The Role of Ubuntu in Conflict Resolution: The Case of the Malamulele and Vuwani Conflict in Vhembe District, Limpopo Province, South Africa

By

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DECLARATION

I declare that the thesis that I hereby submit for the degree Doctor of Philosophy in Anthropology at the University of Limpopo is my own work and has not previously been submitted in fulfilment or partial fulfilment of the requirements of any other degree at any other university.

_____ _____

Tlharihani Michael Risimati Date

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DEDICATION

I dedicate this thesis to the Collins Chabane and Thulamela Local Municipalities and to the Malamulele and Vuwani communities. I also dedicate this thesis to the Limpopo provincial government, together with its four district municipalities, namely Vhembe, Mopani, Waterberg and Capricorn. I also dedicate my thesis to the South African government, and all the other provinces in the country.

ABSTRACT

This thesis explores the role of Ubuntu in conflict resolution in the communities of Malamulele and Vuwani, located in Vhembe District of Limpopo Province, South Africa. Despite the decline in the current South African liberal democracy and the challenges that it faces with respect to its restoration, Ubuntu remains pivotal to conflict resolution. Nevertheless, there is hope for the restoration of Ubuntu on condition of a proper and diligent implementation of the tentative Ubuntu Conflict Resolution Model (UCRM), outlined in this study. The study utilised qualitative research methods to explore the role of Ubuntu in conflict resolution in the case of the Malamulele and Vuwani conflict. As a decolonised anthropological study, it examined African human behaviours and cultures with a view to comprehending the society. Based on primary data collected from interviews, the role of Ubuntu in the conflict was uncovered. The entire study utilised Ubuntu as a theoretical framework to analyse the data provided by the participants. The study found that Ubuntu remains a useful tool to unify, amend, heal, reconcile, and maintain broken relationships, if it is restored adequately. However, the study identified a decline of Ubuntu among the Malamulele and Vuwani community members, but the hope is there for Ubuntu to thrive again since there are some members of the communities who still hold Ubuntu and if steps suggested in this study could be taken into consideration. It was discovered that Ubuntu is an independent variable, and fosters quality traditional, family, educational, religious and political leadership. Quality education is enhanced by Ubuntu as its philosophical foundation. In fact, Ubuntu requires environments that are conducive to its own survival; without these environments it may struggle to exist. The study suggested a tentative UCRM; a model that may be used in the communities of Malamulele and Vuwani to resolve conflict on a short- and long-term, bases. While some of the cultural practices of traditional leadership families such as human sacrifice are controversial and unacceptable considering the values of Ubuntu and their roles as cultural custodians of social justice and human rights, the study recommended further descriptive investigation which will look at Ubuntu in traditional leadership practices in contemporary South Africa. Nevertheless, the study has shown that Ubuntu has a place and role to play in the new liberal democratic society since the hope for its restoration is still there.

Key words: Ubuntu, conflict resolution, ethnic identity, violence, community protest, solidarity.

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LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS AND ACRONYMS

ANC	African National Congress
ATR	African Traditional Religion
AU	African Union
CoGTA	Cooperative Governance and Traditional Affairs
CRC	Centre for Conflict Resolution
IDP	Integrated Development Planning
LPG	Limpopo Provincial Government
MDB	Municipal Demarcation Board
MEC	Member of the Executive Council
MTT	Malamulele Task Team
NATO	North Atlantic Treaty Organisation
NPA	National Prosecuting Authority
OAU	Organisation of African Union
SADC	Southern African Development Community
SANCO	South African National Civics Association
TCA	Thematic Content Analysis
TREC	Turfloop Research and Ethic Committee
TRC	Truth and Reconciliation Commission
UCRM	Ubuntu Conflict Resolution Model

GLOSSARY

Venda and Tsonga words	English meaning with explanation used in the thesis
Aa	Venda formal greeting by females.
Avuxeni	Tsonga male and female way of greeting.
***Davha* (Venda)**	In-kind service done by a group of community individuals to a community member.
***Dzunde* (Venda)**	Special field consigned to the traditional leader, the produce of which is used for the generosity and charity to the leader's people. The leader's people participate in the preparation, cultivation and harvesting of this field.
Khoro	Traditional court, or hearing by a traditional court.
Kuphahlelanamariyeta (Tsonga)	Any material or non-material thing paid as a token of acceptance of guilt.
Makhwaya	Tsonga male traditional dance.
Malende	Venda male and female traditional dance.
Musumo	Giving a portion of what you have harvested or gathered to the senior traditional leader or chief.
Mukhinyavezo	Tsonga female traditional dance.
Mutsongolo	Tsonga male traditional dance.
Ndaa	Formal way of greeting by Tshivenda-speaking men.

Ndhawini	Tsonga male and female way of greeting.
Nduvho	Paying homage to the traditional leader.
Shumela Venda	Always aspire for Venda.
Tsima	Special field assigned to the traditional leader, the produce of which is used for the generosity and charity to his/her leader's people. The leader's people participate in the preparation, cultivation and harvesting of this field.
Tshifas	A traditional dance for Venda girls and boys.
Tshileli	A chief's favourite person.
Tshipfumelo	Any material or non-material thing paid as a token of acceptance of guilt.
Tshikona	Venda male traditional music and dance.
Tshisevhesevhe	An activity for raising funds and goods to affiliates who recognised each other by forming a group that engages in such activity.
Tshitokofela (Venda)	An activity of collecting money and rotating it to members who identified themselves as a group. All group members will contribute money monthly, which is given to a member in bulk until all members receive it.
Tshitotorelo or ***mituvha***	The portion of meat given out as a token of gratitude for helping to slaughter an animal.
Tshitunye	A portion of what you have harvested or hunted given to your neighbours.

Ubuntu	The spirit of humanness.
Vhusha	The first stage of girls' initiation among the Venda.
Xibelane	Tsonga female traditional dance.
Xiseveseve (Tsonga)	An activity of raising funds and goods to affiliates who engage in such activity.
Xitokofela (Tsonga)	An activity of raising funds and goods by members who identified themselves as a group. Members will visit each other at their different homes to give money and goods in a playful occasion.

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CHAPTER ONE
ORIENTATION OF THE STUDY: UBUNTU IN CONFLICT RESOLUTION IN MALAMULELE AND VUWANI

1.1 Introduction

The purpose of this chapter is to provide an overview of this thesis. The researcher presents background information about the study as well as the impetus behind the research challenge and defines the research problem as well as the aim and the research objectives. In addition, the researcher explains the motivation for the study, provides an overview of the theoretical foundations, describes the research methodology and discusses the constraints that were placed on the investigation. Finally, a chapter outline is provided.

According to the findings of the study, Ubuntu has recently garnered a lot of interest as a potential method for settling disputes in South Africa and other nations in Africa. Countries like Ethiopia and Tanzania are examples. When it comes to the topic of conflict resolution, the concept of Ubuntu is at the very top of both national and international agendas. It is considered that Ubuntu, which originates in Africa and is a relational concept, has the potential to play a part in lessening the amount of ethnic violence that impedes progress in Africa. Although there is insufficient proof that it is effective, particularly in the presence of Western democracy, capitalism and modernity, the concept of Ubuntu, which was repressed by colonial administrations, is becoming increasingly popular among Africans due to the Afrocentric capabilities it possesses.

By following Eurocentric orthodoxies and reforms, many African countries are characterised by greed, poverty, violence, crime, ethnic conflicts, mismanagement of government recourses and poor governance. One of the limitations of these Eurocentric approaches is that their development was based on the experiences of Western industrialised countries whose culture and history of growth differ from those of African countries. This is why this study chose the African philosophy of Ubuntu as a theoretical framework.

This study shows that, for the sake of peace or as an attempt to end the hostilities that have been going on between two or more ethnic groups, Ubuntu needs to be brought back and made into a policy guide in the operation of the country's systems, structures, values and cultures. Redefining the perspective and institutional understanding of local people as well as

the indicators of governance is necessary to reflect the expectations of local stakeholders as well as their culture and norms. In this way, the local people will recognize that their interest and values are respected. This requires that the indicators of governance be rethought. This study specifically advocates for the building of an Ubuntu framework that will enhance the wellbeing of local inhabitants in South Africa, rather than imitate any foreign institutional structure. Ubuntu, which means "humanity toward others," is a framework that will promote the welfare of local citizens. There is a lot that can be picked up from the country's valuable African cultures and indigenous institutions, both of which have persisted to effectively support the welfare of local people although contemporary government has been unable to enhance the lives of its population (Olowu & Erero, 1995; Okunmadewa et al., 2005). Interdependence, forgiveness, generosity and reconciliation are just a few of the Ubuntu tenets that were used in this study. Other tenets include sharing and selflessness. These principles served as the foundation for the entire research endeavour from the design to the analysis of the data. The next section deals with the background to the study.

1.2 Background and Motivation

The then new South Africa, when Nelson Mandela was serving as President, established a foundation that made Ubuntu the focal point of conflict resolution. This was accomplished under Mandela's direction. In order to address the divisions and strife that arose during the apartheid era in South Africa, the negotiators of the South African Interim Constitution of 1993 came to the consensus that "there is a need for understanding but not for vengeance," "there is a need for reparation but not for retaliation," and "there is a need for Ubuntu but not for victimization" (Constitution of the Republic of South Africa, Act 200 of 1993: Epilogue after Section 251). In addition, the development of the1996 constitution, which advocates for unity in diversity, the vow to a rainbow nation, as well as national healing, all speak of the concept of Ubuntu (Tutu, 2005). The primary motivation for making these agreements was to reduce the likelihood of racial and ethnic tensions arising in what was then known as South Africa (Abrahams, 2016). After a positive commitment to the concepts of Ubuntu, South African policymakers anticipated that all the historical differences that were brought about by the segregation practices of apartheid would be overcome. This was their hope (Abrahams, 2016). During Thabo Mbeki's administration, as one of the government's conflict resolution initiatives, Ubuntu was recognised as a critical philosophy that could assist in promoting peaceful relations (Desai, 2015). Even though it was hailed for its presumed qualities, the majority of White Africans hardly observed the ideals of Ubuntu. Consequently, conflict

between South Africans and foreign internationals erupted in both 2002 and 2008 (Hailey, 2008). In all these conflicts, leaders of the government and non-governmental organisations (NGOs) had been telling people to heed the Ubuntu philosophy as one of the solutions to the problem.

Ubuntu was seen as a potential ethical compass by both the government and the leaders of the African National Congress (ANC). For instance, former South African President Thabo Mbeki and President Jacob Zuma appealed for commitment to Ubuntu as an ethic that ought to shape government action. Thabo Mbeki argued for the return of Ubuntu while at the University of Cape Town. During the eighth annual Steve Biko Memorial Lecture in Jameson Hall, he quoted Steve Biko as saying,

> "The great powers of the world may have done wonders in giving the world an industrial and military look, but the great gift still has to come from Africa - giving the world a more human face" (Mbeki, 2007).

Mbeki further argued that “indeed ubuntu connects all of humanity irrespective of ethnicity or racial origins’’ (Mbeki, 2007). Furthermore, On February 1, 2012, President Jacob Zuma stated that South Africa's foreign policy would always be guided by the values of Ubuntu and commitment to mutually beneficial partnerships with Africa and other countries of the world. This statement was made in reference to South Africa's approach to international relations (South Africa Government News, 2012). To a significant extent, domestic values and policies are extended abroad through the implementation of various foreign policies. At the level of discourse, South Africa articulates a foreign policy that emphasises the values of Ubuntu (South Africa Government News, 2012). Human rights, the creation of peace, equality and justice in the international order are emphasised as essential tenets of the country's foreign policy perspective. The foreign policy white paper that was published in 2011 and given the title Diplomacy of Ubuntu places a significant amount of emphasis on the idea of pursuing "shared humanity, collaboration and co-operation, and forging partnership above confrontation" (South Africa Government News, 2012).

In his address to the Annual Ubuntu Awards in 2020, the current President Cyril Matamela Ramaphosa said, "as members of progressive humanity – driven by the spirit of Ubuntu – let us continue with our noble effort. Let us continue with our noble effort as members of progressive humanity driven by the spirit of Ubuntu. Let us enhance the connections of commerce and trade while also spreading peace and friendship throughout the world. Let us

show the world a more compassionate side, shall we?'' (South African Government, 2020). This means that since Nelson Mandela's debut as president, all South African presidents, namely Thabo Mbeki, Jacob Zuma and Cyril Ramaphosa have pointed to Ubuntu as the solution to social, economic and political instability in the country. The presidents mentioned Ubuntu as essential to putting an end to the strife that arose because of the expansion of colonialism and apartheid.

