the world to form a description of it (Unah, 2004, p. 10).

African metaphysics searches for the ultimate cosmic principle that provides comprehension of their lived experiences, influenced by higher forces. "This worldview of the supernatural led to the idea that some higher forces control human relations and existence" (Essien 2005, p. 36). Understanding reality had always been the quest of humanity. In order to understand human existence, religion was used to interpret the natural world and its operations in order to understand it and to make humankind feel at ease (Essien 2005, p. 36).

7.4.2. The scientific dimension

Although metaphysics is viewed as a science, Africans view it as magic that is rooted in the supernatural. Offiong (1991, p. 33) defines magic as a typical hyper-tool utilised by man to successfully carry out devious missions with the help of supernatural forces for his gain. The African reality has always had a conceptual abstraction. Moreover, metaphysics can be subject to a ritual failure, whereby elements of reversal occur. Africans are predisposed to the following scientific activities: 1). the preservation of water and food, in clay pots; 2).

sourcing natural remedies to heal; 3). making available steam baths from hot stones (dangerous of course and yet practical); 4). And sourcing bath soaps, shampoos, and toothpaste from plants.

7.4.3. Metempsychosis

Lastly, the concept of transmigration at death is believed by particular individuals or groups. They believe that transmigration may occur between the same or different species, i.e. (between humans or between humans and animals). Hence, in some regions, they worship individual animals, birds, or reptiles. The concept of metempsychosis (transmigration of the soul) demonstrates the deep-rooted (African) traditional worldview.

7.4.4. Cosmology and Ontology

7.4.4.1. Cosmology

The word cosmology – κοσμολογία is a Greek word. Κόσμος – kosmos, means ‘universe’ or ‘world’ referring to the nature and structure of the universe; and λογία -logia means ‘study’ or ‘science’. Put together cosmology (κοσμολογία) means the science of the universe or the study and understanding of existence in its totality, encompassing the infinite and eternal, and the origins and evolution of the cosmos, galaxies, stars, planets, earth, life, humankind (Schild 2010, p. 1; Reese 1980, p. 108). The interconnectedness of things maintains that humankind is a part of the (whole) universe. According to Campion (2012, p. 10), “cosmology deals with how human beings locate themselves concerning the cosmos, seen as the totality of everything.” Nwala (1985, p. 7) defines the term cosmology as, “the framework of concepts and relations which man erects in satisfaction of some emotional or intellectual drive, to bring descriptive order into the world as a whole, including himself as one of its elements.” Therefore, according to African worldview, the whole universe is interconnected; hence, the term (communal), the universe is a community or joint participation for all.

The universe encompasses the whole existence as an act of God, and cosmology is the origin of the universe. According to Reese (1980, p. 108),

traditionally, cosmology is considered a branch of metaphysics which concerns itself with questions of the origin and structure of the universe, its creation or everlastingness, vitalism, or mechanism, the nature of law, space, time, and causality. The task of cosmology can perhaps be distinguished from that of ontology by a difference of level, the cosmological analysis seeking to discover what is true for this world, and the ontological analysis attempting to discover relations and distinctions which would be valid in any world.

The African cosmology is viewed according to patterned structures of authority. According to Tempels (1952, pp. 44-69) African cosmology is ordered in the form of hierarchical structural forces that have varying degrees necessary for the dynamicity of the African concept of existence. Tempels (1952, pp. 44-69), further indicates that God is the Supreme Being that transcends all forces and is the source of all vital power that occupies the highest position. Humankind occupies the central position, and the other living organisms occupy the lower ranks. Kanu (2013, p. 534), says that the African cosmos is like an isosceles triangle with God at the apex. The ancestors are at the base of the triangle, with man at the centre, and the animals below.

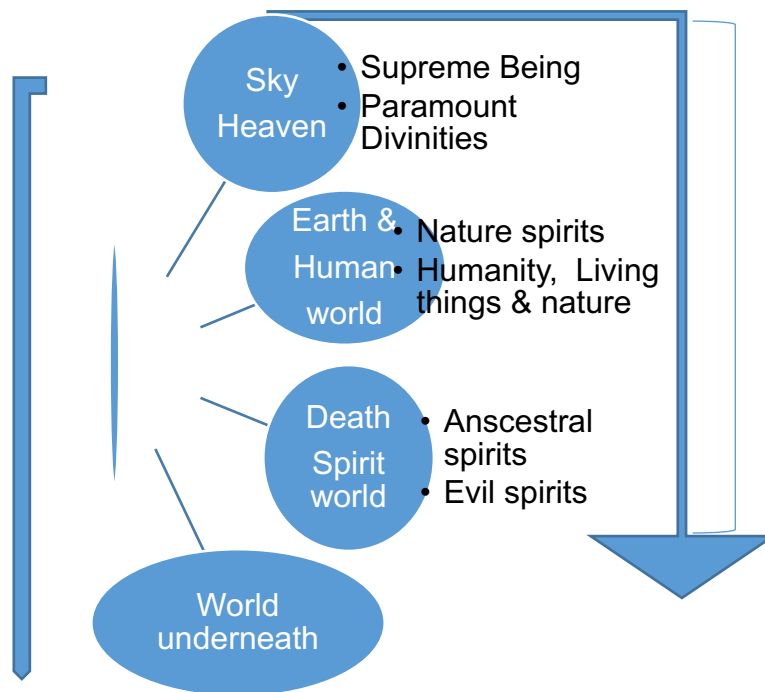


Figure 7. 1: A depiction of the structure of the African view of the universe

An African worldview has always regarded God as the Supreme Being. The Supreme Being is the highest-ranking-ancestor, higher above the forefathers venerated in traditional African society. There is a widespread belief in this Supreme Being, who is recognized as true and real by the African majority (O'Donovan 1996, p. 41). John Mbiti's cosmology (1969, p. 16) situates spirits between God and humans with animals and plants at the bottom, although, in the physical world, humanity dominates, and inhabits the central position according to

God's creation. Mbiti (1969, p. 74), "The spirits (humans and non-humans), in general, belong to the ontological mode of existence."

7.4.4.2. Ontology

Ontology comes from the Greek word *ontos* (being) and *logos* (knowledge), meaning the 'knowledge of being'. Ontology refers to the division of philosophy directed at the study of existence. Mbiti (1970, p. 114) says that African ontology is anthropocentric; regards humankind as the central element of existence. African people recognise this central position of man. God is the explanation of man's origin and sustenance; it is as if God exists for the sake of man.

The ontological African view is bent towards God as a life-source, and the spirits function as pointers connected with the afterlife. The African understanding of reality, according to Mbiti (1969, p. 20), is that Africans have their ontology, but it is a religious ontology. To understand these religions one must have a deep understanding of the specific ontology.

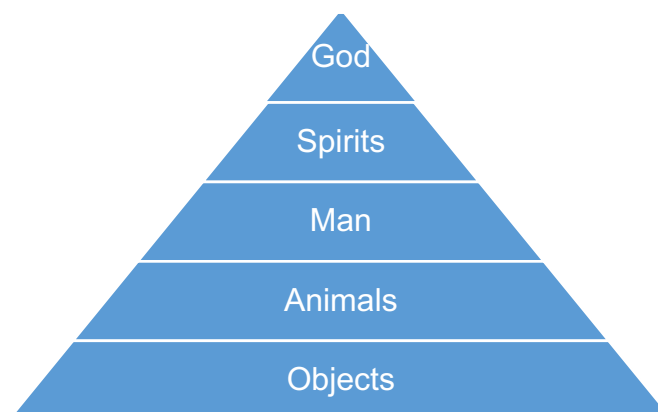


Figure 7. 2: Illustration of the five categories of African ontology

Source: Mbiti 1969, p. 20

These are the five categories of the African ontology by Mbiti:

- 1. God is the Originator and the Sustainer of man.
- 2. Spirits (ancestors and forces of nature) hold the destiny of man.
- 3. Man including human beings who are alive and those about to be born.

- 4. Animals and plants, or the remainder of biological life, constitutes the environment in which man lives, providing a means of existence.
- 5. Phenomena and objects without biological life.

God controls the universe and power. The spirits have access to a specified amount of power. Some godly and ungodly people have access to this power (latent energy or invisible power) but this power can only be noticed through the perceptible manifestations (Mbiti 1969, p. 20). African perspective is that man functions within his relationship with God. The attainment of man's destiny is a harmonious collaboration with God, spirits, and the self. The positive functioning of man, according to the African view, is the probable presence of good health, prosperity, freedom from hardships, and calamities. The following concepts are definitions by different authors.

7.5. Definitions of the word worldview

The following are different types of worldview definitions by different authors and a working definition. Almost every worldview writer has their definition of the concept. Some are short and simple. Some are long and complex to provide a general-purpose.

Dewitt (2004, p. 2):

The worldview is a system of beliefs interconnected in the way of the pieces of a jigsaw puzzle are interconnected. The worldview is not merely a collection of separate, independent, unrelated beliefs, but is instead an intertwined, interrelated, interconnected system of beliefs.

Geisler & Bocchino (2001, pp. 43, 55):

A worldview is a set of beliefs, a model that attempts to explain all of reality and not just some aspect of it... Moreover, a worldview is a philosophical system that attempts to explain how the facts of reality relate and fit together... In other words, a worldview shapes or colours the way we think and furnishes the interpretive condition for understanding and explaining the facts of our experience.

Kraft (1999, p. 385):

Worldview, the deep level of culture, is the culturally structured set of assumptions (including values and commitments/allegiances) underlying how people perceive and respond to reality. The worldview is not separate from culture. It is included in culture as the most profound level presuppositions upon which people base their lives.

O'Donovan (1996, p. 3):

The worldview depends on the community to which a person belongs and grows up. Also, what is learned from family and teachers. A person's worldview is reinforced through repetition of familiar actions and is generally taken for granted until one encounters a different worldview which forces them to analyse why they do or perceive things in a certain way

Working definition:

A worldview is a system of interconnected perception of views. A worldview is a philosophical structure that endeavours to explain the factual reality that shapes the way people think and furnish the interpretive condition for understanding and explaining the facts of their experience. A worldview depends on the influence that society, family, and teachers have on the individual. A person's worldview is reinforced through repetitiousness actions and is customarily acquired.

7.6. Elements of the African worldview

7.6.1. The Mythic dimension

According to Jaja (1995, p. 28), "Myths, folklores proverbs, therefore, become the major sources of African philosophy." Besides myths being primary sources of African beliefs, Alagoa (1978, p. 9) argues that historical information is transmitted orally by processes peculiar to each community. Each community transmits historical stories based on the precious concepts of the morality of good and evil. More than fifty years ago, Bohannah (1964, p. 1) stated that Africa is often seen through a mesh of myths, so permeating and slick that comprehending these myths become a two-part delineation of locating its meaning and the hidden reality behind it. Similarly, So the moral value of myths and its transference becomes indispensable knowledge in an African context. Moreover, according to Anyanwu (1987, p. 280), "man is a myth-making animal." The categorical position of myths, according to Magesa (1997, p. 37), is that cosmogonic myths embody flawless ancient moral traditions.

7.6.2. The rite of passage and ritual dimension

Africans celebrate the rite of passage in multiple occasions, e.g., the birth of a child, puberty, marriage and the preparation of it, and death. The three stages of van Gennep (1960, p. 26), were discussed in the ritual chapter, i.e., the first phase (separation), the individual gets into the rite; the second phase (in between); and the third phase (is the reincorporation phase) i.e. reintegration to the new status. People communicate and maintain connections

in the form of ceremonies. Rituals unite those who perform or attend them, which nurtures a collective identity. The following are African worldviews concerning the phases of the rite of passage individuals pass through.

7.6.2.1. The concept of childbirth

According to Magesa, (1998, p. 112), marriage always sets up secure relationships between families and clans, mainly when children are born. In this view, the child is sometimes initiated, even before its birth. A mother will wear a cord or beads on the waist for protecting the pregnancy. Pregnancy is believed to be a transitional stage, where the mother's womb is a passage through which transformational life takes place (Akrong 2007, p. 63). After birth, to protect the child from possible threats, small incisions will be made, and traditional medicine will be applied to the incisions, and the child will wear a cord on the wrist, ankle, or waist; a witchdoctor or spiritualist perform this ritual. Kanyoro (2002, p. 60) states that "rites of passage such as birthing rites, naming rites... are all performed as an affirmation of individuals within a religious and cultural setting. They are seen as community building and never as a way of diminishing persons."

In the African context, the child bonds with the mother. The father is prohibited from sharing the same room. This practice is to protect the child from impure exposure. The child will stay indoors for a few months, according to the clan's belief system, to protect the child from possible environmental endangerment. The period of staying indoors can be a minimum of three months or a maximum of six months. The child's initiation ceremony involves exposure to the world. Family and friends traditionally celebrate the ceremony. In present-day churches, the prophet offers prayers. According to Kanyoro (2002, p. 57), "Africa has reached crossroads between an inherited culture and the challenges of modernism." To get through this binary, cultural laws need to be taken into serious consideration.

7.6.2.2. Childlessness

According to Sherwin (1998, p. 164), "motherhood is not only valued but expected of every woman." Motherhood is a remarkable concept; women are participants of a life-giving gracious process that promotes life. "Childlessness or bareness is considered a major taboo since children are considered a must in ensuring continuation of the family line and the ancestral status after a person dies" (O'Donovan 1996, p.295). The child is a potential candidate to extend the family name, especially if it's a boy. In addition, the ancestor will

continue to live through a child that is named after him. In such a context, therefore, to be without a child is considered one of the worst curses. A barren woman is thus considered useless and cursed, while the husband of such a woman is forced to marry another woman to bear him children, to perpetuate the family name and lineage.

7.6.2.3. The developmental stages of childhood

Infancy is Erikson's (1959, pp. 18-24) first stage of development in which the mouth is regarded as the most sensitive zone of the child's body. In early childhood (three to six years), the child's physical development enables him to experiment with vitalities, namely holding on or letting go, then follows the school-age from six years old to the competitive puberty stage. African children develop socialization early because of the corporate environment in which they grow. Therefore, "socialization, somewhat, is organised to teach social competence and shared responsibility within the family system and the ethnic community" (Nsamenang & Lamb, 1994, p. 137).

Values and norms are transferable through story-telling and deliberate teachings. Below is a chart to indicate the development of children through stages. The perception is that one must go through all stages until the end. Stinton (2004, pp. 134–135) says that "one must pass through all stages of life to attain adulthood, which is only considered to arrive once one has had children and therefore transmitted life." The following diagram shows some of the stages that an individual should go through in life.

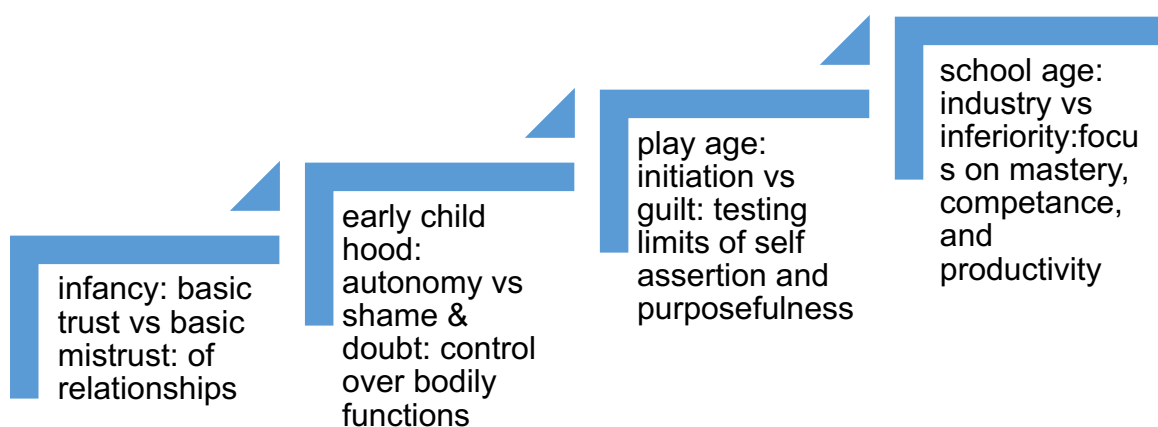


Figure 7. 3: Illustration of the developmental chart

Source: Erickson 1980, p. 18-24

7.6.2.4. The rite of passage and puberty

“A modern day rite of passage is achieved when parents and the community create and participate in experiences which are perceived to be transformative by youth and offer them increased status within the community and facilitate their healthy transition through adolescence” (Blumenkrantz, 1996, p. 21). This rite of passage brings separation of adolescents from childhood to adulthood. Among traditional African people, several initiation practices such as circumcision or initiations exist to promote communal bonding and identity. Such rites are used to educate young people on essential cultural matters. However, the shedding of blood during such rites is to solemnise the event and provide a covenant unity between boys/girls and the whole clan, both living and dead (O'Donovan 1996, p. 235).

7.6.2.5. The rite of passage: Marriage

For every marriage to be legal, customary observances have to be fulfilled (Ayisi, 1997, p. 7). The preparation for marriage commences with the negotiations for lobola. By this action, marriage signifies that the responsibility is not limited solely to the couple but has a much more full application (Magesa, 1998, p. 110). There is a perception that marriage must display itself competent biologically, morally, and financially for it to succeed harmoniously. Marriage is a religious, moral obligation, and forms a focal point where members encounter each other (Mbiti 1970, p. 144). In all African societies, everything possible is done to prepare people for marriage and to make them think in terms of marriage (Mbiti, 1969, p. 104). Therefore, marriage and childbearing are the focus of life; they are at the very centre of human existence, just as man is at the very centre of the universe (Mbiti 1969, p. 106).

7.6.2.6. Death, widowhood and thereafter

7.6.2.6.1. The concept of Death

Death is a natural transition where the spirit - the quintessence of the person, transition to the realm of ancestors. “Death does not constitute human finality” but marks a transition; it is the “other beginning”, which is “the first beginning.” (Egbujie 1976, p. 141). Death is the right of passage where an individual graduates to be an ancestor and continues to live in the community, be visited at the gravesite, and be appeased. “A person dies and yet continues to live: he is the living dead, death is the commencement of being able to communicate between the two realms, the visible and the invisible realms” (Mbiti 1969, p. 161). Furthermore, one will continue to be respected after one's death, and not be exposed

to diminishing memories, or become a homeless spirit due to the disregard of funeral rites (Nürnberg 2007, p. 25).

7.6.2.6.2. Death rituals

The death ritual should be executed appropriately, to avoid an incomplete transition whereby the spirit of the departed comes back to torment or scare the living (Akrong 2007, p. 69). The perception is that the priest should be sought to conduct proper funeral rites. “Death by accident, suicide, unclean diseases or in childbirth is not considered a good death” Stinton 2004, p. 134–135). If the death of the person was violent, for example, accidental death, stabbed or gunned down, the corpse will not be allowed in the family residence before burial, to avoid a repeat of the misfortune. Another advantageous factor is that people in the realm of the departed retain their occupations; the farmer has his farm, and the king remains a king Leonard (1968, p. 185-186).

7.6.2.6.3. Funerary ceremonies

Before the burial, mourning rites take a week or more per clan. Prayer meetings are held daily, to give support to the bereaved. The day before the funeral, the corpse is brought home before sunset and placed in the bedroom or lounge concealed with a temporary curtain. People hold a night vigil in honour of the deceased. At sunrise, the funeral procession begins. A designated praise poet recites the family name (clan - praise) while the corpse is being taken out of the house. “In Africa, there is no rite or event that demands so much ceremony, numinosity, and dread as does death. The obsequies are celebrated with utmost grandeur and solemnity” (Muchemwa 2002, p. 11). The ritual of shedding blood by slaughtering a cow is guaranteed, regardless of the family’s social or financial position. There is an abundance of food and drink for mourners to feast on, including the famous African beer, to give the deceased a dignified send-off. After the funeral, the ritual of blanket-washing and window-cleaning takes place, as well as a general clean-up with ‘dip’ (disinfectant) to conclude the ritual.

7.6.2.6.4. Widowhood

Immediately after the funeral, a widow or widower is initiated, by being marked or put an identification, a woman will have to wear black mourning clothes, for a year. “In many contemporary African villages in South Africa, the widow is... required to wear black clothes... and behave in a manner that shows that she is grieving” (Kotzé *et al.* 2012, p.

754). A man will attach an identification or token similar to an 'arm-band' or button attached to a shirt or jacket for twelve months.

Furthermore, a ceremony will be conducted after a year to end the mourning period. The deceased belongings will be shared among the family and relatives. Sometimes a woman can be married off to the deceased's brother or relative. Property that belonged to him may be taken away from the wife and children.

7.6.3. Psychological dimension

According to Walsh and Shapiro (2006, p.227), "We are what we think. All that we are arises with our thoughts. With our thoughts, we make the world." People view the world according to their understanding of reality. Miller & West (1993, p. 3) says that a worldview is like a strainer through which situations are discerned and understood. The assumption is that people view the world according to underlying beliefs. Nobles (1980, p. 35) states that Black psychology must be mindful of patterns and communication. The oral tradition may help to unearth spiritual mysteries of the soul, i.e., the extended self. It purports that there are universal underlying psychological processes inherent in all individuals.

7.6.4. The rationale of cause and effect

The ultimate source is the starting point that gives birth to an effect, and the effect is the adverse result, (Mackie 1995, p. 126) The causal theory, according to Sogolo (2004, p. 182), is that afflictions point to causative factors. Causative factors are classified into two groups, namely primary and secondary factors. Primary factors are- external - contravening cultural set-laws, and secondary factors are - internal, e.g. actions caused by self. The following illustration in Figure 7.4 shows the concept of cause and effect, according to Sogolo (2004, p. 182).

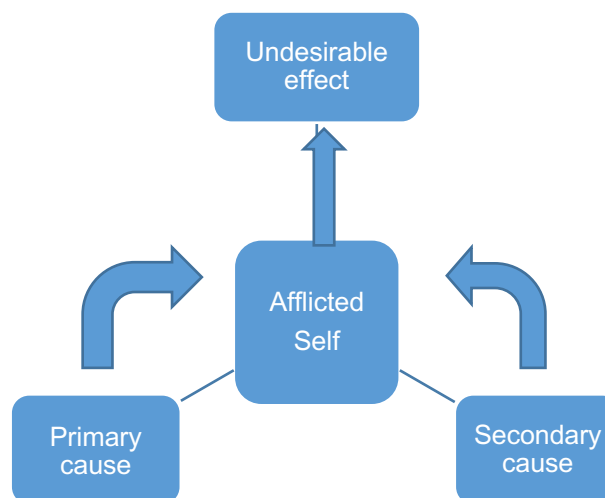


Figure 7. 4: A depiction of the causal theory

The following are types of causality. Tempels, Rubbens & King (1959, p. 45) agree with Sogolo (2004, p. 182).

Africans have traditionally been very conscious of the social dimension of morality. Morality is always seen in social context. Hence, any serious violation of the moral order has a social aspect which involves serious social consequences. The whole society is affected, for every evil act is an anti-social act which has adverse effects on the whole community.

Norms and values are key to African culture as a moral code to keep the ethical balance in society. The community is held accountable by the standards governing their knitted moral fabric. Substantiating this view of morality, Asouzu (1998, p. 3) writes that "African traditional society recognises and holds firmly to certain values... identified as necessary for correct functioning of the society and the welfare of the individuals." Almost all distressing situations are subject to scrutiny. "They are always searching for a cause, for the how, why and by whom of events that have befallen them" (Buhrmann, 1984, p. 32).

The mystical causation is believed to be attached to spiritual pollution. Spiritual pollution leaves its victims exposed or in an endangered position. The connotation of the breach is void of a direct emissary. The affliction comes as a slipstream propelled from a mystical position, leaving an individual or group in a vulnerable position. The best thing for the individual or the group is to avoid contravening the set cultural laws or to carry out a propitiation for ancestors, to avoid bad-luck. Straker (1994, p. 459) substantiate this, when he says, "These persons are required to observe certain taboos and to perform a variety of rituals to protect themselves and others from the effects of their pollution."

Magical causation is related to witchcraft (curses and spells), used to negatively alter the lives of people. Bewitchment is a practice instigated by wicked forces employed by enemies to ensnare other people. On this view, Buhrmann (1984, p. 36) says that "One is in the power of omnipotent and omnipresent evil spirits who can see and hear everything you do or say and whose aim is one's extermination." Other people hire witchdoctors to invoke wicked forces upon their enemies. "In other words, untimely deaths, accidents, illness and other misfortunes are 'brought on' by witches" (Buhrmann, 1984:35). The perception is that ill-fortune does not just happen, other than, a causal factor, i.e. hatred, envy, animosity and vengeance.

7.6.5. The concept of time

Time exists, as it gradually unfurls and is experienced as a reality by the community.. Once one makes mention of any minute, it is already a gone. “Eternity is defined as the transcendence of time; without beginning or end, it is also qualitatively superior to the temporal” (Erickson 2001, p. 60). Seasons, are sure to occur, and are, therefore in the category of predetermined or potential time. The most significant consequence of this is that, according to African traditional philosophical concepts, time is interpreted as a two-dimensional phenomenon, with a long past, a present and virtually no future Mbiti (1990, p. 17; in Kalumba 2005, p. 11-20). The following schematic drawing in Figure 7.5 is the interpretation of time by Cilliers 2018, p. 1

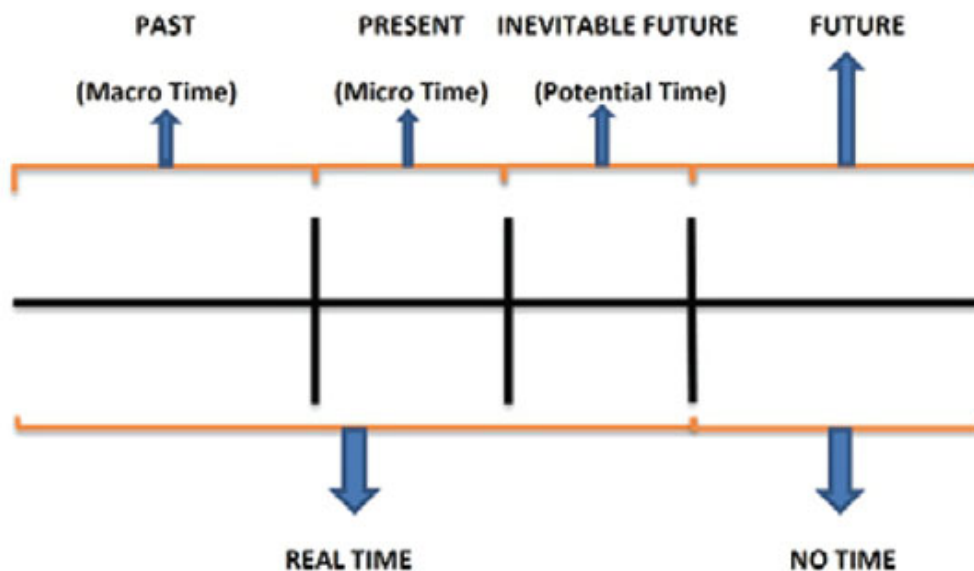


Figure 7. 5: A the interpretation of time

Source: Cilliers 2018, p. 1

The past (a reality) that is triggered-off by the present and the future is not yet present. According to Lacey (1986, p. 228) time has two senses. The first sense implies a series of notions like past, present and future that applies to different times. The second sense is that events are linked to time, and that there is allocated time to these events.

According to Babalola & Alokun (2013, p. 144),

African time makes meaning when attached to events when Mbiti concluded that Africans have no time consideration from the perspective of the future. This is because the events in the future have not yet taken place; they constitute only

potential time, not the actual time. Therefore a day is reckoned about events, milking cows, time for people and cattle to rest (noon-time), time for the cows to come back.