The African philosophy of Ubuntu appears to have been perverted in practical terms because of several conflicts, most notably the racial and ethnic conflicts that took place in South African towns and rural areas. In 2013, a confrontation that gained the national attention broke out between Vatsonga in Malamulele and Vhavenda in Vuwani. The violence involved people from both communities. The Vatsonga who live in Malamulele were dissatisfied with the way the Thulamela Local Municipality managed its municipal services. They claimed that the municipality promoted the interests of Vhavenda-speaking people at the expense of the Vatsonga, hence demanded that the government grant them a separate municipality. However, prior to the imposition of white regimes, these distinct groups used to coexist peacefully with one another.

When the government decided not to grant a separate municipality to Vatsonga out of fear of recreating ethnic divisions like those that existed during the apartheid era, the confrontations became even more severe. Despite this, the Vatsonga never gave up and continued to fight for their own municipality using a variety of tactics until they finally succeeded. The Municipal Demarcation Board (MDB) imposed the idea of incorporating some villages within Vuwani communities into the newly established municipality of Collins Chabane. This municipality was established because of protests by Vatsonga. As a direct result of that judgment made by the MDB, the conflict between the Vhavenda and the Vatsonga got worse. There were many attempted other approaches to dispute resolution, but none of them were successful. Even though the most important community stakeholders participated in some capacity or another, disagreements persisted.

Traditional leaders, the Malamulele Task Team (MTT), the Vhembe District counsellors and the mayor, the responsible Member of the Executive Council (MEC) and the Limpopo provincial government (Executive Council), representatives from the Department of Cooperative Governance, the Limpopo Department of Human Settlement and Traditional Affairs, the Pro-Makhado Task Team, the Pro-Task Team, and others were involved at

various times in the process of resolving conflicts involving Malamulele and Vuwani. In Vuwani alone, 26 schools were destroyed by fire, property belonging to the government was looted, roads were blocked off, and government officials and police personnel were defied. During the protests, there was a rise in hostility between the Vatsonga and Vhavenda. This circumstance served as the impetus for the researcher to carry out research employing Ubuntu as a theoretical framework to investigate the conflict that erupted between the villages of Malamulele and Vuwani. In South Africa, studies of conflict have been conducted, but the application of this paradigm has been largely ignored in favour of greater emphasis on the Eurocentric paradigm. In this research, particular emphasis is placed on Ubuntu as practiced in South Africa.

1.3 Problem Statement

The violent conflict that erupted between the Vatsonga of Malamulele and the Vhavenda of Vuwani in 2016 was ostensibly over the delivery of services by the Thulamela Local Municipality in Limpopo Province, South Africa. The Vatsonga claimed that critical services such as electricity, water, roads and sporting facilities and many more, which they needed for the enhancement of the quality of their lives, were being directed towards the Vhavenda communities at their expense by the Thulamela Local Municipality which they perceived to be dominated politically by Vhavenda-speaking municipal officials. The researcher who grew up to adulthood and maturity in the area saw and experienced the unfolding of this destructive conflict and was naturally deeply concerned about the conflict. It is this deep concern which led to the decision to conduct this research and investigation.

The Vatsonga and Vhavenda-speaking people subscribe to the same African-centred worldview and lived experiences, which at its core is grounded in the meta-theory of Ubuntu (Ramose, 1999; Mkhize, 2004; Tutu, 2004). Ubuntu, which is underpinned by spirituality and ethical concern, has led historically to the construction of societies and communities among both the Vatsonga and Vhavenda, organised around the virtues of balance, order, reciprocity, righteousness, complementarity of duality and sharing. It is these virtues and ethical ideals which sustained cordial relations among and between different groupings and nations in the Southern African region (Mkhize, 2004). This does not, however, imply that there were no conflicts in precolonial Africa. Conflicts existed but were tempered by an African humanism founded on the principles of sharing, cooperation, forgiveness and harmony, which kept at bay the principles of competition and aggression encoded in the Eurasian worldview

(Obenga, 1997). It may be noted that Ubuntu in Southern Africa shared similarities with the divine principles of Maat-order, balance righteousness and levelness -which were deemed to be intrinsic to the creation of the universe by deep thinkers of classical Kemet (Ancient Egypt), Nubia and Meroe (Obenga, 1997). Southern African Communities were historically energised by the principles of communal harmony and order encapsulated in the proverb, *umuntu ngumuntu ngabantu* in isiZulu, which loosely translates to "a person is a person through or by means of other people" (Mkhize, 2004).

Surely, communities that subscribe to Maat/Ubuntu should have found, within themselves, ways and means of preventing the escalation of conflict which paralysed life in Thulamela Local Municipality. It may also be noted that the conflict took place 22 years in a South Africa supposedly governed by Western Liberal democratic principles and an African leadership – from Nelson Mandela to Jacob Zuma – who deployed the rhetoric of Ubuntu to pull South Africa out of three centuries of dehumanising and divisive apartheid Afrikaner white supremacist rule (Abrahams, 2016). Furthermore, several task-teams composed of community members and government leaders drawn from all levels of the South African political system were sucked into the violent vortex of Malamulele-Vuwani conflict but failed to prevent it.

The issue under investigation is centred on the problematic inability of Vatsonga and Vhavenda of Malamulele and Vuwani, all of whom have historically and culturally subscribed to Ubuntu, which in essence excludes violent conflict, to stop the conflict between them from escalating into destructive violence. The two groups continue to believe in the efficacy of Ubuntu principles as a set of mechanisms that can prevent and stop conflict that erupted between them. What role did Ubuntu play in the process of conflict resolution in Malamulele and Vuwani?

1.4 Purpose of the Study

1.4.1 Aim

This study aimed to explore the role played by Ubuntu in conflict resolution in the Malamulele and Vuwani conflict in Vhembe District of Limpopo Province, South Africa.

1.4.2 Objectives

- To examine views and understanding of Ubuntu of the people of Malamulele and Vuwani.

- To investigate their knowledge of causes and course of the conflict in Malamulele and Vuwani conflict.
- To describe their understanding of the significance of Ubuntu conflict resolution.
- To construct a tentative Ubuntu conflict resolution model (UCRM).

1.5 Significance of the Study

The significance of the study is that it addresses gaps in the literature (Maree, 2016; Rossman & Rallis, 2012). In this thesis, the researcher considered the significance of the study from three different vantage points: (1) what is the general contribution of the research in this field; (2) what specific contribution will this study make to the knowledge base; and (3) who is most likely to benefit from this study.

African leaders have acquired an interest in Ubuntu for conflict resolution as a result of the negative experiences of colonial modernity. As a result, a theoretical approach that supports the role of Ubuntu in conflict resolution has been outlined thanks to this study. In studies such as "Conflict and Conflict Resolution," written by Achankeng I (2013), the concept of Ubuntu as an indigenous conflict mechanism that may be employed successfully to combat conflict was never investigated. Although this study emphasised some of the examples of the process of reconciliation, it failed to describe in detail the extent to which Ubuntu can be applied as a philosophical framework. According to the findings of the second study, which was carried out by Ghebretekle and Rammala (2019) and titled "Traditional African Conflict Resolution: The Case of South Africa and Ethiopia," the central governments of both South Africa and Ethiopia acknowledge the significance of traditional methods of resolving conflicts. They should, however, go beyond pledges to recognise traditional conflict resolution systems by taking active steps to allocate the necessary power and provide new authority for traditional conflict resolution. This would be a better approach than simply making pledges to recognise traditional conflict resolution systems. The current study makes recommendations for the appropriate implementation of Ubuntu at the highest levels of government. According to the findings of this study, no other research has tackled the topic of Ubuntu in the same manner as this one has.

My role as a researcher in the field of anthropology required me to offer insights into how the indigenous culture of Ubuntu changed because of conflict, as well as how it could be synthesised into modern structures and organisations to develop a modern culture that is

geared towards the resolution of conflict. For instance, modern cultures derived from more traditional indigenous cultures can be popularised using media such as radio and television in order to facilitate conflict settlement. Culture should not be considered to be unchanging in this sense; yet, it is essential for the development of contemporary laws, dances, dress codes, and many other things. These contemporary cultural pursuits will retain a flavour or quality that is characteristic of the indigenous civilisations from which they have been derived. Local communities, such as Malamulele and Vuwani, which were previously affected by policies of divide-and-rule, will benefit from this research by synthesising the cultural principles of Ubuntu into promoting peace and harmony.

This research study may also be of importance to policymakers and development organisations since it can provide insight into the genuine nature of current ethnic conflicts and their underlying causes, both of which affect peaceful interrelations between members of South African society. Enhancing harmony is a requirement for both human and economic progress, and policy makers provide knowledge to find solutions to deal with ethnic disputes if they read this thesis. This study sheds light into the institutionalisation of Ubuntu-based techniques of promoting peace, social cohesion and harmony in many areas of governance as well as at a local community level. Other scholars will find a pool of resources and a point of departure when they investigate research subjects that are comparable to this one. This study is exploratory in nature, and as such, it features a variety of intriguing and broad ideas regarding Ubuntu that were identified throughout the course of the study and may require future description and an explanatory study.

The researcher has noted that there is a paucity of written material and studies that attempt to comprehend the problem of conflict resolution from the point of view of local inhabitants and within the framework of the African environment. It has been argued that conflict resolution is a phenomenon that occurs everywhere. According to Rodrik (2008), various cultures have distinctive historical and cultural legacies, which render the application of a strategy that is generic and applicable to all situations ineffective. It is possible that no single institutional paradigm could work in every setting. Considering this, the researcher adopts the African-centred strategy of Ubuntu to gain an understanding of the context-specific issues that are significant for addressing South Africa's approach to dealing with conflict.

1.6 Limitations of the Study

The researcher states that no study can answer every question on the subject due to the limits of the chosen framework. There is not a lot of room for further research on the part that Ubuntu plays in resolving conflicts. As a cultural philosophy, Ubuntu was weakened because of the colonial and Eurocentric values that were encouraged through schooling in African countries during colonial rule. The utilisation of African cultures in governing systems, healthcare systems, environmental protection systems, and agricultural practices has only occurred very lately. Extraordinarily, little has been written to this point about the role of Ubuntu in the resolution of conflicts. Because the researcher needed to dig out information that would help upcoming researchers in a similar field of conflict resolution using the cultural component of Ubuntu, he opted for an exploration research design. This was because he needed to find information that would help.

1.7 Chapter Outline

***Chapter One*:** This chapter provides an orientation to the study; provides a clear introduction, background, motivation, and presentation of issues of focus in the study. It also defines the problem statement, the aim, objectives and significance of the study, including this chapter outline.

***Chapter Two*:** The chapter conducts a critical review of the relevant literature on conflict resolution in order to come to grips and to determine the approaches and conceptualisations of other scholars on this matter. The purpose is to ensure that this study does not duplicate what is already known. The researcher identified knowledge gaps as well as the merits and demerits of extant approaches and conceptualisations on conflict resolution. Since the study is not comparative, the review focuses mainly on the African experience on the grounds that the African cultural experience often neglected in Eurocentric discourses offers a unique and distinct paradigm in resolving human conflicts. The chapter closes with an explanation of the basic and fundamental assumption of what the researcher designates as the Ubuntu paradigm/ research programme and theory which guide the study. In this way, the epistemic identity of the entire research process is provided.

Chapter Three: Focuses on the demarcation of the study area and unpacks the main historical-political features to provide the backdrop to the Malamulele-Vuwani conflict.

***Chapter Four*:** Describes the research methodology which guided the study.

***Chapter Five*:** Turns to a discussion on Ubuntu in the context of the causes and course of the Malamulele-Vuwani conflict.

Chapter six: Discusses Ubuntu in the context of the results and outcomes of the Malamulele-Vuwani conflict.

Chapter seven: Focuses on an outline of a tentative Ubuntu conflict resolution model.

Chapter eight: Summarises the findings of the study. The chapter also focuses on the conclusions and recommendations.