Crowing cock time (as an alarm clock), time according to shadows on the ground (indicating day-time, and noon-time). Concerning the concept of future time, analysing Mbiti, Òkè (2004, pp. 28-29), suggests that God controls scheduled time or that the future exists for God, but not for human beings. Such a position can be used to explain most Africans' peculiar carefree attitude of time and development, i.e. the seemingly carefree attitude toward time.

7.7. Spirits

7.7.1. Ancestor spirits

We have touched on the hierarchical structures of ancestors in the ontological concept. According to Ezeanya (1969, p. 43), "Life has no meaning at all apart from ancestral presence and power." Although ancestors bless, they also inflict harm whenever there is a breach of set-laws. According to Ferdinando (1999, p. 48), "they are a constant threat, punishing breaches of tradition and taboo as well as any failure to render them appropriate honour."

7.7.2. Evil spirits

"Spirits may dwell in forests, rivers, mountains, or on the outskirts of a village" (Mbiti 1969, pp. 79-81). The belief is that, since evil spirits do not have bodies, they wander in search of something or someone to possess. "They lack bodily form and may seek to possess people, animals, and other objects" (Kalu 2008, p. 177). They are perceived to inflict or cause damage to their victims deliberately. Humans most fear them since they are considered unfamiliar or alien. "Malevolent spirits disturb cosmic harmony and peace within a community, detracting vital energy from victims" (Magesa 1997, pp. 178-179). Other spirits are regarded as sadistic spirits or evil apparitions. According to Idowu (1973, pp. 174-176), 'ghost-spirits', are aimless wanders; spirits 'born-to-die', who sadistically enter the wombs of women to kill their children; and spirits of witches, who are 'out-and-out diabolic'. Witchcraft is also regarded as a harmful activity. Witches are also active agents of malicious activity, although sometimes witchcraft entails manipulating evil spirits (Evans-Pritchard 1937, pp. 118-33). Almost any personal and societal misfortune may be attributed to witchcraft or sorcery (Evans-Pritchard 1937, pp. 23-39).

7.8. Collective: structure and functions

The following African philosophical concepts are necessary features, to guide the comprehension of the African belief system and practices concerning communal living in society and churches. These principles will help unravel the phenomenon of unusual prophetic churches in South Africa.

7.8.1. African philosophy

The philosophy acts as a guiding principle to understand attitudes, behaviour, and actions, e.g., the common factor in African communities. Sogolo (1993, p. 6) explains that the long-established African reasoning is collaborative. The body of thought ascribes to the collective rather than to an individual. The African lifestyle comprises of communities of a unified whole. Okolo (1990, p. 10) says that “African philosophy is essentially an activity, a systematic and coherent inquiry into African experience.” Therefore, whatever happens to the individual happens to the whole group, and whatever happens to the whole group happens to the individual (Mbiti, 1970, p. 141). Figure 7.6 depicts the collective identity and links of conception of structures, and functioning of Africans.

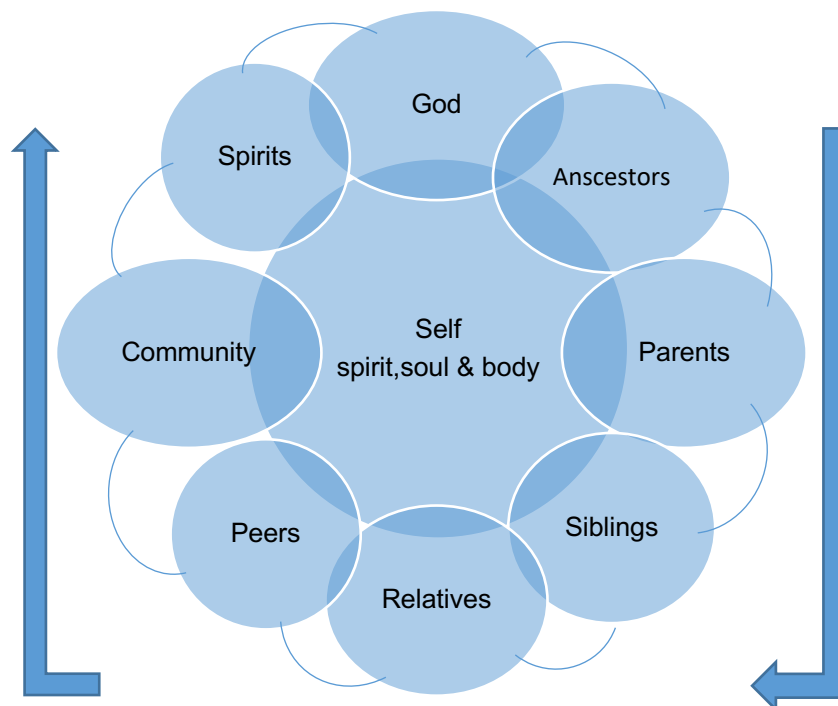


Figure 7. 6: A depiction of collective identity and links of conception of structures and functioning of Africans

7.8.2. The extended family

Krüger *et al.* (2009, p. 38) highlight the fact of a unified community that shares a specific social understanding. Concerning the concept of the extended family Krüger *et al.* (2009, p. 38) say, “There is a dynamic natural bond between the individual, the extended family, the clan or the tribe, and the ancestors, nature, and God.” To this list, Thorpe (1991, p. 120) adds the relationship with coming generations. The notion is that individuals thrive within a group. The statement is substantiated by Thorpe (1991, p. 120) when he stated that “Individuals cannot exist alone, and they are because they belong.” This belonging includes religious communities.

7.8.3. Interpersonal relationships

The African worldview of holism underlies the belief system that maintains that an individual is part of a system (interconnected system) of relationships that upholds the sum of all the parts that inversely make up the sum of the whole. According to Magesa (1997, p. 46), “The holistic worldview of Africa portrays humanity as being connected to all living and non-living entities implies a universal interdependence. The knowledge and understanding of oneself opens the doorway to liberation. African culture, family extends beyond the basic social unit, to include grandparents and other relatives.

7.9. Religious focus: morality, pneumatology, and salvation

7.9.1. The moral dimension

About the origin of religion, Krüger (1995, p. 174) says that religion becomes the contribution of Africa's humanity. According to Opoku (1993, p. 79), “religion is the source of life and meaning.” Meaning, according to Turaki (1999, p. 124) is that “African understanding is always understood spiritually.” All liturgical events have a spiritual significance since this is how African religion expresses its reality. The understanding of reality is religiously predetermined that to be, is to be religious in a religious universe (Mbiti 1990, p. 256). Concerning African religion, at most one reality exists, and part is transcendental. Transcendental reality is believed to affect physical reality. The pursuit of cosmic harmony is an ethical principle in traditional Africa (Turaki 1999, p. 122).

African religion functions as a moral and ethical foundation (Turaki 1999, p. 122). Moral principles conform to the substructure of an African understanding of religion. In understanding reality, Africans, according to Sundermeier (1999, p. 11) express their experience of the transcendental in the form of norms. Morals, according to Mbiti (1975, p.

11), assist humans in maintaining harmony with their entire environment. Mbiti (1975, p. 13) further maintains that religious morals and values provide identity. In this view, Van den Heever (2001, p. 16), adds that “religious values and morals give direction and provide answers to life's questions.”

7.9.2. The transcendental and the pneumatological dimension

About the transcendental in terms of a Supreme being, Mbiti (1970:3) maintains that "God takes the highest possible position; He is incomprehensible and mysterious' (Mbiti 1970:26). He is recognized as the creator and a significant being with no beginning and no end. God (and his creation) has no beginning and no end (Opoku 1993:70, 73). In an African view, God is discerned as a Spirit that resides in a non-physical world, beyond physical laws, high up in the heavens beyond other deities and who must be revered. And in churches the Holy Spirit is perceived as one who acts on behalf of God.

Concerning the pneumatological factor, Anderson (2001:222) notes that:

Experiencing the power of the Spirit is a common characteristic of these churches, where the Holy Spirit is the agent of healing and deliverance. In this regard, the experience of the Spirit becomes a self-authenticating key in the hermeneutic process, the experience of the Spirit becomes essential, and perhaps the most crucial key in the hermeneutic. The gifts of the Spirit are proof that the Gospel is right and the confirmation of the written word of the Bible.

The operation of the Holy Spirit in the African context is quite a pertinent commodity, and this is precisely is required for the African psyche, in terms of salvation, healing, deliverance, prophecy, breakthrough, prosperity, since all these are considered the salvific work of the Holy Spirit.

7.9.3. The dimension of salvation

Anderson (2001, p. 222) notes that:

Experiencing the power of the Spirit is a common characteristic of these churches, where the Holy Spirit is the agent of healing and deliverance. In this regard, the experience of the Spirit becomes a self-authenticating key in the hermeneutic process, the experience of the Spirit becomes essential and perhaps the most essential key in the hermeneutic.

The manifestation of the Holy Spirit in the church is perceived as proof of the presence of God. The operation of the Holy Spirit is a pre-requisite for present-day African churches, in terms of salvation, healing, deliverance, prophecy, breakthrough, prosperity.

Concerning African worldview of salvation, Mbiti (1974, p. 112) says:

Salvation in the African view has to do with physical and immediate dangers: health, prosperity, and safety. It is the primary religious setting in which the notion of salvation is understood and experienced. Salvation is not just an abstraction; it is concrete, told in terms of both what has happened and is likely to be encountered by people as they go through daily experiences. In this sense, salvation in an African context is a holistic affair. Every area that has to do with the individual must be touched: health, safety, prosperity amongst others. Therefore, the provision of sin is not accommodated, as it is considered a transgression of divine laws.

7.10. Prophets African worldview

Oosthuizen (1992, p. 193) notes that the prophet/healer can meet this world of insecurity or misfortune and look into the future in order to be better prepared for what is approaching. The prophets take seriously the worldview in which their people live. The prophets are regarded as religious specialists who have the power to diagnose the cause and source of trouble (Mbiti 1969, p. 167). Prophets are expected to know the causes and cures of these harmful situations. Their responsibility, according to Magesa (1997, p. 175), is to advise on measures to be taken to restore the force of life. These religious specialists are believed to be in touch with the source and channels of power in the universe (Bediako 1995, p. 106). The main issue is that if God can use the prophets to protect them from witchcraft, He is a true God. Stabell (2010, p. 1) says that in many places around the world, the mission is carried out in contexts where talk of witchcraft is a significant element. The traditional denial and demonisation of witchcraft by most western theologies have not stopped witchcraft, rather the threat of witchcraft is now used by prophets to invite people to their churches (Merz 2008, p. 202). According to Newell (2007, p. 1), there is no doubt that churches derive their popularity from the claim that they can put an end to witchcraft in the community. Regardless of its association with the power of evil, the terms and expressions of witchcraft can be used positively, according to Asamoah-Gyadu (2015, p. 1). Deliverance from health issues is an essential aspect of the Christian life. Healing and deliverance are significant because they bring homogeneously affected people in proximity with one another to be touched by the supernatural force.

Generally, among Africans, there is a deep-seated belief in supernatural forces that intervene and alter human destinies for good or ill. People throng to prophetic churches to

avoid evil manifestations in their lives. The prosperity gospel is widespread in African Christianity today (Gifford 1998, p. 39). There is a theory that the prosperity gospel is also found in traditional religiosity. In the prayers for wealth, success, and prosperity, African peoples indicate their conviction that peoples physical welfare ultimately depends upon the spiritual realm of God and the departed. People have to solicit spiritual help to make their physical life harmonise with the spiritual realities surrounding them (Mbiti 1975, p. 56).

7.11. Healing and deliverance

About prayer, Muthengi (1998, p. 254) says,

The contents of prayers in African traditional worship is largely for the material and physical blessing. Some of the main concerns are protection from sickness and death, a long life, material prosperity, victory over enemies, protection from evil spirits, etc... There does not seem to be any concern about the deity's will.

Prayer (to the Sovereign God or deities) is believed to be the key that unlocks wholeness to an individual. The African view of healing is a holistic affair, and the whole person is supposed to be healed, i.e., amongst others from sickness, protection from enemies, afflicting spirits, from poverty, hardship, failure, unemployment, and all setbacks. Isichei (2004, p. 318) says that "Neo-traditional religion is ... insistently this-worldly. The devotee looks for answers to prayer in this life, not for compensation in a life to come."

7.11.1. African worldview and healing

The belief in a being or beings is perceived as usual. Healing is paramount in the African psyche, and so is salvation. "Salvation is understood as holistic healing, touching both body and soul" (Becken 1975, p. 237). Holistic healing in this sense pertains to health in every area of an individual's life: the spiritual, emotional, physical, material, relational, and environmental, to name but a few. Shabangu (2005, p. 155) notes that good health is seen as a key sign of a blessing from the ancestors. Healing always features prominently in prophetic churches in South Africa. "What people expect in religion are physical healing, deliverance from demonic influence, and the meeting of other basic needs" (Anderson 1992, p. 117). Healing and well-being necessitate the physical, psychological, spiritual, and the social factor; healing entails the individual, the individual's family, the group, and the community, therefore, integrating the entire life of the individual.

7.11.2. Deliverance

In South Africa, prophetic churches persistently encourage Christians to close the gateways leading to all bloodline covenants, to cut all ancestral cords and to break all generational curses. Freedom from these attacks is secured through deliverance. Prophets perform rituals of deliverances, to cast out demons. There is a notion that witches employ the help of evil forces to inflict their enemies, by invoking them to operate in other people's lives. People who go for deliverance, complain of harassment by some of the above mentioned evil forces.

7.12. South African prophetic churches and worldview

The worldview of South Africans and that of the prophets is the promise of blessings in the form of good health, protection, breakthrough, and prosperity. The perception is that prayer is the solution to problems, since all problems emanate from the spirit world. As Kalu (2008, p. 186) notes, "They exhibit a pneumatic and charismatic religiosity that existed in traditional society." A person must look for assistance to eradicate the problem of high-powered commanders of the spiritual forces. Also, Kalu 2008, p. 186) says that "in the African worldview, therefore, is to discover the source of a problem." Deliverance is performed to eradicate the following: severe social conditions of poverty, disease, unemployment, childlessness, and the right partner to marry. Amanze (2013, p. 1) substantiate this matter when he writes,

The church in Africa is growing in leaps and bounds - unprecedented in the history of Christianity. This growth and development, however, is taking place mainly in the New Religious Movements, because of their emphasis on the prophetic ministry characterised by the performance of healing miracles and predicting the future.