CHAPTER TWO
LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1 Introduction

In the preceding chapter, the backdrop of the Malamulele and Vuwani conflict was described. In this chapter, the researcher conducts a critical review of the relevant literature to determine what is known and what is unknown about the subject, to identify theoretical traditions within bodies of literature, and to describe methods of inquiry used in previous work, including both their successes and failures. However, because the topic of conflict resolution is so vast, this review of the literature concentrates on published literature. The chapter analyses the literature on conflict and conflict resolution, focusing primarily on the causes of conflict and methods of conflict resolution. This review examines conflicts from a national, continental and a global perspective.

The problem that Africa is currently facing is not really the occurrence and/or severity of the conflict in the real sense; rather, the problem is how to resolve these conflicts in such a way as to prevent past conflicts from re-occurring while simultaneously containing present conflicts so that they do not escalate and degenerate into full-scale war. As a result of the fact that human interaction can lead to conflict, the selection of appropriate methods, instruments, tactics and strategies for resolving such conflicts in Africa is a matter that is of concern to a number of stakeholders. The purpose of this assessment of literature is to discover the most applicable theoretical framework on which to build this study, and as part of that process, a critique of several theories of conflict resolution is presented. At the end of this chapter, we will also discuss the advantages and disadvantages of conducting this literature review in its entirety.

2.2 Description of Conflict Resolution

Landis (2017) proposed that practically every academic field has its own distinct theoretical approach to understanding conflicts. This was in reference to the fact that the study of conflict is an interdisciplinary field. In economics, the focus is on game theory and decision-making, and in psychology, the focus is on interpersonal conflicts. In sociology, the focus is on status and class conflicts, and in political science, the focus is on intra-national and international conflicts. As a result, doing a comprehensive study of the literature on conflicts

is a challenging endeavour at best. The primary emphasis of this literature study is on conflicts and the settlement of conflicts from a global to a local perspective. The primary objective of conflict resolution is to establish conditions in which the parties involved can emerge from the experience having gained something positive. The situation should have improved more than it would have if it had been left to follow its natural course to guarantee that the actions adopted to end the conflict were suitable. One positive aspect of conflict is that it may sometimes be beneficial by serving as a foundation upon which to build the kind of life one dreams of having in the years to come. When there is conflict, several community organisations and stakeholders get together to try to find a better solution or to distribute available resources more fairly (Scialabba, 1998). The word "conflict resolution" is a catch-all phrase that refers to a wide variety of approaches that might be taken to settle a dispute. Whatever a person does to resolve a conflict, regardless of how unfavourable the action may be, it is carefully considered a type of conflict resolution. An alternative dispute resolution is another name for a conflict resolution, which is another prevalent name (ADR). The three most common methods of resolving conflicts are called negotiation, mediation and arbitration.

2.3 Conflict as a Concept and its Causes

Butware (2012) maintained the position that there is no possibility of a long-term solution to any given society's disputes until the underlying causes of those conflicts are addressed. In the absence of mediation, conflicts quickly become contagious and have the potential to spread across borders as rapidly as cancer cells (Marshall, Gurr, & Khosa, 2001). According to the findings of a study conducted by Alemei and Mandefro (2018), social disputes are a natural part of social life; they are not signs of disorder or occurrences that ought to be avoided. According to this school of thought, differences of opinion can result in changes that are both helpful and effective. It is often considered a challenge to view disputes as opportunities for problem-solving, as they are thought to motivate both individuals and institutions to develop novel approaches to resolving the issues they face. However, aside from the motivational impulse, the negatives associated with conflicts are evident. Conflicts can be damaging to the orderly functioning of human systems if they are not controlled and regulated, and this can be a result of the fact that they are not managed. According to Katz et al. (2020), conflict is studied by social scientists in two quite different approaches, depending on whether they are interested in the positive or negative aspects of the conflict. Keeping this

fact in mind, every social structure has devised means to contain and manage the potential for conflict.

The term "conflict" refers to the clashing of overlapping interests (positional differences) around values and issues (tangibles and intangibles) and is a process of interaction between adversaries to destroy their opponents because they have incompatible goals or interests (Muyingi, 2013). As a result, a problematic relationship can be identified by a particular attitude and set of behaviours, while the conflict process itself indicates some level of interdependence between the parties involved. There are many kinds of conflicts, including family conflicts, intra-state conflicts, inter-state conflicts, global conflicts, revolts, mutinies, and insurgencies, and conflicts between diverse groups of people. Intergroup conflict is the form of disagreement or feud that takes place between two or more sectarian or religious groups, ethnic groups, communities, or interest groups given the context, and the primary topic, of this study (Alemei & Mandefro, 2018). The contention between Christians and Moslems in Nigeria is a classic example of inter-faith conflict. On the other hand, the Vuwani-Malamulele protest in South Africa (Mokgopo, 2017), the Maitatsine riots in Kano, and the Bulumkutu crisis in Maiduguri (Jacob, 2015) can be referred to as ethnic conflict. Ethnic conflict typically culminates in civil war. The common usage of the word "conflict," on the other hand, does not adequately describe the full scope of the occurrence.

2.4 Causes of Conflicts

2.4.1 Civil Disobedience

It is commonly held that conflicts between diverse groups almost always end in demonstrations and acts of civil disobedience. These kinds of demonstrations can be nonviolent or violent, and the people involved may respond positively or angrily, which can lead to violence on both sides. For example, in 2012, the South African police were responsible for the deaths of 34 miners who were nonviolently demonstrating against bad working conditions (Aserumule, 2015). According to research published by academics such as Khosa, Ted Gurr and Montrel Marshall, most African conflicts are precipitated by a confluence of factors, including poverty, weak states and institutions (Marshall, Gurr, & Khosa, 2001). According to Jacob (2015), since African state frontiers are more flexible now than they were at the time of independence, thousands of refugees fleeing economic and political persecution migrate freely throughout the continent. As a consequence of this, there

is a possibility that this will alter the perspective of various states and the citizens of those states, leading to disparities in ideologies and values as well as conflicts between different groups. It is considered that the root cause of all conflict is a lack of communication, an absence of openness, and a lack of trust between the parties involved. This is because the dysfunctional repercussions of conflict can inhibit growth (Rasila & Musitha, 2017). One of the primary factors that is believed to play a role in the escalation of tensions between two groups of people is the inability of one group of people to recognise and accommodate the requirements and goals of the other group of people. As a result, as soon as a conflict is noticed, its root cause should be determined, and then the conflict itself should be resolved as quickly as possible.

Civil disobedience is in direct opposition to the core principles that underpin Ubuntu and the society that has abandoned Ubuntu. An individual who has a solid foundation in the ideals of Ubuntu cannot disregard the laws of the state (Tutu, 2005). Even in situations in which there are no law enforcers to correct him, a person who possesses Ubuntu will ensure complete allegiance to the state. He intends to pursue a career in law enforcement and always tells the truth. It does not mean that a person who possesses Ubuntu does not stand up for his or her rights; rather, it means that he or she stands up for the truth and their rights regardless of the cost. During their fight for their rights and the rights of others, for instance, freedom fighters in South Africa were subjected to arrest, torture, and even death for speaking the truth (Tutu, 2005). Through non-violent activism and negotiation, the effect of Ubuntu in the fight against unjust allocation of services, treatment, and manipulation becomes apparent. As a result of this, the transition from apartheid to democracy in South Africa will always serve as an admirable illustration of Ubuntu because political leaders were prepared to negotiate, forgive, and make peace with those who had wronged others (Tutu, 2005).

Civil disobedience is a tool that is utilised to gain something in the political sphere; however, when the role of Ubuntu in conflicts is taken into consideration, civil disobedience transforms into nonviolent resistance. In that scenario, there will be no violence, theft, or destruction of property. The most effective method for fighting against injustice is nonviolent resistance, particularly the practice of speaking out against injustice. This is because nonviolent resistance does not destroy other people (Van den Heuwel, Mangaliso & Van de Bunt, 2007).

Ramose (1999) contends that contemporary Southern Africa and Ubuntu are among the products of globalisation and can only be understood as such products. For him, globalisation

is some external phenomenon that needs to be opposed by Ubuntu. Van Binsbergen (2002) contests the view that the established, socially accepted and public norm, particularly in urban areas, revolves around the consumption of manufactured goods that are circulating globally; formal education; world religions; formal organisations that structure the state, industry, schools and churches; civic self-organisations; and notions of authority, causality and truth that are patterned by constitutional democracy, the Enlightenment, and modern global science. To fall short of this norm is to concede to personal failure, backwardness, rebellion, and sin for the urbanite of Southern Africa, particularly the urbanite under the age of forty. An assessment of the relevant research reveals that both Christianity and Islam have been responsible for substantial shifts in African cultural norms and values (Van Binsbergen, 2002). Even those values that match these religions in traditional African cultures, such as the ideals of Ubuntu, were looked down upon in a derogatory manner. Colonialism was responsible for the introduction of both religions. For the purposes of colonialism, Africa's political worth was dislodged and replaced with a value imported from outside. The introduction of Christianity and the effects of colonialism led to the erosion of traditional African values. These new standards have replaced the previous ones (Ewelu, 1999: 40). The African cosmos ended up being a victim of extraneous ideology, which is a problem it has continued to struggle with despite having extraordinarily little or no success. For instance, because of the gradual erosion of African traditional norms, most Africans now have at least one name that is either European or Christian. This suggests that in terms of orientation and value, pagan names, arts, music, religion, and so on are inferior to their European counterparts. The acceptance of this by Africans has continued to be harmful to the postcolonial world in a variety of diverse ways.

Nguyen (2010) also emphasised that ethnic conflict is a product of globalisation, which brings diverse cultures in touch with one another, and ultimately causes a collision of civilisations. He believed that this was the root cause of the problem. The idea that "conflicts of the future would arise along the cultural fault lines separating civilisations" was put forth by Huntington (1993). It is thought that the ease with which individuals may communicate around the world would lead to an increase in the number of interactions that occur between people of diverse cultures, hence enhancing civilisation consciousness. This heightened "civilisation consciousness" makes the contrasts between civilisations more obvious, which will revive animosities, which ultimately leads to warfare (Huntington, 1993). According to Blimes (2006), moderate levels of diversity are more prone to experience conflict than ones

with either a high degree of homogeneity or heterogeneity. It has been discovered that states with an elevated level of fractionalisation have a lower likelihood of experiencing civil war than those with a prominent level of ethnic homogeneity.

Given these conditions, it is not plausible to assert that the majority of people living in Southern Africa now know and practice Ubuntu as a result of any continuity with village life (Van Binsbergen, 2002). They need to be educated so that they might pursue, under the name Ubuntu, a global and urban reformulation of ideals that are traditionally held in villages. They learn this on the authority of recognised opinion leaders of the globalised centre, such as politicians and university intellectuals, as opposed to traditional diviners and priests, to whom one cannot appeal in the globalised space without risking a significant amount of personal embarrassment. And the latter can only communicate with the urban people worldwide. As a form of thought, Ubuntu needed to be globalised so that it could be accepted by the vast majority of contemporary people living in Southern Africa (Van Binsbergen, 2002).

2.5 Economic and Political Differences between Groups

A global study coordinated by an Oxford professor named Frances Stewart (2008) came to similar findings after taking economic factors into consideration. The findings centred on the hypothesis that violent conflict in multicultural societies occurs when there are major horizontal inequalities between culturally defined groups. The contention of this article is that when cultural differences combine with economic and political divisions between groups, it can produce deep anger, which may, in turn, lead to violent struggles. According to another explanation provided by Langer, Mustapha and Stewart (2009), from the late 1950s, several ethnic groups in Nigeria have been in competition with one another for representation in government and state institutions. This frequently resulted in members of the groups that were inadequately represented feeling as though they were being discriminated against because of their ethnicity, race or religion. This, in turn, stoked feelings of tension and conflict, which ultimately led to the outbreak of civil war in Nigeria (1967–1970).

2.6 The Creation of Ethnicity

Niehaus' (2002) reassessment of "Shangaan identity in the multi-ethnic South African Lowveld" highlights the agency of the subordinate to adopt terms of their own definition as the basis for collective assertion. This is in contrast with the revisionist studies on ethnicity that were conducted in the 1980s, which focused on the creation of ethnicity by colonial

rulers for their own gain through divide-and-rule. These studies were conducted during the 1980s. This lends credence to the idea that Africans were active participants in the creative process, despite the fact that colonialism utilised both constructed and traditional aspects of African ethnicities in order to create politically useful ones. In some instances, Africans appropriated these elements and altered them in order to make them more suitable to their own requirements. Indigenous communities that were prevalent throughout the area utilised ethnicity to their advantage in order to promote tribal histories, tribal narratives and tribal myths, which resulted in the formation of ethnic connections and the strengthening of ethnic relationships. During the 1930s and 1940s, colonial politicians such as Awolowo and Macaulay, among others, encouraged and supported such actions (Falola, 1999). In addition, their activities have long-term repercussions for the conflict resolution that is taking place in South Africa today.

2.7 Competition of Ethnic Groups over Natural Resources

According to Nguyen (2010), there is a correlation between the accessibility of natural resources and the occurrence of ethnic conflict. If the economy of a nation-state is based on primary commodities like agricultural produce and natural resources, then that nation-state is more likely to experience internal conflict. In this setting, conflict can be attributed to either greed or grievances. Where there are emotions of ethnic or political marginalisation, because of one group being disadvantaged by another group in terms of access to natural resources, these feelings can lead to conflict (Humphreys, 2005). In addition, a study carried out in Kenya indicated that several communities continue to rely on ethnicity, either intentionally or unconsciously, to perpetuate their control and hegemony in an environment that is defined by a lack of resources, fear and prejudice. There is hardly any region in this country that has not been affected by the escalation of ethnic tensions, including Western, Central, North Eastern, and Eastern Kenya, as well as the Rift Valley, Nyanza, the Coast, and even Nairobi. The proliferation of ethnic conflicts in this country is so widespread that there is hardly any region where the problem has not reared its ugly head (Nyukuri, 1997).

2.8 Instrumentalism

Conflicts do not arise because of racial or ethnic differences; rather, they are caused by the "instrumentalization" of those differences, which is the result of a variety of institutional choices that are influenced by political, economic and social forces. The myriad of factors that contribute to conflicts serve to highlight this fact (Musau, 2009). Many people believe

that instrumentalism is another factor that contributes to ethnic strife. In this sense, instrumentalism maintains that conflicts between different ethnic groups are likely to occur because of modernisation and development, since these processes provide elites with the incentives to manipulate ethnicity in order to achieve power and riches. In addition, the process of modernisation and development leads to the "creation" of multiple ethnic identities by aspirant "elites in the struggle for power, wealth, and security," and as a result, violent conflicts "emerge within and between ethnic groups as modernization tends to progress unequally" (Angstrom, 2000).

2.9 Use of State Violence in the Exercise of Power

When it comes to the exercise of authority in Rwanda, the custom of resorting to state-sanctioned violence has deep historical origins. As a result of brutality, the Tutsi were able to gain political authority over the Hutu masses far more easily. Extermination has always been the method of choice for combating discord, and prevention has always been accomplished by the maintenance of terror towards factions within a society that harbours disagreements that can lead to unrest. The quiet of oppressed communities has always been the most important requirement for peaceful cooperation with those in power. Because this power has always been held primarily by a single ethnic group, the members of the various militias have all come from the same ethnic group. The Tutsi were more commonly found serving in the militia, whereas the Hutu were restricted to non-combat roles (Batware, 2012).

2.10 The passing of the Bantu Education Act

H.F. Verwoerd was the mastermind behind the South African Bantu Education Act 47 of 1953, which led to a lot of disputes in South Africa. The Act provided greater educational privileges to white learners, and while black learners were required to learn in a more challenging environment (Hartshorne, 1992). During the majority of the 1940s, the African National Congress (ANC) became involved in a fight with the government in order to force it to change its policies on education. The government's insistence on depriving black students, including the implementation of Afrikaans as a medium of teaching in 1976, contributed to the escalation of the conflict. It was necessary for the learners of 1976 to demonstrate, and this led to an insurrection that resulted in the deaths of several learners at the hands of the government's police. As a direct consequence of the rebellion in 1976, it is estimated that between 176 and 700 students lost their lives.

2.11 Conflict Resolution

According to Brigg and Muller (2009), conflict resolution is a process or an intention to bring about changes that will result in the completion of a process. This includes the diffusion of the negative emotional energy, which allows the parties in conflict to understand and resolve their differences in such a way as to achieve solutions that are not imposed, that have been agreed to by all of the parties in conflict, and that addresses the root cause of the conflict in order to promote peace. According to Brigg and Muller (2009), conflict resolution encompasses the whole individual, a nation, or the group of the person, as well as the political system and the physical environment. Studying conflict, its resolution, and ways to prevent it is invariably a subject that is beyond the confines of conventional thought.

According to Burton (1990), conflict resolution is a field of study that may be applied in any context because it transcends cultural boundaries and cannot be dissected into component parts of behaviour. The study of conflict resolution goes beyond the discrete fields of study that are more commonly referred to as disciplines. It aims to take a comprehensive perspective on the ways in which people behave when they are in conflict, without being politically idealistic or, in any way, superficial (Brigg & Muller, 2009). Klare (2001) expanded on the idea that resolving a conflict necessitates addressing its fundamental causes, altering attitudes and behaviours so that they are no longer antagonistic towards one another, changing behaviours so that they are no longer violent, and modifying structures so that they are no longer exploitative. Burton (1990) desired to facilitate better communication between the participants in disagreement and assist them in better understanding the requirements of one another. In addition to this, he sought to ensure that both parties were aware that human wants are not constrained by resources, and that successful negotiation may always result in a situation in which both parties come out on top.

2.11.1 Conflict Resolution: A Global Overview

It has been stated that in a wide variety of subjects, researchers are slowly but surely beginning to come to terms with globalisation. Peace and conflict resolution theorists have recently started to ponder the meaning of globalisation from their perspective. Since the end of the Cold War, the world has seen a rapid transformation, and the old system of colonialism has been eradicated as a result. Even while it is simple to define what has changed, it is abundantly evident that a new system of neocolonialism has taken its place. However, it is

not yet clear how African governments can deal with it given that it produces multiple disputes within the states themselves. The colonial powers have pretended that they are ready to transfer power and authority to indigenous African populations when, in fact, they intended to hand over only the "trappings" of authority without transferring genuine power and authority. The indigenous African populations have pretended that the colonial powers are ready to transfer power and authority, which they have seized back. The African economy and territories were still under the indirect control of their respective former colonial powers. This was accomplished in the form of the provision of loans to African states at high interest rates. The impoverished African republics had a tough time making the loan repayments, which ended up becoming a burden for their economy. It is unfortunate that neocolonialism has fallen out of favour as a framework for analysing "progress" in Africa (Langan, 2017). Political warfare between blacks and blacks, conducted along personal, tribal, or religious lines, simmers just below the surface almost everywhere and has burst into the open in the states and territories that recently attained their independence as well as in those that are scheduled to achieve independence soon. According to Achankeng (2013), the problem with the conflict resolution community is that it appears to undertake efforts to resolve conflicts in Africa for a wide variety of goals and interests, and it does so with policies that are frequently riddled with ambiguities and contradictions. It is possible that this circumstance is the reason many wars in Africa are currently quiet but continue to be largely unresolved. The following are some of the issues that were discussed when trying to find solutions to conflicts on an international level.

2.11.1.1 The use of the judicial system

According to Shmueli, Elliott and Kaufman (2006), conventional dispute resolution at an international level is typically entrusted to the legislative branch (by vote), the judicial system (by law), or an administrative arena, where decisions are made according to technical expertise. In each of these cases, the resolution of the dispute is carried out in accordance with the relevant legal framework. If legislative actions or administrative judgments are challenged in a manner that leads to legal action, the focus is typically placed on the procedural and legal intricacies rather than the substantive issues at hand. Due to the frequent dissatisfaction of the parties involved when disagreements are settled through these conventional channels, researchers and practitioners have begun investigating alternative dispute resolution (ADR) approaches as a supplement to conventional systems (Jacob, 2015).

In addition, in recent years, academics have begun to focus more of their emphasis on the ways in which social science can be used to develop strategies for resolving conflicts.

2.11.1.2 Reliance on International Organisations for Conflict Resolution

A de facto reinterpretation of what constitutes an international conflict has brought about a potentially revolutionary shift in international politics. Traditional war, which can be defined as a violent confrontation between nation-states operating through their armed forces or proxies and taking place outside the borders of at least one of those nations, is still a component of international conflict. Muyingi (2013), on the other hand, hypothesised that in the present day, certain conflicts are regarded as dangers to international peace and security even if two governments or groups are not actively engaged in combat. This is especially true in situations where abuses of universal principles, such as self-determination, human rights, or democratic government, are at the heart of internal conflicts. Disputes are being prevented, concluded, or resolved through concerted international measures, which may include the threat or use of force. This is similar to the way that conflicts were occasionally settled in the past through the waging of wars. In this sense, some wars that take place within the borders of a country are being considered as if they are international.

According to Hehir (2008), there have been a number of prominent recent examples of international responses by international organisations. Some of these responses include the delayed international military responses to genocide in Rwanda, ethnic cleansing in Bosnia, and repression in East Timor; the unprecedented military response of the North Atlantic Treaty Organisation (NATO) to repression in Kosovo; the establishment and enforcement of no-fly zones in Iraq; and the use of economic sanctions against Iran. As is the case with Haiti, situations in which democratically elected governments have been the target of attempted or actual coups d'état have on occasion also been categorised as international conflicts. Concerns on a global scale have also been raised in response to situations in which the violent breakup of states or the descent of states into violence is a real possibility, such as in Bosnia, Albania and Somalia. The state system, which had been preeminent in international politics for centuries, was reflected in the primary methods of international conflict management throughout the time of the Cold War (Butler, 2009). It made sense to consider international conflict as an event that took place between nation-states that acted in a unified manner. This was done based on consistent and distinct national interests that were rooted in geopolitics, natural resources and other everlasting characteristics of countries. The reliance on

international organisations for the resolution of conflicts in Africa has not produced any fruitful results because the intervention of these organisations has not been successful. One such dispute is the one that occurred in Rwanda between the Hutu and the Tutsi, which resulted in genocide. The interventions took a long time to bring about a resolution to the conflicts.

2.11.1.3 Government's Delay to Respond to People's Needs

When Africans communicate their issues to their governments in a peaceful manner, those governments have a tendency to disregard them. It is not until they escalate their complaints through violent protests that governments pay attention to the citizens' concerns (Stewart et al., 2006). Conflicts that escalate into violence are frequently precipitated by a lack of understanding of what people want. An example of this is the youth rebellion that took place in Soweto in 1976. This occurred because the apartheid administration was unwilling to listen to the requests of the young of Soweto, who did not want Afrikaans to be taught in public schools.

2.11.2 Conflict Resolution on the Continent of Africa

Throughout history, the number of violent conflicts that have broken out in Africa has been the highest in any region in the globe (Nwadike & Ekeanyanwu, 2012). These wars of liberation might include anything from disagreements over land and borders to struggles for control over resources and even acts of ethnic cleansing. One of the fundamental reasons for the ongoing strife in Africa is the legacy left behind by colonisation. According to Cohen (1995), the legacy of colonialism can still be seen and felt in most African countries that have achieved their independence. The parasitic effects of colonialism, which have transformed into imperialism in the post-colonial and post-independent era, are still causing several African countries to struggle with the challenge of nation-building as well as several developmental issues at the present time. This is the case in several African countries. The colonisation of Africa resulted in a clash of cultures between the indigenous African culture and the Western culture. The cultures that were subjugated by the West in Africa believed that their culture was inferior to and subservient to the Western culture. According to Ghebretekle and Rammala (2018), the realm of African conflict resolution was introduced to the concept of cultural hegemony.

Africa is plagued by diverse types of violent conflict, including border disputes, civil turmoil, civil wars and genocides. The Democratic Republic of the Congo (DRC), Sudan, Burundi, Rwanda, Liberia, Uganda and Lesotho, are just some of the countries in Africa that have experienced civil wars because of ethnic or religious conflicts. Other examples of African conflicts include turmoil in Angola; state or rebel conflicts in Sierra Leone, Cote d'Ivoire and Guinea Bissau; border conflicts between Ethiopia and Eritrea and between Nigeria and Cameroon (Oguone & Ezeibe, 2014).