The following maps are maps where the churches in this research are situated.

7.12.1. The geographical location of churches under study

This is the geographic location of church B and C on the slightly orange marge, in the Capricorn region Figure 7.7 and the third church is in Tshwane region as shown in Figure 7.8

Figure 7.7 is the map of Capricorn where the two churches are situated.

The following is a Tshwane map where Ga-Rankuwa is situated. The third church in the research is situated here.



The map above shows where Ga-Rankuwa is situated in Gauteng. Observing this map, the light green almost 'khaki' colour represents Ga-Rankuwa. Space is further indicated on

a small map on the right side of the main map. The population living in Ga-Rankuwa and Limpopo share the same worldview that also includes the sub-Saharan region. The followers of these prophetic churches or 'Miracle seekers' share the same fate due to current unfavourable economic conditions, widespread corruption by the government and private sectors, inequality, the decline in health sectors, unemployment, and other afflictions. These misfortunes have led the masses thronging to prophetic and deliverance churches, on a quest for solutions. The elite are also susceptible to this current movement. The subsequent media concepts may also cast light on this argument.

7.13. Media

The African worldview of acquiring wholeness is susceptible to the pursuit of wellness. Prophetic and deliverance churches exist to serve exactly this purpose. These churches advertise themselves in the social media and visual print, with the promise to alleviate afflictions. This strategic plan serves as an attraction or invitation to the church. According to Marshall-Fratani (1998, p. 300), "the modern use of media and technology, is concerned with the dissemination of the 'word of God', making it an exciting and sensorial experience for people with different cultural backgrounds." By utilising social media, local religious occurrences may spread out, extending across the board provoking interest. Employing the use of visual printed material, by means of flyers and posters at every street corner, is peremptory to spark the necessary interest. People are drawn to the promises of healing and deliverance. Interest is evoked or kindled, indicating that something good is likely to happen.

Meyer (2015, p 335) substantiate this by writing:

Pictures operate in the context of embodied, habitual practices of looking, display, and figuration – a visual regime. In this process, there is a prime role for religion, involving notions of heaven and hell, good and evil, the beyond and the here and now, the 'spiritual' and the 'physical,' as well as a pantheon of spiritual beings and practices of revelation and concealment, in shaping visual regimes.

Besides advertising of events, some prophets have a compelling charm that induces devotion and surrender from adherents. In this view, Kalu (2013, p. 283) says that "some operated as solo prophets whose charisma drew people to a new understanding of the power of the gospel; others formed new faith communities." Prophetic churches have managed to draw in the younger generation. Facebook is popular among the youth. Most signs and wonders happenings within prophetic churches are posted to lure more followers.

Moreover, one cannot deny the increase in Facebook usage around the globe. According to Miller *et al.* (2013, p. 228),

The use of Facebook is exceptionally high among younger adults: 86% of 18-29-year-olds use Facebook, 31% of 18-22-year-old Facebook users post status updates daily or more frequently compared with 3% of users over 49, 18-29-year-old Facebook users have substantially more online 'friends'.

7.14. Chapter Summary

African worldviews encompass the whole way of life of the African society. It is a psychological reality referring to shared constructs, shared patterns of belief, feeling and knowledge, which members of the group that subscribes to this reality carry in their minds as a guide for conduct and the definition of reality. Concerning the worldview of the supernatural, there is an idea that some higher forces control human relations and existence. According to African society, the cosmology is arranged in a hierarchical form of force-beings, which possess varying degrees of vital force (the dynamic African concept of 'being').

The ontology is 'anthropocentric'- man is at the very centre of existence; everything else is about this central position of man. God is the explanation of man's origin and sustenance; it is as if God occupies the uppermost position.

African reality is experienced in a common ritualistic way in the form of rites. Communities connect in the form of ceremonies by ritualised symbolic actions that define relationships with the divine; ancestors; societal relationships, and nature. Harmony with the divine; ancestors; society, and nature is maintained to avoid disharmony and unnecessary retribution. The well-being of the individual or healing depends on moral behaviour. Healing is paramount in the African psyche, and so is salvation. Salvation from God is understood as holistic healing, touching both body and soul. In this view, to comprehend the phenomenon of unusual healing, the next chapter will delineate this phenomenon through the lens of prophets.

Chapter 8

Normative

8.1. Present-day prophets

The normative chapter is closely associated with the empirical chapter. In the empirical chapter, the situation was described. This normative chapter determines how the situation ought to be. In other words, this chapter reflects on what ought to be going on (Osmer 2008, p. 4). This chapter acquires a reflective dialogical stance, a prophetic discernment, and human shaping. This infers change. The current practices by present-day prophets will be reflected upon critically through a normative lens. The integral part of this normative chapter, according to Grenz & Smith (2003, pp. 19, 81) entails the following:

- a norm - prescribes some aspect of moral conduct;
- normative ethics - formulate standards and principles for human conduct (ethical norms);
- Christian ethics - studies how humans ought to live according to biblical and Christian convictions.

Classical biblical views and contemporary African views will be expounded upon to understand the current situation of unusual practices by present-day prophets in South Africa. Firstly the meaning of prophecy, who is the prophet and the functions of a prophet will be delineated upon.

8.1.1. Prophecy

Grudem (2008, p.13) maintains that prophecy is a word from the Lord. Prophecy brings God's guidance to specific details of our lives. Prophecy brings much personal edification and conveys to our time of worship intense awareness of God's presence. Grudem (2008, p.13) argues that it is a prediction (revelation of events) to come, a gift of being able to predict the future.

8.1.2. Early Christian prophets

According to (Aune 1983, p.195),

The Greek term *prophētēs* (feminine *prophētis*), meant spokesman or announcer; it had no connection with revelatory activities. The term took a technical meaning, 'one

who speaks on behalf of the god', there was nothing about 'one who predicts the future'. The prefix 'pro-' means 'forth' not 'fore.' For instance, forth-telling is to tell forth, and foretelling is to predict. It is believed that the word *prophētēs* was borrowed from Hebrew term *nabi'* (sometimes referred to as *nebi'm*). The terms were exclusively applied to OT prophets or eschatological prophets.

8.1.3. The writings and speech in Israel and Ancient Near Eastern Prophecy

Zvi (2000, pp. 4-8, 23) noted two types of prophecies in the OT: some were written others were spoken (oral). Oral prophets did not know how to read. They were known for speaking infallible prophecies. Moreover, they were not speaking for themselves or trying to please listeners. Only a few scribes and teachers were responsible for the written word. The advantage of written prophecies over the other forms of communication is that they can be read and reread. The aspects associated with prophetic literature were communicated to the entire population (Zvi 2000, pp. 4-8, 23).

8.1.4. Fallible and infallible prophets in the OT

According to 1 Kings 13:11-14, the older prophet misled and coerced the younger prophet into transgressing God's order or directives, that later led to his death. The death of the young prophet misled Jeroboam (the king) who did not turn from his wicked ways, instead ordained any willing candidate to be priests of the high places. De Jong (2007, p. 317) writes about fallible prophets who were close to the king, and responsible for performing royal functions, enjoying some form of status above that of infallible prophets, who were not employed by the king. Fallible prophets pleased and supported the king, motivated or driven by their own self-seeking motives. Infallible prophets were moved by conviction and motivated by the will of God (what God told them). Micah (3:7, 11) declared that "the seers shall be ashamed and the diviners confounded; including the prophets who divine for money."

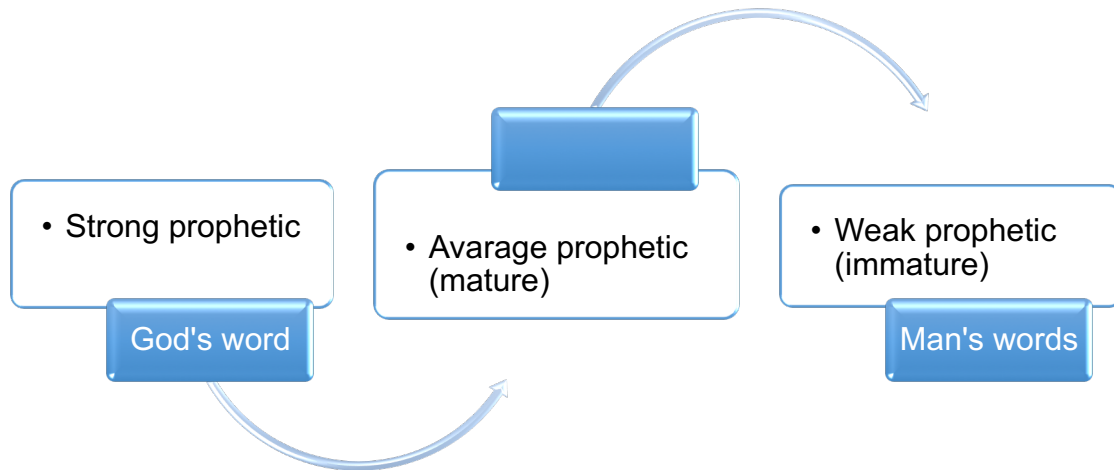


Figure 8. 1: The illustration of a degree of mixture in prophecy today

Source: Bickle (2008, p. 37)

According to Bickle (2008, p. 37) the three categories of prophetic communication comprises of the following: God's word, average prophetic, and man's word.

- God's word: these consist of a larger percentage of God's word. The words are characterised by a high level of precision.
- Average prophetic: the prophecy is a combination of God's word and man's word, nevertheless the word is produced in the inclination of God's will.
- Man's word: the word is at a large extent, man's word, leaning on to the defective side, rendering it inadequate.

8.1.5. Prophecy in the NT

According to Campbell & Campbell (2008, p. 73), "The untranslated Greek verb *mainesthe* means prophecy in the NT', *mainesthe*' was commonly read as a statement, that meant: 'you are mad,' as in spirit possession. Paul's term *mainethe*' implied ecstasy in pagan worship." Paul had a pastoral concern that there was little external difference between Corinthian believers and the pagan cult worshippers. He wanted a clear, not a confused, signal in public meetings. He maintained that prophecy should be promoted in an intelligible manner in corporate gatherings, and tongues in private, (see 1 Corinthians 14:18; Campbell & Campbell 2008, p. 74).

8.1.6. On the concept of prophecy

God addresses people on a personal basis through His prophets for the conviction of sin, to bring people into an awareness of what ought to be purged from their hearts. Polk (1984, p. 9), maintains that:

the office of a prophet, is to speak to us so that we today may perceive God addressing us personally, searching our hearts and consciences, convicting us of sin, calling us to faith and trust, awakening in us love, inspiring us with hope, illuminating us with insight, strengthening us for other tasks, in short, making us aware of God and His profound interest in each one of us.

God has always been concerned about the well-being of people. When He wishes to redeem a life, He sends His prophets to convey the message of restoration. Grudem (1988, p. 168) maintains that “facts that could not be known by ordinary means are revelations, including prediction of the future, the disclosure of the secret sins or anxieties or problems hidden in a man’s heart, or the disclosure of certain gifts for ministry possessed by someone in the congregation.”

God’s messages carry meaning, are powerful and functional. Zimmerli (2003, p. 22) maintains that “a prophet is always subordinate to the sovereignty of God who always remains lord over the content of the prophetic message.” This statement gives rise to the fact that only God’s message ought to be delivered, not self-proclaimed messages. Zimmerli (2003, p. 65) further states that “a false prophet always has something to say on his own account, without any prompting, and makes a thoroughly confident impression.” This is how the prophetic office is now being misused. Demar (1999, p. 12) warns against turning the Bible into a crystal ball by using the word of God in vain. This claim is to validate fallible prophecies. Due to the phenomenon of unusual liturgical healing ritual practice, the following conceptual facts concerning present-day prophets, functions, and their followers have been noted, described, reflected upon and analysed.

8.1.7. Unusual prophecy

8.1.7.1. Itchy ears

Miracle seekers have an inherent nature to foreknow (predestination), the future, or future events. People seem to have (itching ears) a tendency of being inquisitive about the future

– wanting to know ‘what is going to happen tomorrow?’ or ‘what is happening now?’ The condition of inquiry or searching keeps surfacing, hence the interest in prophecy that seems to be one of the qualities that escalate the popularity of ‘contemporary churches’. Present-day miracle seekers in church A, B, and C grew up in an environment (traditional or cultural environment), characterised by showing curiosity or concern about the future or future events (see the empirical chapter). Present-day miracle seekers demand specific guidance for every specific problem. Present-day miracle seekers have graduated from traditional or cultural tendencies of consulting spiritualists to consulting contemporary prophets. Some prophets will gladly take a chance at guessing for a price. Prophecy, however, is not guessing, nor is it speculation (theologically). Prophecy is a divine disclosure of upcoming events, events which our Heavenly Father already has present and specific knowledge of.

8.1.7.2. In-house prophets and outhouse prophets

Buckley (2014, pp. 115-122) quoted Bishop Jordan, when distinguishing between in-house and outhouse prophets. In-house, “besides being submitted to the house of God, they speak the mind (the heart), and the words of God. The outhouse prophets are out of God’s order, (not submitted to God), they are a form of rebellion.”

8.1.7.2.1. In-house prophets

Their words bring life. Their thoughts are in alignment with God’s thoughts: therefore, they speak the mind of Christ, they submit. A truly called prophet is God’s own personal investment. According to Buckley (2014, pp. 115-122), God has invested the following:

- His time,
- His word,
- His anointing,
- His Spirit,
- His gifts,
- He has invested His healing virtue by pouring Himself on the individual.

As the individual abides in the vine, the fruit of his labor will bear witness to others that he is one of His disciples. “You shall know them by their fruit” (Mathew 7:16).

8.1.7.2.2. Outhouse prophets

Some prophets venture into error, Balaam is identified in 2 Peter 2:15-16, as a prophet who chose the wrong path, for Balaam prophesied for money (out of God's will). False prophets who prophesy for money, prestige, fame, fortune, power, promotion, sexual sin, divination, and witchcraft, perform out of their own will. Unfortunately, other false prophets do give an accurate word; Balaam is an example of prophesying an accurate word.