At this point in time, Africa as a continent does not possess the tools that are required to effectively deal with crimes of genocide and other violent crimes (Nagar, 2016). Conflicts between people of different races or religions, as well as those based on other aspects of identity, take place more frequently than not and are responsible for the deaths of a considerable number of people. Conflicts between different ethnic groups and religious groups are not uncommon in nations such as Nigeria. When one group of people believes, whether correctly or incorrectly, that another group, or an "enemy," poses a danger to their way of life in the form of physical or political diminution or eradication, this can lead to identity-based conflict (or its perception). The battle lines in this kind of conflict are typically drawn along contrasts in material or non-material identities, and they typically occur between communities that have existed for a long time. Consequently, a conflict that is built on identities is a conflict that has collective narcissisms competing with one another. They crystallise out of a sense of belonging to an ethnic group, a territory, a language, a religion and a culture. The basis for this sense of belonging can be an ethnic group, a region, a language or a religion. History, ideological constructions, and political ties may also play a role in the formation of divisions. According to Shyaka (2016), the previous two things are representative of the Hutu-Tutsi conflict that is taking place in Rwanda and Burundi.

At the very least, I can think of three reasons to anticipate a significant amount of success for Ubuntu. One of the reasons why I draw comparisons with girls' initiation ceremonies in contemporary urban Zambia is that the social framework there is analogous to and continuous with that of South Africa and Zimbabwe, even though there is extreme poverty and terrible infrastructure. These initiation rites are performed in accordance with a time-honoured rural idiom that revolves around female identity. This is supported by an in-depth knowledge and appreciation of the female body, as well as a celebration of productive and reproductive capacities. Frequently, the forms and emphasis of these initiation rites are out of step with

contemporary urban life. The construction of female identity with potent and ancient (probably Late Palaeolithic) symbols appears to be of lasting major concern even, or especially, in the face of globalisation. One would have expected such rites to decline and disappear, but on the contrary, they are becoming increasingly popular, especially among the middle classes. A function similar to that of Ubuntu may be possible. In the second place, the symbolic technologies offered by local village-based symbols, concepts and practices, whether they are girls' initiation rites, Ubuntu, or anything else, constitute a form of symbolic empowerment for the very people who fought to attain majority rule and cast off the yoke of North Atlantic cultural and symbolic dominance in Southern Africa in the 1970s and 1980s. This was the case in Zambia in the late 1950s and in Southern Africa in the 1970s and 1980s. Ubuntu gives them the appearance of an ancestral model that is credible and with which they can identify (often they are not). In the third place, Ubuntu is especially appealing when it comes to the settlement of seemingly unsolvable conflicts and insurmountable contradictions, such as those that massively dominate life in Southern Africa today. Ubuntu is especially appealing when it comes to the settlement of seemingly unsolvable conflicts and insurmountable contradictions.

When considered against the backdrop of the anatomy of reconciliation that was covered before, the concept of Ubuntu, when invoked in the contemporary management of urban and national conflicts, can produce positive results. To the contrary, these Africans are largely globalised in their worldview and practices, and are not governed by village rules and allegiances any more than people in similar urban and national arenas on other continents. In other words, it does not summarise the internalised cultural orientations of the Africans who are involved in such conflict. Ubuntu is successful although it is founded on face-to-face interactions between people in rural and other small-scale settings. This is true for two reasons: firstly, it is perceived as an African thing; and secondly, and most crucially, because, despite being built on a global format, it puts non-global, local and personal qualities into the heart of Southern African globalisation. Both reasons are accurate. Ubuntu has the potential to be successful precisely since it is unique and out of place in South Africa, which is where it is most enticing to contemporary industrial managers, politicians and academics. It enables the conflict regulator to provide an unexpected perspective (for reasons related to history, identity and strategy), which is in the best tradition of reconciliation as an inventive sleight of hand (Van Binsbergen, 2001).

2.11.2.1 African Union (AU) as a conflict resolution organisation

The establishment of the Organisation of African Unity (OAU) on May 25, 1963 was an important historical event that is tied to the history of the African Union (AU). The preamble of the OAU Charter highlighted the commitment of member nations to collectively establish, preserve and perpetuate peace and security in Africa, while at the same time preserving the standards of non-intervention. This commitment was outlined in the OAU Charter (Oguone & Ezeibe, 2014). The goal of pan-Africanism and the principle of non-indifference are the roots of the African Union's (AU) right to intervene in internal conflicts. These principles stipulate that African countries can no longer remain indifferent to the conflict and suffering that occurs in their neighborhood and that African countries have a primary responsibility to establish and maintain the peace and security architecture on the continent (Murithi, 2009).

The African Union (AU) has become the go-to organisation for conflict resolution in almost all these African states, even though the AU's reliability has been called into question in a variety of situations across the continent, including those in Côte d'Ivoire, Libya, Ethiopia, Mozambique, Burundi, Rwanda and many other nations. The African Union (AU) was slow to respond in those countries because it lacked the capacity to resolve the disputes there (Oguone & Ezeibe, 2014). Countries such as Rwanda and Burundi (Shyaka, 2016), South Africa and Kenya strengthened their constitutions as tools to resolve conflicts, and national reconciliation was prescribed in each of these countries' constitutions. The African Union (AU), the constitutions of the various countries, and the modern court systems of the various African governments have significantly reduced the number of conflicts; however, this reduction has not been sustainable since conflict as a social problem still occurs across continents, regions, and nations. Therefore, there is still the possibility that African indigenous legal systems, together with the dispute resolution frameworks that accompany them, will make it through an assault by human rights legislative and judicial authorities (Choudree, 1999).

2.11.2.2 African Indigenous Knowledge Systems as a way of Resolving Conflicts

It is of utmost importance to have an appreciation for the specific format under which the ideas, beliefs and images that inform today's village communities and family situations present themselves to have a proper understanding of the nature and the societal locus of the concept of Ubuntu in Southern Africa today. This understanding will allow for a proper comprehension of both the nature and the locus of Ubuntu in society (Van Binsbergen, 2001). Not only peasants and academic Ubuntu philosophers of Southern Africa are suspected of

manufacturing tradition, but others may be suspected of doing so as well. In addition, as ethnographers and analysts, we are frequently required to project the worldviews we come across over the course of our research back in time, at least a few centuries, and possibly even to the time when the Bantu language family first emerged. However, the solutions to these conflicts have been as varied as the communities that have been affected since the beginning of time. Conflicts can take many forms, and just like in any other human community, they can be found in several different communities across Africa. According to Komuhangi (2006), there has been a discernible increasing trend in the awareness of the role that indigenous techniques play in the resolution of high-level, mid-level and low-level disputes. The overarching goal of these approaches is to foster harmonious cohabitation in society. There is not just one method that indigenous African groups can use to resolve conflicts. Instead, they employ several different strategies, all of which are predicated on the notion that achieving peace involves more than simply putting an end to hostilities or finding a solution to a problem; rather, it also involves mending relationships with one another.

Graybill (2004) provided evidence that numerous postcolonial African states have been affected by violent conflicts. As a result, there has been an increased demand for practical methods of conflict resolution and peacebuilding. Certain groups, particularly in West Africa, have the desire to control power and resources at the expense of others. This aspiration is at the root of racism, civil wars, armed insurrections, terrorism, ethnic conflict, genocide, xenophobia, intra-community conflict and domestic conflict that are prevalent throughout Africa. This is especially the case for nations that were dominated by another power for an extended period (Alemei & Mandefro, 2018). Given that Africa's contemporary history is dominated by violent conflict, which has prompted many war-torn nations to embrace different conflict resolution and peace-building approaches, the search for peace and security led to the resurgence of Ubuntu, an African humanist ideology. Ubuntu is an indigenous approach to conflict resolution and peacebuilding, which is significant given that Africa's contemporary history is dominated by violent conflict.

Murithi (2006) went on to assert that the socio-cultural norms and values that were ingrained in the indigenous institutions of Africa's various societies have remained an indispensable component of each organised society in Africa. According to the findings of several studies, and as one academic so eloquently stated it, Africa has never had a state of peace that is long-lasting. The scourges of the slave trade, inter-tribal conflict and the intrusion of colonialism

have been responsible for the disruption of peace in this region ever since the pre-colonial period. Accordingly, as Kamrava (2013) reaffirms, the characteristics of African conflicts cause discontinuities and a lack of coherence in the political cultures of most countries located in the Third World. Since Africa is home to over 70 percent of the peacekeeping operations carried out by the United Nations, it is imperative that a resolution be found as soon as humanly possible. In addition to being a powerful human weapon for survival, as articulated by Thomas Hobbes, colonialism brings order, which in turn causes a society to be devoid of any state of lawlessness (Olusola & Aisha, 2013). In Africa, family ties and community networking are constantly recognised, maintained and strengthened. When there is a dispute between different parties, priority is given to rebuilding the relationships, and this is true even when the dispute is over something as trivial as a parking spot. According to the findings by Osei-Hwedie and Rankopo (2012), the significance of cultural processes, institutions and values in the settlement of conflict and the construction of peace among the Akans of Ghana and the Tswana of Botswana cannot be overstated.

Most people, families and communities in the two countries mentioned still prefer indigenous conflict resolution processes in that these processes are based on cultural concepts, values and procedures that are understood and accepted by the people. In a similar vein, Alemei and Mandefro (2013) investigated the native methods of conflict resolution utilised by a variety of African cultures, and observed the roles that these methods played in the process of conflict resolution. In addition, Olusola and Aisha (2013) pointed out that indigenous ways of conflict resolution have certain values, approaches and practices that are inherent in them, and that it is important to preserve these aspects of indigenous conflict resolution. On the other hand, Olusola and Aisha (2013) claimed that certain components of these procedures can be challenged, such as outmoded ideology (for example, gender injustice) or methods. Specifically, they mentioned gender inequity as one of these problematic features (e.g. pressurising mediation).

According to the findings of yet another study, traditional African leadership still plays a key role and has a significant effect on today's Africa. Despite this, there is no foolproof formula for determining how the state and traditional institutions should engage with one another (Ladan, 2013). Mengesha, Yesuf and Gebre (2015) looked at the function that indigenous conflict resolution processes play within the Kembata society of Ethiopia. According to the findings of the study, local communities favour the use of customary laws rather than the

judicial system for the following reasons. In the first place, customary legal systems are adaptable, and in the second place, they play an essential part in the process of preserving order within communities. Methods such as mediation, adjudication and diplomacy are typical examples of conflict resolution practices that have traditionally been utilised in traditional African communities (Ajayi & Buhari, 2014). On the other hand, mediation is widely regarded as the most effective method of conflict resolution in indigenous African societies. According to Vassalo (2016), those who administer mediation are typically lineage title holders, hereditary elders, priests, traditional warrior chiefs, or noble personas who are recognised for their knowledge, expertise and trustworthiness in either their official spheres or in their personal relationships. These people are thought of as watchers over a community because they have an outstanding reputation in their own communities and the capacity to convince others who have been ordered to appear at hearings.

In addition, because these people play such a pivotal role and have achieved such elevated levels of mastery in the fields of mediation, persuasion, conciliation and advising, they are frequently asked to settle disputes that occur outside of their own kinships or communities (Bischel, 2009). From an African point of view, the parties involved in a dispute will typically investigate mediation because it is thought to be cost-effective, flexible and adaptable. It works as a method of dispute resolution by facilitating the achievement of a settlement through the processes of negotiation, conciliation, persuasion, incentive and compromise. Therefore, it makes sense to try mediation, and it is normal for individuals to do so, because parties who are at odds with one another typically look for ways to resolve their conflicts that are less combative and more cooperative, so that they can continue living together amicably (Ben-Mensah, 2004).

When compared to mediation, the process of adjudication is more involved and often takes place in stages. It routinely involves rigorous cross-examination, the gathering of witnesses, and, when appropriate, the submission of items as evidence. According to the argument presented in the preceding paragraph (Ben-Mensah, 2004), Africans, in general, choose mediation over adjudication for the primary reason that the former is not only less expensive and time-consuming, but it also avoids winner-loser conclusions, which makes post-settlement conciliation more difficult. According to Ajayi and Buhari (2014), traditional African civilisations and communities dealt with the issues of maintaining harmonious

relationships with their adjacent ethnic groups using diplomacy. This is a concept that has been supported by previous research.