8.1.7.3. Deification of prophets

The elevation of man rather than God is a misconception. On account of signs and wonders, present-day prophets are esteemed high in the position intended for God. Present-day followers are so accustomed to worshipping the man of God because the man of God has learned to adapt the liturgy according to cultural requirements. The focus should be on God who does the supernatural, not on man who does the spectacular. The structural positioning of the Kingdom of God always commences with God at the helm. There is a structural positioning in the Kingdom of God, i.e. God at the helm of the pyramid, Jesus, the Holy Spirit, then the prophet. If the positions are reversed, the enemy steps in.

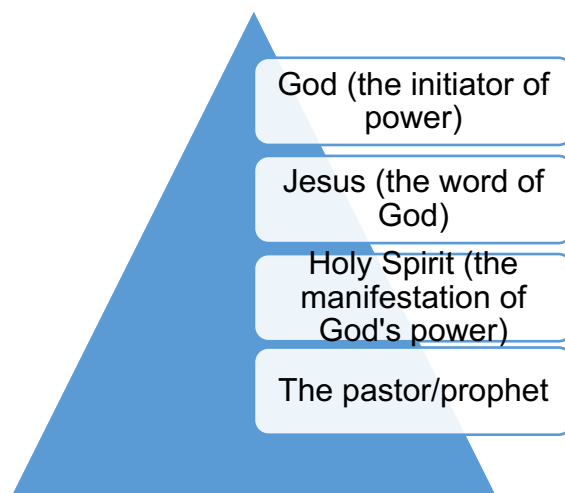


Figure 8. 2: The depiction of the pyramid of the kingdom of God

About the emphasis on justice of many biblical prophets, McIlroy (2011, pp. 182-183, 189-190) noted the following:

Worldly justice is notable and is a just cause that is sustainable. The genesis of the biblical theology of justice examines the chronicles of Yahweh's saving-design and

logic for an equitable society. By being aware of the plight of the disadvantaged to social-barring, misappropriation of economy, penury, and unjust treatment, God is concerned with justice, and injustice is a violation of human dignity. Therefore, unjust acts should be denounced.

8.1.7.4. African prophets

The tendency to lean toward the spirit realm or the accommodation of the mystic world is a basic African principle (see African worldview Chapter 7). This ideology has led to an effortless glissade from the world of spirits to the Holy Spirit domain. "The dominant characteristic of the prophets of the African churches is that they are people of the Spirit" (Anderson 2003, p. 180). The pneumatological accentuation has taken over African traditional prophetism - consultation through spirit mediums is regarded as prophesy in an African context. Some Christians are unable to differentiate between Holy Spirit manifestations and the activities of spirit mediums. The line between the two realms is blurred. There is a constant liminal state between the two realms for the believer. The two realms have an inclination to override each other. The conflicting positions do not support the individual. This leaves the believer in a compromised state. Eventually, the individual must choose the domain of worship. In modern times many are perplexed or confused. This rationale has given rise to prophetism and deliverance all over the nation.

According to Anderson (2003, p. 180), "People perceive the prophets' pronouncements to be the utterances of the Spirit and by their ability to demonstrate the power of the Spirit by meeting concrete human needs." The pastor/prophet is a two-fold figure: 1) they are seen as possessing and invoking spiritual power and protection, and providing material wealth; 2) they are perceived as mediators between the spiritual realm and the material world. The prophets are also seen as religious figures that can interpret the word of God.

8.2. The significance of the Holy Spirit

The African concept leans toward an abstract perception of realms, so the theological concept that is inclusive of the Holy Spirit is quite comprehensible to them. So in the African context, pneumatology is comparable to spirits and gods. Present-day churches believe in the Holy Spirit manifestations of speaking in tongues, prophecy, deliverance, and healing, to name but a few. Besides working with miracles, signs, and wonders, the Holy Spirit is believed to give Christians dreams and visions. According to Anderson (1991, p. 115), the

African concept of potency, particularly biblical potency, is dynamic, impregnable, and abounding with potential. This is the power that is yearned for and claimable through the Holy Spirit. Prophets in present-day churches claim to operate through the power of the Holy Spirit, although some prophets are suspected of employing contrary powers from spirits.

8.3. The concept of the anointing

The power that is accorded to prophets to move in signs and wonders affords them prestige in the community. These prophets are regarded as being closer to God than anyone else. In this sense, prophets are sought after, as mediators. The perception is that prophets are a go-between God and humankind. This perception may compromise the individual's faith. The situation can culminate in 'misplaced faith' or incorrect positioning of priorities. More faith may be put in the prophet, than in God. Furthermore, there is an exaggerated or hyperbolising of anointed objects: anointed water, anointed oil, anointed pens, anointed calendars, anointed cars and front door stickers, to name but a few, that seem to arrogate God's capacity or function in people's lives.

8.4. The concept of faith

"Though most often seen in religious terms, faith remains an "extraordinarily important construct" (Lee 1990, p. vii). Faith is a meaning-making construct in individuals. "Faith is so fundamental that none of us can live well for very long without it, yet it is so infinitely varied that each person's faith is unique" (Fowler 1981, p. xiii). The perception of prophetic churches is that God wishes to bestow to His children the harvest, financial and material prosperity. According to Philippians 4:19, "but God shall supply all your needs according to his riches in glory by Christ Jesus." In addition, there is a belief that the Christian should embark on confession based on 'scriptural promises'.

Most positive confessions or declarations are voicings (sayings) or mutterings. Naming and claiming confessions are focused on setting one's mind into the unseen by faith (see 2 Corinthians 4:18). According to this perception, faith is abstract; it is a cognitive aspect, a visualisation of what is expected. Faith confessions are based on mind-pictures. You call forth what you see (visualise) and speak it, e.g. when you are sick, you see yourself healed and confess healing on the specific area of illness. Normally, healing, deliverance and material acquisition are believed to be God's will. On the contrary, Harrison (2005, p. 13) noted: "There is an implied condemnation of those who are not healthy, wealthy, and

prosperous as having deficient faith or no faith at all.” Also, Christians in present-day prophetic churches are supposed to position themselves for blessings and breakthroughs by giving offerings: tithing (tenth percent of one’s gross), various offerings, and in particular ‘sacrificial offering’, and also to apply (Genesis 8:22a-9:3) that says, “while the earth remaineth, seed time and harvest.”

Word-faith is popular among prophetic churches. One is supposed to have a positive outlook by maintaining a positive attitude. Christians are encouraged to move from unbelief, maintain a paradigm shift for prosperity, good health and protection is the right of a child. It is a privilege for Christians because Jesus came to confer abundant life. Concerning the faith message, Harrison (2005, p. 13) writes, “The faith message is yet another way contemporary Christianity has succumbed to the pressures to compete, assimilate, and accommodate itself and its conservative message to a larger, more materialistic and secular culture in which it is embedded.”

8.5. The prophet as the healer

Prophets are also “diagnostician and healer” (Gelfand 1985, p. 3). “Once the spiritual cause of the illness has been established, the next stage in the treatment of the patient is the prescription of medicine” (Gelfand 1985, p. 15). After establishing the cause of the problem or root cause, the prophet embarks on a befitting treatment or type of deliverance. According to Wepener (2015, p. 7), “prophetic abilities are closely connected to healing abilities because prophecy is directed at revealing the cause of the problem”. Most times the area that the individual aspires to be known by (pseudo-name) is the aspired area of expertise.

There is a lot of competition amongst prophetic church leaders concerning which titles they should carry. These flexible titles range from Professor, detective, Man/Woman of God, amongst others, and are subject to change. There is competition of recognition through the use of titles. Such titles bestow honour and status to the prophet. In addition, to their titles, the prophets also present themselves well: the polished male-model lookalike image, including hip and hugging clothes, and a neat army haircut, to name but a few.

8.6. The question of unusual healing

“And many shall follow their pernicious ways; by reason of whom the way of truth shall be spoken evil” (2 Peter 2:2). It is further written that “they speak evil of the things they

understand not” (2 Peter 2:10b). The truth may refer to the word, according to the above scriptures. Prophets move away from the real word by cloning and twisting it, producing a totally different message to suit their pernicious ways. They employ pernicious methods of healing, backing it up by the Scriptures (the word of God). Their erroneous ways by employing inanimate objects like spraying chemical insecticides on people, giving them bleach, petrol (gasoline), anti-oral liquid bactericide (antiseptic liquid), and grass for ingestion. Some prophets have been taken to court on criminal charges concerning this. As a consequence of desperation, their followers continue to support them even during court proceedings, showing unanimity. Devotees continue to seek their services, despite negative publicity. “Religion produced for consumption... is ‘popular’ because it is fashioned for everyday people with the aim of helping them meet everyday problems” (Quebedeaux 1982, 5).

8.7. Charismatic leadership

There is no disputing that most South African prophets are people-skilled and good communicators. They are capable enough to articulate captivating messages targeted at healing deliverance and prophecy. Their vision and mission are people-based and “Enables leaders to transform followers’ needs and behaviours and to provide a vision, as well as a sense of mission” (Tyssen *et al.*, 2014, p. 369). In other words, they sell their vision and mission as it appeals to people. Prophets automatically draw people to them. According to Rafferty & Griffin (2004, pp.331-332), charisma involves six components, including: exceptional giftedness; the skill of handling a social crisis; provision of conceptual outcomes; fundamental resolution to hurdles; enthusiasts drawn to the extraordinary leader linked to supernatural powers; and the demonstration of remarkable supernatural talent through triumphant manifestations.

Aspiring supporters desire to be like the prophet or man of God. According to Antonakis *et al.* (2011, p. 375), “Followers identify with the charismatic leaders’ aspirations and want to emulate the leaders.” The characteristics of developmental and empowering leadership inculcate change in followers, as well as the organisation. “The influence, the developmental, and empowering focus (e.g., individualised consideration) and on using ‘rational’ means of influence (e.g., intellectual stimulation) is transformational.” Prophets use symbolic understanding to portray figurative representation and influence (Antonakis *et al.*, 2011, p. 375).

To every positive conceptualisation, there is a negative side. According to Adair (2002, p. 303), “this is evidenced by totalitarian, exploitative, and self-aggrandising charismatics such as Hitler, Charles Manson, and David Koresh.” Bass & Steidlmeier (1999, p. 186) connote that, “despite this kind of leadership being animated and directed by an inner ethical core, its ethics have been questioned, rather the “pseudo-transformational” leaders who are deceptive and manipulative.”

8.7.1. Lauterbach’s concept of ‘the big man’

The concept of becoming ‘big’ motivates young prophets. The young radical and upcoming prophets reflect a prominence of vitality. Their ability to mobilise and engage people has culminated into establishing: one man churches; founded by one person; belonging to one person; and in control by one person. Their establishment in the community, tapping into the spiritual dimensions, and the acquisition of power and wealth are conceptualised, achieved and legitimised. These aspiring radical young prophets seem to have found the pastoral career more attractive than pursuing a civil servant career or finding employment within the private sector. These prophets aspire to be ‘big’ and to be flamboyant mega-stars of a large church. They aspire leadership positions with entrepreneurial inclinations. They seek to become bigger, not only in the church context but also in how they are recognised by society. Although they draw on former ideas of wealth, status, and power, they are innovative in the sense that the churches they establish and the hierarchies they are part of are flexible and easy to enter and leave (Lauterbach 2010, pp. 261-262).

8.7.2. Glover’s concept of the man of God “Übermensch”

A man of God is an outstanding individual, an “Übermensch” (Glover 2006, p. 452), suggesting an individual who is literally ‘above men’. Übermensch is a title that places some human beings above other human beings, mainly because of the things that they can achieve. All the undertakings of God, the man of God, can carry out, hence the idea that where the man of God is, the presence of God is guaranteed (Glover 2006, p. 450). Critics find it challenging to reconcile the influence of the present-day man of God’s context on the contemporary South African prophets, particularly prophets’ flashy lifestyles in the context of the poverty of their followers. The individual is defined by what he does. Manipulation is always consequential. “The masses are subjugated and socially curtailed through consent and not coercive measures” (Glover 2006, p. 450). Young ministers often initiate present-

day churches with their youthful style that draws vast youth followers because they relate to the youth-demand (Asamoah-Gyadu, 2007, p. 389).

8.8. The question of Narcissism

Things progress, they do not digress. Things go from modest to flamboyant. What may have looked moderate in the former generation is now noxiously immoderate in the current generation. The theory of Narcissism (or even further solipsism) seems to have taken over modern society. 'The self' or severe self-centeredness is all that exists. People are moving toward selfishness, leaning more to the self without being aware of doing so. The more seasoned culture is to sin, the further they are isolated from God. Being current does not acquit biblical relevancy or conventional principles. Moreover, the latest fads seem to usher self-destructive trends that lead to the phenomenon of unusual practice. More than sixty years ago Watts (1957, p. ix,49) wrote, "The egocentric attempt to dominate the world, to bring as much of the world as possible under the control of the ego, has only to proceed for a little while before it raises the difficulty of the ego's controlling itself."

8.9. The concept of poverty

Poverty in the African context includes sickness, disease, adversity, being disadvantaged, and marginalised in society. The repercussion is unaffordable hospital bills, unaffordable cost of living, and insignificant existence. Due to socioeconomic conditions consequential to corruptions in the political and private sectors, the living conditions of most South Africans are oppressive and dehumanising, especially in squatter camps. Concerning the relevance of present-day prophetic churches Ayegboyin (2004, p. 79) says,

The enthusiasm and the willingness of new ...churches to address people's problems like sickness, poverty, attacks from evil spirits, barrenness, loneliness and all kinds of unproductiveness and misfortunes demonstrate the centrality of healing and wholeness to the African.

Poverty is perceived as an enemy. Moreover, poverty leads to social exclusion, referred to by Hamilton *et al.* (2014, p. 1838) as "rupture of social bonds." This means that an individual is excluded or barred out from meaningful social networks. The barred-effect means that an individual on occasions is 'looking in' unable to 'go in'. Some delve deeper into the dark pockets of debt to preserve a reasonable social status. The individual is left at a vulnerable

state, which Hamilton *et al.* (2014, p. 1843) refers to as “influences of consumption practices.” Individuals seem to have the notion that all their problems can be sorted by prophets.

Social inequality is constantly widening in South Africa. The economic gap between the rich and the poor indicates that the rich are getting richer, while the poor are getting poorer. According to Stats SA 2017, from 2006 to 2015, 30.4 million people (55.5% of the population) are living in poverty. This is up from 53.2% or 27.3 million people reported in 2011. People living below the 2015 poverty line of R441 per person per month, are living in extreme poverty that increased to 13.8 million in 2015, compared to the 11 million reported in 2011. Concerning poverty, Cilliers & Wepener (2007, p. 43) stated

The most typical account of poverty would be economically based on income. A person or family is then considered inferior if their income level falls below the minimum standard, which is contextually set, according to a specific country's development, societal norms, and values. The poor are void of a physical address, socially excluded, and have no identity.

8.10. Consumerism

Consumerism tends to encourage people to consume more, leading to continual chasing (Bartholomew & Moritz, 2000:9). The spirit of consumerism tends to be enticing and manipulative. Advertisements draw people to places of consumption where the promise of emotional satisfaction is eluded. According to Clapp (1998, p. 194),

People intentionally no longer look for spiritual meaning in various faith movements. Their denominations are places of consumption: shopping malls, department stores, theme parks, etc. Due to their busy schedules, they frequent malls even during church time, appointments with friends, or business appointments that are scheduled over weekends for coffee or lunch in the mall. Urbanity and career-building render it challenging to have children since children represent lifetime commitment.

8.10.1. Advertisements

Churches have resorted to marketing their religious enterprise through flyers and billboards, to entice clients by promising exactly what is expected or yearned for in a particular culture. Ritzer (1999, p. 93) calls this kind of marketing, “religious techniques of persuasion.” Marketing psychology does not only apply to commercial advertising. Strategic persuasion has entered the religious market. Advertisements have their targets, for they have studied

the market, they know what they must sell and to whom (they aim for the consumer's interest). Therefore, they use puffery to raise expectations and interest. Globalisation is a reality; the phenomenon of unusual healing practice by present-day prophets has been circularised internationally via social media.

8.11. Globalisation

Present-day prophets have had an impact globally concerning unusual healing practices. The notion of unethical healing practice has spread across borders, thus reducing global barrier narrative. According to Blanco *et al.* (2006, p. 7),

Religion and the economy are more closely tied than one would expect. The ability to globalize religion has contributed to their economic strength and willingness to expand beyond their natural geographic borders to the global marketplace, very similar to what has taken place with economic growth.

Examples of cross-border marketing and profit are books by popular televised authors and popular DVD messages, such as T.D. Jakes, K. Copeland, J. Meyer, and J. Osteen, to name but a few. "Globalisation of markets is best reflected in the internalisation of business transactions" (Cavusgil, 1993, p.84). South Africa asserts to expand its trade with China to create jobs. However, the South African economy is weakened by corruption and its aftermath. In addition most South African restaurants and other businesses enjoy cheap labor from neighboring countries.

8.12. Materialism

Materialism is the degree to which individuals occupy themselves in the structuring and upkeep of relationships, consumption of products, performance of one's duties, and experiences that are deemed as contributors of desirable symbolic value (Shrum *et al.*, 2013, p. 1180). There is a notion that materialism brings happiness. Richins & Dawson (1992, p. 308) substantiate this by saying that it is a "set of centrally held beliefs about the importance of possessions in one's life." This perception appears to be a common belief. The desire to acquire objects affects both the secular and Christian circles based on the general notion of attaching symbolic value to relationships, the self, and stuff (materials).

8.13. The concept of attire

Although most young prophets have not reached the mega-church status yet, they emulate their paragons, by the snappy-dresser look (an attractive appearance). This perception involves presenting oneself well to clients. About the younger generation, the portrayal of 'saving face' is critical. In this sense, Bloch & Richins (1983, p. 70) noted that clothes are, "the general level of interest in the object or the centrality of the object to the person's ego-structure." Clothes tend to classify people. Sometimes people are ranked according to their appearance. O'Cass & Frost (2002, p. 67) states, "clothes say how important an individual is (and) tells others how much status an individual has." People are concerned about their social standing. "These extrinsic values are often encouraged as worthy because they convey a sense of success and power" (Kasser, 2002, p. 9).

8.14. Usual and unusual liturgy

God-centred church vs human-centred church:

Liturgy and worship are firstly God-centred, but also human-centred. It is, however considered God-centred if it has Christ as a central focus. Thus, making Him, the divine presence of God, the main focus of the liturgical action or liturgical celebration. The liturgy of the church is experienced fully when there is the divine presence, i.e. God, Christ and the Holy Spirit. Therefore, the man centred church honours the name of an individual (prophet or pastor, instead of honouring God). Ultimately, a liturgical church fulfils, the great commission in Mathew 28:18-20, "All power is given unto me in heaven and in earth. Go ye therefore, and teach all nation, baptising them in the name of the Father, and the Son, and of the Holy Ghost: teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you: and, lo, I am with you always, even unto the end of the world."

8.14.1. God-centred (theocentric) church

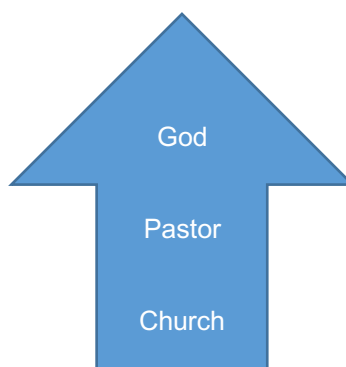


Figure 8. 3: A depiction of a God-centred church

A God-centred (theocentric) church

God-centred means that Jesus is glorified, as opposed to the ego (self) centred church that glorifies itself or an individual. The Church seeks to glorify God by fulfilling the mission that His Son gave us: To make disciples of all nations, for the divine kingdom and not for fame. A God-centred church honours the name of God and shares the Gospel among co-workers, friends, and family because of the embracing love of God for the salvation of souls. In “Christian worship, the focus is neither on the reached nor on the unreached, but on God” (Wepener 2008, p. 206).

8.14.2. Human-centred (anthropocentric) church

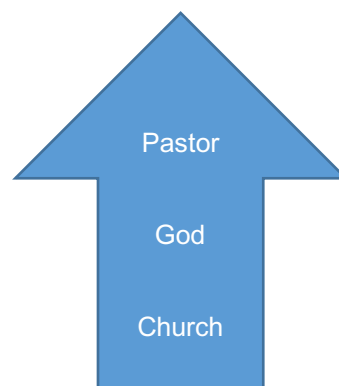


Figure 8. 4: A depiction of a human-centred church

Human-centred or anthropocentric churches are postured as opposed to the God-centred, by being human-centred. “The essence of the church is found in the word *koinonia*, fellowshiping with God intimately, a partner in his activity, and sharing his nature. We are given stewardship of that which is divine. We come to know God experientially” (Blackenby & Blackenby 2007, p. 31). Concerning miracle seekers that flock to these churches, Long (2001, p. 6) says, seekers are unattached religiously they are ravenous emissaries foraging for a spiritual adventure that is distinctive and instantaneous, characterised by an unusual tangible experience.

8.14.3. Unusual liturgical process

The following is Figure 8. 5: A depiction of a congregant’s life elevating the pastor/prophet instead of Christ (Christ centrality).

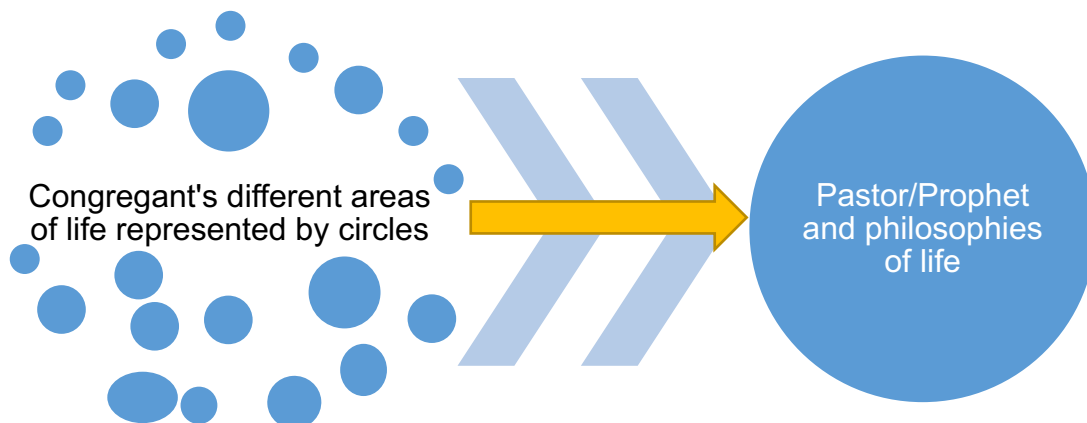


Figure 8. 6: A depiction of a congregant's life elevating the pastor/prophet instead of Christ (Christ centrality).

Pastors mesmerise the crowds by performing unusual miracles, and this causes an increase of congregational-adoration for the pastor. The pastors are given stewardship of that which is divine, and they should direct the congregation to know God on a personal basis.

Table 8. 1: Characteristics of Unusual present-day churches

• Church A • The code-name of the prophet is 'Professor.' • The Logo of the church:	• A university professor or a teacher (especially in the specialised field) at the university in charge of other teachers. A faculty member of highest academic rank. • The logo or church brand is a cross on the world globe, indicating that the church is a representative of Jesus who died to save the world. The aspiration is to impact the whole world.
• Church B • The code-name of the prophet is:	• The prophet's ability to detect or discern the source of the problem and provide a solution.

1. 'Detective' 2. General The logo of the church:	- High ranking officer in charge with authority and power to command, e.g. command an affliction to go from adherents. - The logo of the church shows a dove (the Holy Spirit) circling the world globe with the inscription, "releasing generals to the nations." This is indicative of the church's global mission and the vision.
- Church C - The code-name of the prophet is 'Advocate.' - The logo of the church:	'Advocate general prophet' triple-barrelled name. An apostle who holds the scales of justice, who predicts the future. - IA dove symbolises the Holy Spirit. ARK and Spiritual. Ark means a very big vessel to house even the global community.

The title that each prophet assumed proposes a concept to market a product that must sell. i.e.

- what the product is capable of,
- what the product can offer, regarding the gifts and talents.

The titles of the churches denote a global calling and mission. The icons on the logos also indicate a global outreach mentality. As I have already indicated in Chapter 1 and 2, these names define the uniqueness of identities that these churches have assumed and are reflected on their Facebook accounts.

8.15. The concept of vain philosophy

Biri (2012, p. 3) warns, "Beware lest any man spoils you through philosophy and vain deceit, after the rudiments of the world, and not after Christ." The author highlights the dependence on the pastor undermining the biblical theory of salvation. Many contemporary churches are desperate to win people with signs and wonders. Furthermore, the problem of winning crowds through signs and wonders or prophetic utterances, is that the moment it all ceases,

so does the attendance. As a result, most present-day prophets are compelled to carry on with the show, a frantic effort to keep their flock by all means (with or without God's power).

8.16. Media communication

Communication is supposed to effect a relational connection. According to Fortner (2007, p. 106) however, "when media are involved, it is difficult to ensure relationality." Personal contact will assist in better communication and even better relationships between the pastor and the congregation. The problem with present-day churches is that followers are treated as customers and the church as the market. As Meyer (2006, p. 291) indicates, "the result is that believers are addressed as audiences and consumers." This situation undermines accepted theoretical concepts of religion.

8.16.1. The inadequacies of social Media

There are some positive things social media (Facebook) offers, e.g., instant fame. However, many things can pose challenges or even backfire. The complication is 'performative trends' that feeds the ego and the 'celebrity-culture' mind-set. This is closely associated with social media, the enticement of celebrity-culture and "dramaturgy" that has become pervasive and entrenched in our society. Miller (1998, p. 1) says,

Status seekers' - religious groups have disposed of many attributable religious foundations. Making do with contemporary cultural structures, creating a new category of worship music; they are restructuring the nature of orthodox religion, and they are introducing free system access to the sacred by revolutionizing established principles.

8.16.2. Negative liturgy in media platforms

Most contemporary prophets are still very young and do not differ from their secular counterparts, being dubbed by society as the children of the new media era - children born in the era of technology. Young contemporary pastors can easily navigate their way through digital media on a broader social scale. They interact easily within network spaces, and they are not immune to the likelihood of subverting the established Christian teachings, doctrines, and values. The Facebook space of churches A, B, and C enables large-scale connectivity to people from different backgrounds, cultures, and faiths.

8.17. Alternative liturgy

The space of liturgical media outreach necessitates an identity. By telling their story on Facebook, the churches create their brands, e.g., an impressive title for the prophet, an equally impressive church title, and a logo. The titles of all three churches denote or give an impression of a global calling and mission, for example, a logo representing the global map. The titles of prophets indicate the roles they play in their prophetic office, as indicated in (Table 8.1.); these names define the distinctive identities of prophets and their churches, as indicated on their Facebook.

8.18. Patriarchal tendencies

According to Rich's definition (in Puechguirbal, 2010, p.172)

Patriarchy is the power of the fathers: a familial-social, ideological, political system in which men – by force, direct pressure, or through ritual, tradition, law, and language, customs, etiquette, education, and the division of labor, determine what part women shall or shall not play, and in which the female is everywhere subsumed under the male.

The patriarchal attitude towards women in present-day prophetic churches is a reality. This injustice utilises Scriptures to justify its practice. Contemporary prophets take one or two obscure verses from Scripture, and view them through a cultural lens or mix them with unclear personal opinions, and then build a doctrine that is contrary to the overall message of the Bible. Most liturgical ritual experiments are conducted upon women. "However, the impact on women is real. It makes women feel degraded, worthless, and dispensable" (Grady, 2006, p. 6-9).