If diplomatic efforts were unsuccessful, this might result in war, the continuation of an existing conflict, or even a more severe escalation of the situation. Clan elders or, in the case of centralised political systems, delegates of the ruling king are at the centre of the diplomatic efforts that are being made. According to Okoro (2010), these diplomats, who are frequently referred to as chiefs, emissaries, courtiers or elders, are comparable to mediators in that they have obtained exceptional skills in the use of language and have distinguished themselves in the arts of negotiation, persuasion and conciliation. In a broader sense, therefore, African indigenous conflict resolution methods typically concentrate on reaching agreements through deliberations, negotiations and reflections to establish facts and to solve issues (Behre, 2012). As a result, participants in conflict are more likely to accept instructions from their traditional mediators rather than from outsiders. This is because the verdict of an elder does not result in humiliation and is supported by the standards of the community. In an ideal world, the result will be a sense of harmony, mutual engagement and obligation, in addition to interactions between opposing parties.

By alluding to the preceding, Alemei and Mandefro (2013) maintained that these traditional methods of conflict resolution aim to resolve conflicts without resorting to state-run judicial systems, the police or other peripheral arrangements. In other words, they want to resolve conflicts without relying on any peripheral arrangements. The models of conflict resolution that are utilised in African societies serve as proof that the preservation of the communal spirit and the holistic well-being of the community in efforts to resolve conflicts is an essential component community stabilty. This is the foundation upon which this discussion is based. In contrast with Western techniques, which frequently rely on third-party participants to mediate conflict resolution, members of the communities involved in the process are intimately involved in its resolution. This is the case because they are insiders in the process (Okoro, 2010).

Zimbabwe is an excellent illustration of a society that can function with the assistance of indigenous mechanisms. People in Zimbabwe will sometimes resort to monetary compensation or other forms of restitution as a method of settling disagreements, particularly in circumstances in which one party was responsible for the loss of possessions suffered by another party. In these kinds of scenarios, restitution can take the form of anything from

money to goods. In circumstances such as these, negotiations need to take place before parties may come to an agreement over the amount of money that is intended to be supplied as appropriate payback or compensation. In Shona culture, it is referred to as *"kuripa,"* and has a long history of application as a form of therapy that is culturally accepted (Dodo, 2015).

2.11.2.3 The Use of Traditional Systems to Resolve Conflicts

According to the findings by Ajayi and Buhari (2014), prior to the arrival of European colonisers, traditional African societies adhered to several principles that governed the process of conflict resolution. One of these principles dictated that individuals who desired to have their conflicts resolved were required to have faith in the judicial body that would do so. These people consisted of people such as elders, chiefs, priests, priestesses, members of a secret cult, and other like persons. It was necessary for the disputants to have faith in them. The parties to the dispute needed to be willing to submit themselves to the authorities that had been created. These disagreements may take place within a community or between communities. It was necessary for the mediator, arbitrator, or judge to be truthful as well. The presence of ancestral forces was a factor. Because of the forces, some of the participants may have lost consciousness or been coerced into telling the truth. Because the truth can shift at any moment, the mediator, the court, and the arbitrator all needed to be well prepared. Both disputants and parties in a quarrel should not ignore the truth because it serves as a covenant logo. Although this is not always the case, the fact that one of the disputing parties came before the tribunal indicated that the party was prepared or had decided to settle or resolve the dispute in question, although this is not always the case. In traditional African civilisations, it was the responsibility of law enforcement agents, the traditional police, and the courts to ensure that the laws of the land were followed by the populace. The parties to a dispute will frequently take their cases to elders and community mediators who can be relied upon to resolve problems with dispatch in the local language using a standard of behaviour that is recognisable to the parties involved.

It was argued by Nyukuri (1997) that "it is a historical fact and a current reality to assert that wars may not cease either on the ground or in the minds of people, unless each country resolutely embarks on the struggle to manage conflicts as well as to build a civil society that is free from intolerance, discrimination, violence, and bloodshed." This statement is a historical fact and a current reality to assert that wars may not cease either on the ground or in the minds. In this context, we consider ethnic conflicts to be the antithesis of peace, stability

and sustainable development; hence, there is a necessity for an investigation into the management of conflict through the use of methods that do not include violence. In an analogous manner, Shyaka (2006) stated that it is impossible to resolve disputes and make peace that lasts without sustainable development.

2.11.3 Conflict Resolution in South Africa

South Africa possessed both the political will and the commitment necessary to participate in dispute resolution within the leadership of the country. In addition to this, the nation possessed superior resources to most of the countries on the continent. As a consequence, people all over the continent and the rest of the world are looking to South Africa to play a significant part in mediating the resolution of continental crises (Miti, 2014). The negotiations that ultimately led to South Africa's salvation went on to serve as a model for the peaceful resolution of conflicts in several other African nations. For example, in the year 2000 in Burundi, Nelson Mandela was successful in his role as a mediator in bringing together 19 groups who had introduced themselves as Groups 10 and 7 for negotiations (Miti, 2014). The legal system was another one of the systems that the government utilised. According to Ghebretekle and Rammala (2018), the legal system in South Africa is characterised by a pluralistic approach. It is made up of several distinct legal traditions, the most notable of which are imported European laws (at its core, Roman-Dutch law, which was later influenced by English common law), which are collectively referred to as the common law, and traditional laws, which are referred to as African customary law. In addition, Sections 211(2) and (3) of the Constitution of the Republic of South Africa prescribe a system of customary law to function, with limitations, and to be applied, subject to the Constitution and any legislation that deals with customary law. This system of customary law is subject to the Constitution and any legislation that deals with customary law (Constitution of the Republic of South Africa, 1996). Sections 212(1) and (2)(a) and (b) bring additional attention to the role of traditional leaders as a means through which these practices may be drawn on matters affecting local communities. These provisions emphasise the significance of the establishment of the house and council of traditional leaders through legislation at both the national and provincial levels. In Section 211(3) of the Constitution, the concept is presented that Roman-Dutch law and customary law are on an equal legal basis. In fact, however, disputes that incorporate customary law are frequently dragged out and/or looked at from a non-customary legal perspective, which is detrimental to both parties (Kievits Kroon Country Estate (Pty) Ltd v Mmoledi and Others (875/12 [2013]).

South Africa is one of the countries in the world with the greatest number of different ethnic groups, and one of its goals is to build the most peaceful society possible, one that is united in its diversity. Nevertheless, South Africa faces a challenge in the form of racial or ethnic conflict. According to Berat (2014), the introduction of colonial administration in South Africa may be traced back to the beginning of ethnic hostilities in the country. Colonialism exacerbated racial tensions by encouraging the segregation of different ethnic and racial groups for its own benefit. To prevent the indigenous population from revolting against the invaders, the administration employed a strategy known as "divide and conquer," which involved setting different ethnic groups against one another. The colonists' primary motivation for carrying out these actions was an effort to consolidate their control or get access to additional resources, not only between different racial groups, but also along tribal and geographical lines. Apartheid in South Africa left a legacy of purposefully created differences, and it is vital to recognise that this left a legacy of deliberately instilled divisions (Valjie, 2003). In addition, to legitimise the rapid pace of the transition, as well as to deal with issues of reconciliation, global economic reintegration, and the stability of the future democracy, analysts have argued that a national identity and affiliation needed to be forged among all South Africans. This was necessary for a number of reasons. One of these reasons was to legitimise the rapid pace of the transition. Another reason was to deal with issues of stability in the future democracy. The project of nation-building was seen as both a strategy for resolving the conflict and an urgent endeavour to be undertaken. Even if it has receded to some degree, regionalism posed a very genuine initial threat to the new state. This was a product of the enforced divides that occurred during the apartheid period in South Africa. Earlier, analysts were asked their opinions regarding the transition. One of the opinions was that the new South Africa faced two formidable political forces that were pulling it apart. These forces mobilised for regional autonomy based on ethnic self-determination, and the other force attempted to build a unified nation from the fragments of a divided society. Earlier, analysts voiced their opinions regarding the transition (Khosa & Muthien, 1998).

In the context of globalisation, Ubuntu is an instrument for transformation (Van Binsbergen, 2001:446). It has arisen as an etic rendering in a globally mediated format, and it derives both its shape and its contents from the realities of post-apartheid South Africa at the present time. The term "humanity" encompasses an exceedingly broad range of meanings and can be utilised in a myriad of distinct ways according to the circumstances being discussed. The current use of the concept of Ubuntu in South African political and management discourse is

likely to be limited to a few eminently "usable" varieties. These varieties are usable not because they betray or deny the past; rather, because they help to negotiate the future even though the past and the present are divisive. As a consequence, applying methods from etymology, ethnography and history to discover the "real" meaning of Ubuntu during pre-colonial times or the nineteenth century would be predicated on a misunderstanding of what Ubuntu is and what it is designed to accomplish. In spite of this, Ubuntu is legitimised in the same way that other ideologies are by the claim (which, in principle, amounts to a elocutionary statement and is subject to empirical substantiation or falsification) that this concept sums up the ancestral value orientation of the majority of the southern African globalised urban population in today's day and age.

If the appeal to Ubuntu is going to make a positive difference in specific situations of social transformation and conflict, the global format lends recognition and respectability in ways that the original, implicit normative orientation of contemporary Southern African village and kin situations could never claim in an urban, globalised context. In other words, the global format lends recognition and respectability to the appeal to Ubuntu. In this regard, one could say that the intellectuals behind Ubuntu have invented a tool that has the potential to be rather strong. It does not really matter whether the ethnographic and linguistic underpinnings of Ubuntu philosophy are empirically and epistemologically impeccable in the way that they should be if Ubuntu philosophy were primarily lectionary (an etic restatement of emic concepts of agency) rather than an exhortative instrument at the service of modern urban society at large. This is because the tool is to be used exhortatively in Southern African situations that are largely globalised. Being ahead of its time, the Ubuntu concept seeks to find solutions to some of the most pressing issues facing Southern Africa, which is rapidly urbanising and becoming more interconnected with the rest of the globe. This is the writers' social environment in the academic world. The images of concrete social life that are featured in statements of Ubuntu do not have to correspond to any lived reality anywhere; they are permitted to refer to "no place" and to merely depict, through social imagery, desired changes that will be brought about by an application of the precepts contained in Ubuntu (Van Binsbergen, 2001:448–449). Because Ubuntu is utopian, the images of concrete social life that are featured in statements of Ubuntu do not have to correspond to any lived reality (Metz, 2014).

2.11.3.1 Strategies used by South Africa to Resolve Conflicts

(a) Negotiation

If the miracle of the negotiated settlement had not taken place, South Africa would have been obliterated by the bloodshed that practically everyone anticipated would be the country's inevitable end (Truth and Reconciliation Commission Report, 1998). On the African continent, South Africa earned a reputation thanks to the involvement of three of its presidents in the resolution of continental conflicts. These presidents were Nelson Mandela, Thabo Mbeki and Jacob Zuma (Miti, 2014). Even though peace has not yet been restored in any of these African countries, negotiation was the most effective method of resolving the conflicts that these presidents encountered in every country they ever visited. For instance, the negotiation efforts in the case of Cote d'Ivoire were unsuccessful as a direct result of the perception that Mbeki was biased in the matter (Akindes, 2009). The process of negotiation was another crucial factor in abolishing apartheid. The discussions that took place between Nelson Mandela and F.W. de Klerk were essential in facilitating the transition of South Africa into a democratic country. During the negotiations between Nelson Mandela and F. W. de Klerk, a consensus was reached; however, rather than focusing on the nation-building project in what was then the new South Africa, there was a need to implement the reconciliation between black and white people by forgiving each other for the wrongs that had been committed in the past.

(b) Commission on the Truth and Reconciliation

Since the country's transition to democracy in 1994, South Africa has become more involved in the promotion of peace and stability across the larger African continent, as well as in the resolution of disputes. This is because of the country's reputation for its own negotiated settlement as a model for other conflict-torn countries to emulate; the iconic status of Nelson Mandela as a master of reconciliation and forgiveness; and, finally, the sense in Pretoria that South Africa had a moral obligation to "repay" Africa for the sins of apartheid, while the country had considerable military and economic capacity to do so. All of these factors have contributed to the current situation (Southall, 2006).