8.19. Chapter summary

The prophet holds the office of one with divine knowledge who foresee and discern the life of an individual or the community. However, the prophet should be cognizant of the distress of the poor. God is concerned with the just acts toward the weak. The prophet is perceived as possessing a three-part element classification: possessing the ability to invoke spiritual power for protection, and providing material wealth, and perceived as the mediator between the spiritual realm and the material world.

Present-day prophetic churches believe in Holy Spirit manifestations of speaking in tongues, prophecy, deliverance, and healing, to name but a few. Besides the working of miracles, signs, and wonders, the Holy Spirit is believed to give Christians dreams and visions. The power accorded to prophets to move in signs and wonders affords them prestige in the community. They are regarded as agents of the Kingdom and mediators.

Prophets also diagnose and heal, but the spiritual cause of the illness has first to be established. The next stage is the treatment of the patient and a prescription befitting the treatment (the type of deliverance). The new generation of prophets, unlike the older ones, are deeply involved in the performance of miracles and predictions. There is no disputing that most South African prophets are people-skilled and good communicators. They are capable enough to articulate captivating messages targeted at healing deliverance and prophecy. The prophetic office is now being misused by producing a different message to suit their harmful ways.

Chapter 9

9.1. Introduction

This chapter will recap Richard Osmer's model from the first chapter concerning the pastoral cycle. The model will assist in fitting this chapter into the bigger whole. The four areas of the pastoral cycle are distinctive yet closely connected. Each area has a directive question and a theological referent. The two models: the pastoral cycle by Osmer (2008, p. 4) and the spiral model by Heitink (1999, p. 165) are employed to help delineate theories and to discern social problems with the aim of developing a plan for change. "The strength of the model is the way it helps participants unpack the 'social, moral, and ethical implications' of particular social issues in order to affect social change grounded in Christian faith and values" (Trokan 1997, p. 148). The process acquires a reflective dialogical stance, a prophetic discernment, and human shaping. This infers change to arrive at a praxis, by reflecting critically on the current practices that were dealt with in the sequence of the pastoral. According to Anderson (2001, pp. 47-51) a theological reflection always starts with an existing praxis (current practices), a theory-laden practice, and then traverses through critical reflection towards a more faithful form of praxis. Praxis refers to a practice, an act where an assumed an ultimate objective aim (telos) that is bound up within the action itself.

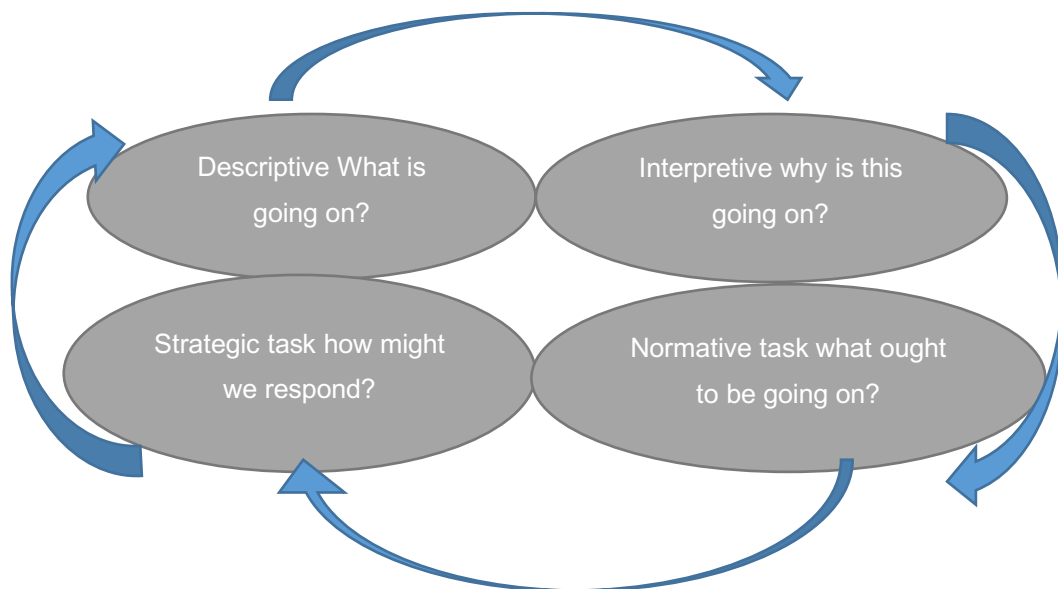


Figure 9. 1: An illustration of the pastoral cycle

Osmer 2008, p.4

9.2. The spiral model for praxis

The spiral displays different continuous winding curves representing different types of theories employed to arrive at a standard practise (praxis). Heitink (1999, p. 165) maintains that regardless of the number of steps concerned with explaining and understanding the phenomenon, the final product is a renewed praxis. The praxis model renders a framework to explore, analyse, and reflect on how to discern different elements that constitute the problem of unusual liturgical ritual healing. The in-depth movement through the spiral model happens in the way liturgies in the three case studies or churches were conducted (negatively). The praxis based approach provides a praxis based framework that is transformative to both present-day prophets and their followers.

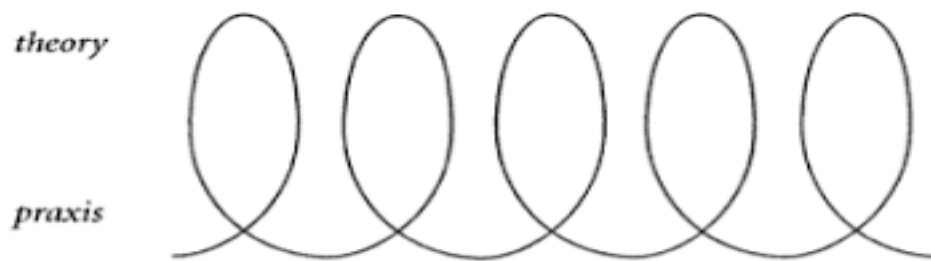


Figure 9. 2: An illustration of the practical theology cycle

Source: Gerben Heitink (1999, p. 154).

Heitink (1999, p. 154) presents multiple cycles, a critical reflection upon theories. He maintains that practical theology exists for the sake of change. By reflecting upon the existing practice, and looking through the biblical lens, the normative task forms a basis for making adjustments in order to enact a more faithful one.

9.3. The model of praxis

The concept of praxis (πραξις), denotes to the realm of acting and carrying out contrasted with an abstract realm (theoretical knowledge) (Ganzevoort & Roeland (2014, p. 93). The moral code is not conceptual. Principles concerning the distinction between right and wrong are about the way people act in moral esteem. Moreover, what people do in practical theology has much in common within disciplines like anthropology, sociology, and media

studies, known as ‘the practical turn’ not to production processes but to what people are doing (Couldry 2012, p. 35). Praxis is a practical religious exercise engaged by various people, concerning religious practices such as ministration, as well as recipients of spiritual experiences. These experiences include liturgical activities such as, shared rituals, religious views, symbols, and the spiritual realm that make up a meaning for the united group. Durkheim (1995, p. 6) says it is, “a unified system of beliefs and practices relative to sacred things, that is to say, set apart and forbidden, beliefs and practices which unite into one single moral community, called a church, all those who adhere to them.” Concerning the spiritual realm (the sacred), of how worship is conducted regarding present-day prophets and their churches, specific behavioural patterns have been noticed.

Firstly, the concern about the unusual phenomenon of present-day prophets was explored to gain an in-depth, comprehensive understanding. The research looked into normative standards applicable to scriptures and other disciplines to help in the continuing reshaping practice, and interpretation perceives patterns, regarding the new trend in present-day churches. Jaison (2010, p. 3) stated,

Practical theology draws on and responds to people’s interpretations of biblical standards that help in the ongoing change and transformation in order to respond more adequately to God’s call.

Theories from other disciplines were sourced. “Praxis must first be examined with the use of a series of instruments from the social sciences” (Heitink 1999, p. 113) that require exploring “interpretation of human action in the light of the Christian tradition (the hermeneutical perspective)” (Heitink 1999, p. 165).

The responsibility of exploring the phenomenon utilising theories from theology and social sciences is to gain a deeper understanding, to be able to describe, explain, interpret, and reflect the problem through the lens of the common good toward good practice. “Ethical reflection refers to using ethical principles, rules, or guidelines to guide action towards moral ends” (Osmer 2008, p. 161). Utilisation of norms as a moral code is required because “present practices are filled with values and norms” (Osmer 2008, p. 149), which are often in conflict.

The following schematic diagram is an illustration of a qualitative empirical media research conducted:

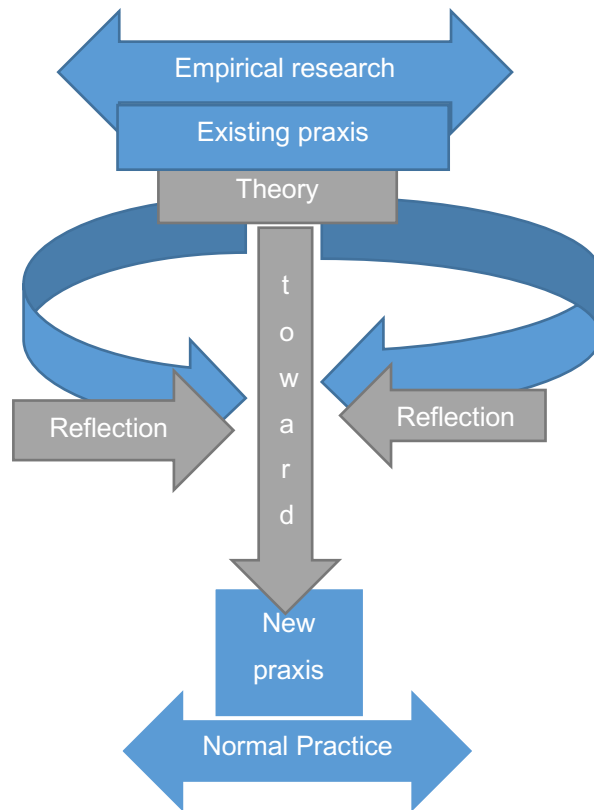


Figure 9. 3: A model of praxis in practical theology

A model of praxis in practical theology means that:

- Qualitative empirical media research was conducted.
- On the existing practice (the unusual liturgical ritual healing practice).
- Theories from both theological and the social sciences were consulted.
- Theological reflections were applied, according to Linton & Mowat (2006, p. 95), “Critical reflection on the practices of the church in the light of scripture and tradition.”
- To arrive at a new praxis (normal practice), the new theory questions the existing praxis leading to a re-examination of the theory (Heitink 1999, pp. 153-154). Moreover, on theological reflection Kinast (1990, p. 3) wrote, “Theological reflection therefore may confirm, challenge, clarify, and expand how we understand our experience and how we understand the religious tradition. The outcome is new truth and meaning for living.”
- “It aims to clarify what is good practice and what is inadequate practice” (Moon 2009, p.5). Praxis serves as a function of liberation for change.

9.4. The components of praxis: an overview

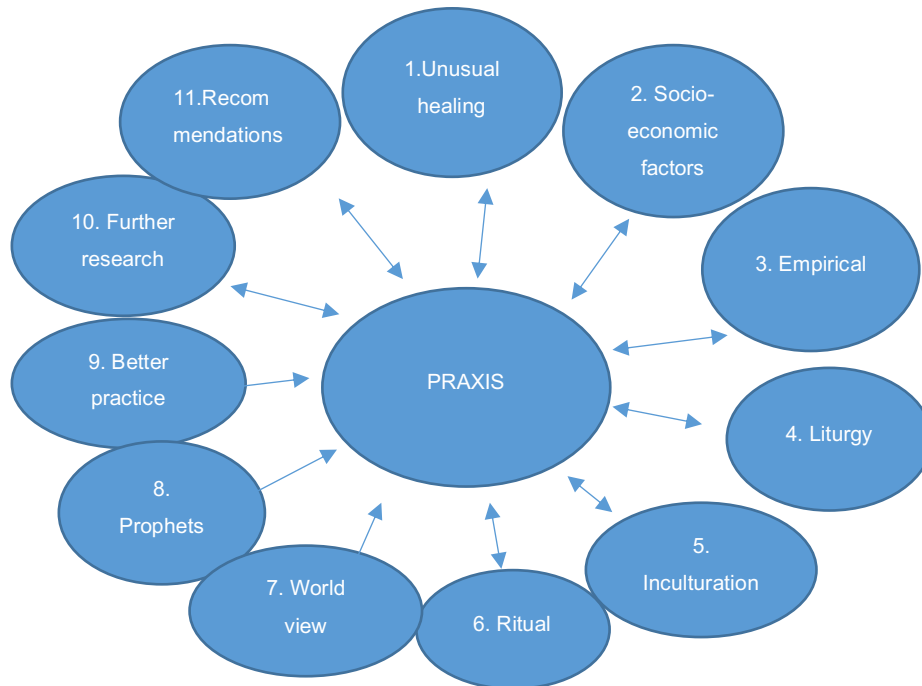


Figure 9. 4: The components of praxis in practical theology: an overview

9.4.1. The concept of unusual healing

This new trend seems to pose a challenge in South Africa attributable to the perception of ‘bad practice’, such as eating grass, drinking petrol, Dettol and Jik. Regardless of ‘bad press’, the trend is becoming more and more appealing to many. “The prophetic ministries attract people from different social classes, gender and age groups, including the top cadres in politics and the arts” (White, Tella & Ampofo 2016, p. 3). Present-day religion is regarded as a solution. Large present-day religious organisations have managed to position themselves socially, economically, and politically. These organisations have an impact on government personalities, especially the prominent and influential churches around the country, and those who are backed by the state. The game plan of swaying religious organisations by the government for the validation of winning votes, as well as praying for them to evade corruption charges, is proving challenging to regulate wheeler-dealer religious organisations.

These are some of the core pillars holding the present-day theology: an over-emphasis of the miraculous, healing, and deliverance, among others. The types of methods used to get to solutions have proven to be a source of concern in South Africa. For instance: 1) The tools utilised for healing; and 2) How these healing tools were administered or were practiced concerning the phenomenon of study - how the liturgical ritual healing practise is accomplished.