Nelson Mandela was the driving force behind the creation of the Truth and Reconciliation Commission (TRC), which Archbishop Desmond Tutu oversaw as its chairman. The South African Constitution mandates that a secure foundation be established "for the people of South Africa to transcend the divisions and strife of the past, which generated gross human

rights violations and a legacy of hatred, fear, guilt, and revenge." The goal of this legislation was to provide that secure foundation (Omar, 1998). The Truth and Reconciliation Commission (TRC) was one of the conflict resolution mechanisms utilised by the South African government. The TRC was determined to address the long-term and deeply embedded components of the conflict in South Africa; yet the commission was hampered by a lack of a unified vision of what it set out to do, which was a disadvantage for the commission (Gready, 2010). The TRC was never able to achieve the goals that would have not only satisfied those who had suffered under apartheid, but also those who had advocated for it (Gready, 2010). The primary obstacles that stood in its way were a lack of coherence as well as theoretical clarity. Again, the commission struggled due to a lack of financing from the central government, which hampered the potential of providing genuine restitution to those who had been harmed by apartheid. Both in the case of the National Prosecuting Authority (NPA) and the Truth and Reconciliation Commission (TRC), the government refused to pay the relatively insignificant costs that were involved in the expenses of those organisations. This had an impact on the efforts made towards socioeconomic reconstruction, as well as the levels of reparations.

(c) Relying on International Organisations

Some of the most common conflicts in South Africa relate to xenophobia, crime and violence. The South African government was urged not to lose sight of its domestic human rights challenges, particularly in relation to violence, crime and xenophobia. This was a way of encouraging the South African government or urging Tshwane, as a capital city, to give these problems as much priority as was given its outward-looking foreign policy (Nagar, 2016). One of the organisations mainly relied on by South Africa for resolving conflicts was the Southern African Development Community (SADC). Southern African governments were urged by the South Africa-based Centre for Conflict Resolution (CCR) to honour their commitments enshrined in SADC, the African Union (AU) and the United Nations (UN) treaties and other international legal documents designed to promote human rights more effectively across the sub-region.

As was indicated earlier, conflict is an all-pervasive element in our society. Conflicts may end up in destruction and even death, and may result in increased effectiveness and enhanced relationships. Indeed, in human terms, conflict is one of the engines of evolution that allow us to learn, progress and grow. Therefore, our goal as skilled communicators is not to attempt to

do away with conflict but to skillfully manage it in order to further its constructive capabilities (Bichsel, 2009). Indigenous approaches to conflict resolution vary considerably from society to society, from region to region and from the community to the community. There are as many different indigenous approaches to conflict resolution as there are different societies and communities with a specific history, culture and custom.

To date, indigenous approaches to conflict resolution have not been adequately addressed by scholarly research and political practice in South Africa. For the most part, they are widely ignored, although empirical evidence from relatively successful cases of conflict resolution demonstrates their practical relevance (Boege, 2006). Throughout history, societies across the world have used different forms of indigenous conflict resolution mechanisms specific to their cultural contexts. For instance, more than 80% of all disputes in Africa are resolved through indigenous dispute resolution mechanisms. There is a lack of interface between the formal and the indigenous legal systems. There are theoretical concerns that put history at the roots of identity, memory and ethnicity. Such concerns will enrich the theoretical analysis of these issues, as well as the practical applications that stem from these analyses. Analysis and resolutions are different and interdependent, while history is crucial for both. The role of history in conducting and understanding conflict analysis and conflict resolution is an understudied field. Meyer (2016) attested to the fact that historical studies have found a place in many studies of conflict, but these have been contained within various disciplines, such as international relations, political science or industrial relations. These studies are highly specific to the given conflict event and description, yet reflect little integration into the corpus of conflict resolution knowledge. In the field of conflict analysis and conflict resolution, there has been considerable emphasis on participant behaviour, the examination of conflict strategy and the selection of options. However, adequate explanations of why and how actors come to the choices they make have not been explored.

Studies have established that a clear identification of the roots of conflict depends on the historical load carried by the respective parties (Li, 2019). Accordingly, conflicts with a political and historical background, such as war, inter-ethnic clashes, border problems and problems faced by minorities will have to be dealt with within the context of a particular set of notions and solutions. This is where history becomes part of conflict analysis, and contributes to conflict resolution. Even in workplace conflicts or intra-family problems, the history of the conflict is of significant importance.

One of the most prominent issues at the crossroads of history and conflict resolution is identity, which is a difficult concept to study, but in the case of conflict analysis, it offers an insightful and interesting route to explore. Wallensteen (2018) argued that the conception of identity includes aspects of language, tradition, history, culture, territoriality and ethnicity, while history provides society with identity, just as memory does for an individual. The history of a group, the charter for its existence, emerges, to a considerable degree, out of the body of individual stories about the past that its members tell. To the extent that they define individual members, the memories and re-telling of history shape the contours of the group, the nature of belonging and exclusion, and the relationship between the group and the outside world. This fact illustrates the flexibility and pragmatic influence of history`, which is an overall ideological discourse that infiltrates group identities as well as individual notions of self-definition.

According to Outwater, Abrahams and Campbell (2005), one of the consequences of decades of apartheid state-sponsored violence and reactive community insurrection is that, for many people, physical violence has become a first-line strategy for resolving conflict and gaining ascendency.

For instance, in post-apartheid South Africa, domestic and intracommunity violence has become a daily occurrence and can be related to Nigeria’s ethno-political violence, Sudan's ethnic conflict, Rwanda's genocide and the resource violence in the DRC. Intolerance and hate have become recurrent challenges to statehood, sustainable peace and security in Africa (Akinola & Uzodike, 2018). Intolerance and hate undermined the social fabric of societies in South Africa and the cultural affinity that formed the basis of African communalism, which symbolises the spirit of Ubuntu. One of the major causes of conflict in Africa remains the scramble to acquire power and amass resources by a group of the elite or an ethnic group in place of the others (Murithi, 2006). It is noted that the overreaching effect of resource manipulation by a few elites was said to be reason for the prevalence of poverty in Africa (Kart et al., 2020). Ubuntu's utility in achieving peace is pertinent at a time of increased interest in the role that culture plays in determining human relations, especially in terms of peace-keeping. Ubuntu, which encapsulates humanness, fairness, justice and the African value system, was the backbone of many African societies in the precolonial dispensation and in the immediate post-apartheid period in South Africa (Mokgopo, 2017).

Murithi (2006) posits that Ubuntu helped South Africa to transcend the bitterness, hatred and suspicion of the past, enabling the country to make the transition to a more stable, albeit still imperfect, political order. The cultural values and attitudes held by South Africans that promoted forgiveness and willingness to move beyond the legacy of the apartheid state have been attributed to Ubuntu. The apartheid state assumed that the European culture and way of life were superior to that of Africans. Africa's quest for sustainable peace needs to be built on reconciliation and coexistence based on human rights and on social, economic and political justice, all of which lie at the heart of Ubuntu (Murithi, 2006). Murithi (2006) further argued that colonialism has imposed self-centred leadership on African states, leadership that has exploited the divisions, colonial legacies, and the illegitimate character of the postcolonial African state to aggravate tension and fuel violence of diverse nature. This was evident in Sierra Leone and Liberia (blood diamond conflict), South Africa (gold and land resource), Nigeria (crude oil) and the DRC (crude oil), as well as identity assertiveness experienced in Rwanda (Hutu-Tutsi ethnic cleansing), South Africa (xenophobia) and Nigeria (Biafra civil/ethnic war) (Akinola & Uzodike, 2018).

In addition to the above, the violent community protests in Vuwani and the surrounding areas in Limpopo cannot be understood in isolation, which is the main purpose for this discourse. Shai and Mothibi (2015) posited that a mixture of both historic and contemporary reasons offers a just account of these protests, including historical imperatives such as the legacy of colonialism, apartheid and the violent culture of South Africa, inter alia. In the current era, the Vuwani community protests can be partially understood as a by-product of the effects of similar occurrences in Malamulele. This, therefore, calls for culture-based conflict resolution. Before the violent community protests in Vuwani, the ANC-led government mishandled the violent protests in Malamulele. It is worth pointing out that South Africa witnessed the Malamulele violent service delivery protests between the years 2013 and 2015. During this period, the people of Malamulele violently protested against Thulamela Local Municipality, whose administrative seat is in Thohoyandou, for allegedly giving preferential treatment to Tshivenda-speaking, over Xitsonga-speaking, communities. This claim must be understood within the context that Thohoyandou was the capital city of the Venda Republic during the apartheid era in South Africa. The Malamulele residents, who are mostly Xitsonga-speaking people, protested against the perceived retarded levels of service delivery in their communities. It can be deduced from this scenario that colonial and postcolonial South Africa assumed the position of vampire state, which produced and reproduced the violent resource

conflict and attendant widespread extreme poverty that sustained ethnic and community conflicts. Thus, Ubuntu is assumed to be, and regarded as, an effective indigenous response to the violence that has characterised the African socio-political landscape (Murithi, 2009).

Brown (1996: 620) suggests that the international community needs to take strong decision in resolving the conflicts. He argues that conflicts may not be ready for resolution at times, but the willingness of the international community to help should be in place when conflicting parts need to resolve the conflict. Since peace processes and conflict resolution methods need large resources, Brown suggests that the international community should accumulate their efforts and resources in resolution approaches when conflicts are ripened for resolution. In this way, there is a lot that the international community can do to resolve the conflict and bring peace. Here, Brown suggests steps such humanitarian assistance for needy people, a fact finding and mediation mission and traditional peacekeeping forces. Furthermore, during conflict resolutions, Brown underlines a multifunctional peacekeeping operation, which helps with the reconstruction, economic and political systems building (Brown, 1996: 2).

In this regard, the two track strategies suggested by Brown (1996: 622) became the most relevant corridor for durable peace in Somalia. The first one is "co-optation", which strategy navigates measures in dealing with the militant group (Al-Shabaab) and neutralises their power. This includes "undercutting popular support for militants by implementing political and economic reforms that addresses broad-based societal problems, marginalising militants by bringing more and more fringe elements into the political and economic mainstream." By offering political and economic opportunities to members of Al-shabaab, it will undermine and eventually bring more into the peace process. The second strategy, which is more relevant in the current situation of Somalia is "Neutralisation." Brown explains this as an aggressive campaign against militants, thereby dealing with them by "cutting off arms and logistics from neighbouring states and search-and-capture or search-and-destroy missions" (Bown, 1996: 622). Although the strategy is mainly the responsibility of the Somali people and government, it is enormously important for Somalia to get help from the international community in order to achieve a peaceful and stable Somalia. While these two approaches are focal point for a resolution prospect to conflict in Somalia, the study also suggests four other important actions. The first one is humanitarian assistance to the needy people. In the case of Somalia, humanitarian assistance is relevant to help the affected civilian communities to get basic human needs in their livelihood. The second is a fact finding and mediation

mission. The fact that Somalia's conflict has been going on for over two decades now involving various actors, having such a mission may help to facilitate in creating a platform for peace in the country. The third one is traditional peacekeeping forces; this mission is important for Somalia since the country is at war with militants and has no strong security institutions. This mission will help Somalia to build its own strong security forces to be able to defend as well as neutralise anti-peace forces. The fourth one is multifunctional peacekeeping operation, which helps with the reconstruction of infrastructure, economic and political system building and law and judicial enforcement. By doing so, the prospect to achieve peace and security in Somalia and the region is possible. In all the strategies, Brown suggested the third, which is traditional, and which he did not speak much about. However, Endelew spoke about *Gadaa* system and *Shimagelle* system as some of the effective strategies of conflict resolution (Endelew, 2014).

2.11.4 Conflict Resolution involving Vatsonga and Vhavenda Speaking People

Because of the apartheid policy, the government was forced to initiate the homeland policy in 1951. This policy was formed that year. The chiefs were granted more power as a result of the political development of the homelands in 1951, which also assured that political development was conducted along ethnic lines. In 1953, the homeland of the Venda people in South Africa had the lowest population in all other African ethnic groups there (Thompson, 1990:167). Chiefs such as Mphephu, Kutama, Sinthumule, Tshivhase, Rammbuda and Mphaphuli, amongst others, were responsible for the administration of the nation. The indigenous people of South Africa were supposed to be given an opportunity to govern themselves and to keep their culture intact after the homelands were established for them. However, in practice, the people who lived in these homelands were not given a chance to take part in the political process in South Africa. Because they were confined to a single country, the Venda people were not granted South African citizenship. This was because they were considered to constitute a small portion of the overall population of South Africa.