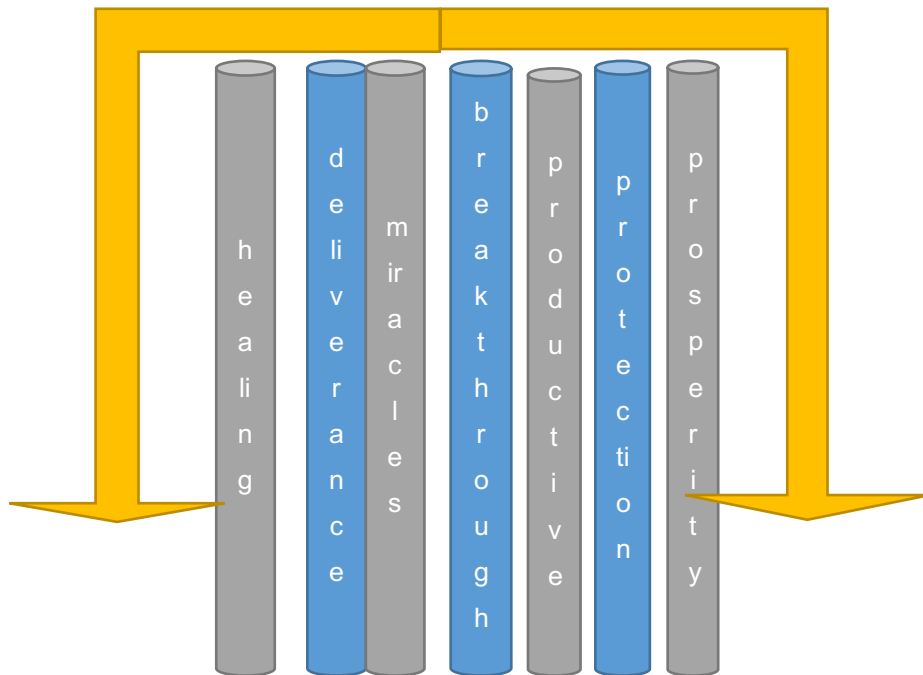


Figure 9. 5: The pillars holding the present-day theology

9.4.2. Factors that have given rise to present-day churches,

- poverty,
- deterioration of health care delivery system,
- supernatural causes.

9.4.2.1 Poverty

Inequality of living standards in South Africa continues to decline, the rising unemployment, and social injustice raise the level of poverty. Inhumane conditions, such as lack of appropriate food, housing (living in squatter camps) infrastructure: lack of proper roads, power supply, water supply, pit toilets, and lack of proper health care, continue to hinder ordinary citizens. Cilliers & Wepener (2007, p. 44, in Wepener *et al.* 2010, p. 64) define

poverty as “a state of affairs where the absence of material resources, the denied space for trust and identity forming, as well as the loss of civil skills impact negatively on one another, in a seemingly unstoppable and negatively escalating spiral.”

9.4.2.2 Health care system

Public hospitals in South Africa are on the decline; as a result, the poor are being affected. Health care facilities and services, as well as buildings in public hospitals, are almost on the verge of breaking down. Disheartened medical practitioners are continually moving to private hospitals, and some to urban areas due to the lack of apparatus. Patients, as well as nursing staff, are frustrated because of the shortage of medication. The general public now believes that the best health care can be accessed in private hospitals; unfortunately, that is beyond the bounds of possibility for the poor.

9.4.2.3 Supernatural causes

The African reality of duality means that malevolent spirits can cause harm to an individual except for prayer. Such prayers are ‘boisterous and very physical’. Indeed, terms like ‘spiritual warfare’, ‘spiritual battle’, and ‘military prayers’ are frequently mentioned by believers in expressing such prayer rituals (Asamoah-Gyadu 2007, p. 311; Omenyo & Adjei 2013, p. 53). Besides malevolent forces, generational or ancestral curses also cause harm, due to evil covenants made by ancestors. Kalu (2007, p. 8), argues that “Covenants can only be reversed by recognising their existence, potent reality, character and appropriate rituals of disengagement. They are legally binding and may not be wished away without due processes.”

9.4.3. The descriptive-empirical task

In the descriptive approach, the aim was to primarily attend to the situation (the unusual liturgical ritual healing practice) in South Africa. The target was to find out how things are or how they have been and how they should be. The researcher has collected evidence through secondary sources (media-based research) to gain knowledge toward the effectiveness of the phenomenon’s transformational task. The pastoral cycle has been utilised to delineate the phenomenon of unusual liturgical ritual healing practices.

9.4.4. Liturgy based on present-day prophets

Lartey (2001, p. 8) explains,

The success of these churches... is its ability to proliferate itself as 'powerful and effective' and set people at liberty. The liturgy of these churches is provisioned towards the acquaintance with the efficacious aura of the Holy Spirit. Christians have been encouraged to have an awareness of God in their midst, manifested in tangible ways. In this sense, the ministries have been entirely popular within the community, respectively, because they have been found relevant, vibrant, and effective.

The pursuit of miracles has become the apex of present-day churches, to the point of ushering in the issue of devotee-migration, people in search of bettering their lives. Many consider miracles as a validation of God's presence. As a result, people support these churches despite the controversy surrounding them. The traditional African outlook has managed to institute itself, in the Christian liturgy over the years. The notion of ancestors, bad-luck, and witchcraft, frequently surface during deliverance sessions. The quest to overcome evil forces that are perceived to be wicked and are responsible for bringing: ill health, poverty, adversity, ill fate, hardship, and premature death, is the reason why people pursue ameliorates.

The dominant factor for yearning to encounter the power of God is to subvert wicked powers to precipitate victory. Present-day Christians are attracted to liturgical events that are characterised by promises of good health, prosperity, marriages, the fruit of the womb, material blessing, to name but a few. Therefore, contemporary prophets are perceived as problem solvers, who possess spiritual authoritative-power to overcome the predicament. Another contributory factor that ushers in followers to present-day churches is the element of the prophetic, accompanied by signs and wonders. Primarily when predicting the future is associated with a panacea.

9.4.5. Inculturation

Inculturation suggests the conferral of the Gospel shaped to benefit cultures by the insertion of the Gospel. Inculturation in present-day churches is not the adaptation of the way, but an abstract presentation of the supernatural, mostly to influence those cultures through signs and wonders. Present-day theology presents God as a supernatural being to be perceived

abstractly through the Holy Spirit. The Spirit of God is a requirement in spiritual churches. As the African worldview possesses a subjective perception of a dualistic reality, they adapt quickly to the supernatural activities of the Holy Spirit (pneuma).

9.4.6. Ritual

This chapter examined the religious phenomenon of ritual function and its nature in the context of the healing ritual practice, given the fact that unusual ritual healing practice in South Africa is perturbing. Generally, rituals are indispensable elements in the nature and essence of humankind. Rituals also regulate and control social situations for the sake of social order. Since rituals are perceived as features of all known human societies, the inquiry assisted in clarifying, explaining, analysing, unravelling ritual activity, and ceremonial rites. Healing ritual activities involve the following symbolic items employed by South African prophets: pesticides to spray afflicted areas; ingestion of car liquid lubricants, ingestion of antiseptics, and bleach. The reason for present-day prophets employing a diversity of ameliorates is to alleviate a variety of afflictions, to realise a dimension of wholeness.

9.4.7. Worldview

The African worldview is influenced by holism, and the approach focuses on the whole man and one's well-being. He describes an African reality with a distribution of different conceptual elements: views, emotional tendencies, learning that influence their thinking, behaviour, and meaning. The African worldview is influenced by an abstract approach (the supernatural factor) that denotes an African classical culture. Also, the African worldview is characterised by cohesiveness, a unique aspect that exists throughout the continent - a collective or common attribute that forms a united whole. Gehman (2005, p. 24) substantiate this when he writes:

All African people are integrated on a large canvas, although individual expressions exist, general indistinguishability prevails throughout the continent on account of long-established African beliefs. That are deeply entrenched within the lives of many African people, regardless of their geographical location.

9.4.8. Metaphysics

Metaphysics is portrayed as an act of transcendence, an act of going outside the range of things in order to uphold things (Unah 2006, p. 2-3). Reality commands the comprehension of the universe at an abstract level. It is the principle of going (outside the parameters of the

known) over and above the usual activities in the universe. The metaphysician tries to find out fundamental truths of the reality that controls the world to form a description of it (Unah, 2004, p. 10).

African metaphysics search for the ultimate cosmic principles that provide comprehension of their lived experiences, influenced by higher forces. "This worldview of the supernatural led to the idea that some higher forces control human relations and existence" (Essien 2005, p. 36). Understanding reality had always been the quest of humanity. In order to understand human existence, religion was used to interpret the natural world and its operations in order to understand it and to make humankind feel at ease (Essien 2005, p. 36).

9.4.9. Causal theory

According to Sogolo (2004, p. 182), the causal theory for afflictions, points to causative factors. Causative factors are classified into two groups, namely primary and secondary factors. Primary factors are - external - contravening cultural set-laws, and secondary factors are - internal, e.g. are actions caused by self. Therefore, norms and values are essential to African culture as a moral code to avoid misfortunes and to keep the ethical balance in society. The community is held accountable by the standards governing their knitted moral fabric. Substantiating this view of morality, Asouzu (1998, p. 3) writes that "Traditional African society recognizes and holds firmly to certain values... identified as necessary for the correct functioning of the society and the welfare of the individuals." Almost all distressing situations are subject to scrutiny. They are continually investigating for a cause, to detect the reason for events that have befallen them (Buhrmann, 1984, p. 32).

9.4.10. The concept of time

Time exists, as it gradually unfurls and is experienced as a reality by the community. Defining time will prove to be a daunting task. Neither is the present. Once one makes mention of any minute, it is already a gone. "Eternity is defined as the transcendence of time; without beginning or end, it is also qualitatively superior to the temporal" (Erickson 2001, p. 60).

Seasons are sure to occur. Seasons are, therefore, in the category of predetermined or potential time. The most significant consequence of this is that according to African traditional philosophical concepts, time is interpreted as a two-dimensional phenomenon,

with a long past, a present and virtually no future (Mbiti 1990, p. 17; Kalumba 2005, p. 11-20).

9.4.11. Prophets

The tendency to lean toward the spirit realm (the supernatural) or accommodating the spiritual world is a basic African principle (see African worldview chapter six). This ideology has led to an effortless glissade from the world of spirits to the Holy Spirit domain. “The dominant characteristic of the prophets of the African churches is that they are people of the Spirit” (Anderson 2003, p. 180). The pneumatological accentuation has taken over the traditional African prophetic consultation through spirit mediums and is regarded as prophecy in an African context. Some Christians are unable to differentiate between Holy Spirit manifestations and the activities of spirit mediums. The line between the two realms is blurred. There is a constant liminal state between the two realms for the believer. The two realms are inclined to override each other, and this leaves the believer in a compromised state. The conflicting position does not support the individual, instead, it leaves the individual in a compromised position.

Eventually, the individual must choose the domain of worship. In modern times, many are perplexed or confused. This rationale has given rise to the prophetic and deliverance all over the nation. According to Anderson (2003, p. 180), “People perceive the prophets’ pronouncements to be the utterances of the Spirit and by their ability to demonstrate the power of the Spirit by meeting concrete human needs.” The pastor/prophet is a two-fold figure: 1). the prophet is seen as possessing and invoking spiritual power, protection and providing material wealth; 2). the prophet perceived as the mediator between the spiritual realm and the material world. Moreover, as a religious figure that can interpret the word of God.

9.4.12. Toward better practice

Churches should be beacons of hope, in influencing and transforming communities. Moreover, they should be agents in moral and social justice. They should play a significant role in the reduction of corruption and poverty in the land. The understanding of current burning issues will play a role in the persuasion of church organisations to lend a hand concerning national challenges to meet the human existential needs of joblessness among the youths, abuse of women and children, victims who have become prey to unjust social, political, economic, and cultural factors. Liberation for the poor should be a top priority.

9.4.13. Further research

Further research is required to understand the situation that South Africa has found itself in. The current situation seeks further observation, exploration, analyzation, and explication through the lens of theological perspectives and theories from other disciplines, to unearth the “underlying forces that are causing it” (Smith 2008, p. 206).

Further research is necessary to critically analyse the available literature on unusual healing practices and the pursuit of power by present-day prophets. Recent ritual practice by South African pastors is a national concern, further research is needed to resolve the problem. This investigation will determine the source of power employed. It appears as though other sources of power are in control, other than God.

9.4.14. Recommendations

Despite the limitations noted, the findings from this study have several implications for future practical theological knowledge. There is also a need to identify strategies for teaching theology across uninformed South African churches by applying strategies as the point of departure by:

- Conducting workshops - to articulate specific knowledge, skills, attitudes, and behaviours associated with biblical and theological competency;
- Ecumenical reaching out;
- Accreditations;
- Continual interaction, and collaboration between the churches and critical facilitators.

Since we live in the age of information, to ensure a more excellent representation for the public, the following endeavours need to be followed:

- Continually informing the public about sound religious healing practices, and for rural communities to utilise the radio as a source of information.
- Learners should be informed through life skills. This means sound biblical information and all the dangers pointing to the abuse of another human being should be incorporated into the curriculum.

9.5. Conclusion

The fact that diviners used to play a crucial role in attending to African's life questions according to the African worldview is caused by their upbringing. Once people encountered the savoury promises of wholeness through the new trend of a new culture (the arrival of spiritual churches), people abandoned the beliefs of their upbringing and converted to Christianity. The conversion meant doing away with diviners and attaching oneself to Christianity. When pressure mounted from the congregation, the prophet had to consult the diviners, to avoid partisan migration. Ejenobo (2009, pp. 77-78) calls it "syncretism" interfaith dialogue or religious-dualism, which means that Christianity is conflicted. The challenge has tarnished the face of Christianity. The departure from established traditional theological resources, as well as biblical insights have led to the misunderstanding of good practice toward current trends of unusual liturgical healing ritual practice.

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