The partition policy had an impact on several different South African ethnic groups, including the Vatsonga and the Vhavenda, for example. The relationship between these two ethnic groups was said to be harmonious in what was then known as the Northern Transvaal (now known as Limpopo Province) prior to the enactment of the Bantu Authorities Act 68 of 1995 (Nkhwashu, 2011:22-23). The Act allowed for the creation of black homelands as well as regional authorities with the intention of giving the homelands a greater degree of

autonomy over their own governments. The Native Representative Council was terminated as a result of this Act. The Bantu Homeland Constitution Act 21 of 1971 and the Promotion of Bantu Self-Government Act 46 of 1959 were both enacted into law during this time period. These Acts established the political separation of Bantustans, and the people who lived in these areas became citizens of their various countries of origin; as a result, they were considered foreigners in South Africa (Kelk & Mulaudzi, 2011).

As a direct consequence of this, the apartheid government established the Vhavenda Tribal Authority in the month of October 1961. The Vhavenda Tribal Authority was granted the status of "self-rule" in February 1973. In 1979, the Vhavenda Tribal Authority was granted the status of "independent republic," transforming it into the Republic of Venda. In a manner analogous to that of Transkei, Ciskei and Bophuthatswana, the Republic of Venda was an experiment in apartheid that emphasised white predominance and racial segregation (Martin, 2016). There was no plan to create a homeland for the Vatsonga, and the Tsonga tribal authority were consolidated administratively into regional authorities that were led by Venda and Northern Sotho speakers. The first step towards ethnic segregation between the Vatsonga and the Vhavenda was taken when the Vatsonga became alarmed by the fact that the Vhavenda leaders were exercising a preponderant amount of control over their regional authority. There have been calls for a separate commissioner general as well as an authority that is governed by the Vatsonga. Following the enactment of the Promotion of Bantu Self-Government Act in 1959, their pleadings were finally heard and granted. The Act divided people of African descent into eight distinct ethnic groupings. Each community had a commissioner general assigned to oversee them, and his job was to establish a homeland for their people. There would be no interference from whites in the internal affairs of the country, which would be free to rule itself (SAHO, 2017).

Following the passing of the Bantu self-government Act, the wishes of the Vatsonga chiefs were granted. After that, the previous multi-ethnic regional authorities of the Northern and Eastern Transvaal were separated from the four regional authorities that were created at that time. The Vatsonga chiefs came together in November 1962 to form what is now known as the Matshangana Territorial Authority. After another seven years, a Tsonga-Shangaan commissioner general was appointed, and a legislative assembly was inaugurated in the freshly built capital city of Giyani (Vail, 1989).

Many of the Vatsonga were relocated to the Malamulele region against their will and on a massive scale, not by the Vhavenda but by the administration of the National Party. These relocations took place in territories that were slated to become part of the Republic of Venda. Roughly during the same time, an ethnic border was formed between the homelands of the Vatsonga and the Vhavenda that ran south of the Levubu River. This barrier threatened the deportation of 40,000 Vatsonga who lived to the north of the border and 10,000 Vhavenda who lived to the south of the border. Overnight, these people's ethnicity took on new significance, and so did the role that the territorial authority plays in protecting the Vatsonga people. No longer considered integrated neighbours, Venda speakers could no longer be found living south of the original Levubu ethnic line. They were seen to be outsiders from a historical perspective. The passage of the Bantu Homelands Citizenship Act in 1970 led to an increase in racial and ethnic conflicts in the country. Regardless of whether or not they had ever resided in the area, the Act required all black people to become citizens of a homeland that represented their ethnic group, and it cancelled their citizenship in South Africa. This was the case even if they had never lived in the area (Desmond, 1969, cited in Vail, 1989).

As a result of talks that took place in 1993, the homelands were removed from the Constitution of the newly democratic South Africa (Berat, 2014). In place of the previous four provinces that existed during the time of apartheid, the constitution called for the establishment of nine provinces: the Eastern Cape, the Free State, Gauteng, KwaZulu-Natal, Limpopo, Mpumalanga, the North-West, the Northern Cape, and the Western Cape. These nine provinces were to replace the previous four provinces. The nine provinces that make up the Republic of South Africa, as well as the borders that separate them from one another were outlined in Schedule 1A(a) of the Interim Constitution of the country. This decision was made with the intention of devolving power to sub-national units. The provinces have a fair amount of autonomy, which help reduce the severity of disagreements. As a result, Limpopo Province came into existence. In the place of the old Republic of Venda, the Vhembe District Municipality was founded, and the buildings formerly occupied by the independent government were utilised. In addition to being established within Vhembe District Municipality, Thulamela Local Municipality is in the historical centre of the Venda homeland, otherwise known as Thohoyandou Town.

Berat (2014) emphasised further that South Africa's process of transitioning to democracy, which was championed by Mandela's charisma, assisted the ANC in pursuing the route of

negotiation, accommodation and confidence building for the purpose of managing the issue of ethnic diversity. Despite this, violent ethnic conflicts opposing new forms of government that encouraged ethnic integration during Mandela's time as president began to show force in 1997. These new forms of governance were implemented during Mandela's presidency. In Bushbuckridge, the ethnic disputes between Vatsonga or Shangaan and Basotho could be interpreted as a problem related with the Basotho people's ethnic identity (Niehaus, 2002). The imposed homeland system, which encouraged cultural identity between these ethnic groups, could be traced back to the root of the conflict that arose between people who spoke Xitsonga and Tshivenda languages. As soon as these tribes were divided according to ethnic lines, the issue of cultural identity began to emerge as a concern. That was the beginning of the unhealthy competition, which later developed into a problem with the governance of the municipality when both ethnic groups were combined into a single one. According to Bradshaw and Haines (2015), the government of South Africa did not pay sufficient attention to ongoing conflict resolution processes of any kind in the country, and it is possible that key parts of South African society were not interested in conflict resolution to the same extent as they should have been. The grievances of these two communities are at the heart of their dispute with one another. These complaints are founded on the losses that were incurred because of the history of forced displacement. Even though the Vhavenda and Vatsonga used to get along well before and during the homeland system (Maluleke, 2016), the two groups have a long history of fighting over who belongs to Levubu (Manenzhe, 2016) and in the communities along the river. These communities have three related names that come from the languages of the people who lived there: "Levubu" (from White farmers) and "Rivhubye" (from Xitsonga (Rasila and Musitha 2017). Within the Malamulele region, Vatsonga is the dominant form of Vhavenda. Since the beginning of time, the communities have followed several customs and rituals, some of which include the combined labour on the king's fields, the payment of royalty as a sign of acknowledging their authority, and several other behaviours. The incorporation of large-scale commercial farms into traditional communities in the form of Communal Property Associations (CPAs) raises questions regarding membership in traditional councils, which are known for their time-honoured customs and practices (Manenzhe, 2016).

On another level, the processes of making claims that took place between 1994 and 2005 amplified the social tensions that existed inside these rural communities, which led to the struggles that ultimately shaped the dynamics of change in Levubu. To begin, it was difficult

to decide who should obtain exactly what piece of property due to overlapping and competing claims to rights in land made by several "tribes" and clans. These claims were made by different people. This issue was made significantly worse by the fact that the previous property definitions were in direct opposition to the indigenous "tribe" boundaries. Membership in particular ethnic groups acts as a way of belonging that determines where a claimant belongs and what piece of property one has rights to, which further complicates the problem. For instance, even though oral history asserts that communities of Masakona and Shigalo once coexisted at Tshitungulu with overlapping rights, ethnic identities have been used to define membership in Shigalo and Masakona, that is, Tsonga- and Venda-speaking communities, respectively. This is the case even though oral history asserts that communities of Masakona and Shigalo once coexisted. As a result of this, it has been challenging to find solutions to some of the boundary conflicts. The Shigalo settlement is located smack dab in the middle of the Malamulele region. Because of these dynamics and procedures, the facilitation of signing agreements on common borders now takes significantly more time in most circumstances. To this day, such disagreements have not been satisfactorily settled in certain regards.

2.12 Theoretical Framework

It is necessary to have a clear understanding of the meanings of the concepts of paradigm and theory used in this study to conduct an accurate and meaningful evaluation of the scientific quality of the research process and its results. It is essential to take into consideration the fact that, at the present time, social scientists do not share a mutual understanding of the significance of these phrases. Thomas Kuhn, a philosopher of science who borrowed this term from linguistics, is credited with popularising the concept of a paradigm. In linguistics, a paradigm is defined as a "class of linguistic items, either lexical or grammatical, that are in complementary distribution." Kuhn popularised the idea of a paradigm in his works (Kuhn, 1962; 1970; Mazama, 2001:390). Kuhn used this idea to describe how one specific style of scientific thought and practice might become well-established and referred to as "normal science," but that it can later be superseded by another mode contending for dominance in the field. The purpose of Kuhn's explanation was to demonstrate that all scientific inquiry is predicated on specific and unique premises, demonstrating that the concept of scientific neutrality advocated by positivism and logical empiricism cannot possibly be true.

According to Kuhn's theory (1962, 1970), a paradigm can be broken down into two distinct categories: the cognitive and the structural. The cognitive factor, which in the context of scientific knowledge production acts as a set of guiding principles (beliefs, techniques, and examples), is an essential component of any such construction. In the context of the cognitive component, the term "structural aspect" refers to an organised community of researchers practicing that element. African-centred scholarship, in which knowledge is never produced for its own sake but rather for the cause of African liberation, emancipation, and empowerment, considers Kuhn's concept as inadequate. Kuhn maintains that these two features are crucial to the understanding of the notion of "paradigm." For instance, Mazama (2001), an academic with an African-centred focus, has maintained that an accurate description of a paradigm must contain the functional aspect. In her opinion, a paradigm should be able to perform the role of awakening our African consciousness and bringing back our ancestral victorious consciousness. These are two aspects of our ancestors' psyche that the colonial system of Caucasian imperialism attempted to eradicate. The definition of the paradigm that was utilised in the research is as follows. In passing, it should be noted that the concept of paradigm has been used interchangeably with terms such as "research traditions" and "research programs." These terms connote long-lived conceptual structures that guide research in terms of specifying what realities there are in the world, the nature of those realities, the definition of facts, how facts are acquired, and how facts are interpreted to arrive at scientific knowledge of phenomena. It is also essential to keep in mind that paradigms and research traditions do not materialise from thin air. Rather, they originate from or have their origins in the worldview or reality structure of a people, which emerges because of the lived experience of that people (Carroll, 2008).

African-centred scholarship has identified seven tenets of the worldview, which are as follows: constructivism (the definition of reality), cosmology (the structure of the universe), axiology (the system of values), epistemology (the nature of knowledge or grounds for knowledge), logic (the canons or criteria of validity in reasoning), teleology (the sense of directedness, of definite ends, and of purpose), and ideology (the prophetic vision of thought and the action orientation of moral commitment) (Carroll, 2008). The seven pillars that make up the worldview construct serve as the basis, the foundation, and as the source from which all paradigms acquire their meaning and operation. It is also necessary to note that the African worldview, which forms the basis for African paradigms, is fundamentally distinct from the worldview held by Europeans and Caucasians. It is necessary to provide a few quick

instances. Caucasians have developed a worldview that is de-spiritualised and desacralised (Ani, 1994); Caucasians have developed an either/or logic while African civilisations have developed duality logic or a both/and logic; Caucasians thus view realities as rigidly oppositional. Everything in the cosmos is connected to everything else, but in Caucasian societies, atomisation is reality. Axiologically speaking, African civilisation places a priority on positive interpersonal interactions among individuals, whereas the same premium is placed by Caucasian civilisation on the acquisition of objects, the accumulation of riches, or material things (Myers, 1992; Carroll, 2008).

2.12.1 The Ubuntu Paradigm and Theory

Pulling together and synthesising what we have learned from the review of the literature as well as the requirements of an African-centred paradigm just discussed, it is possible to construct what the researcher calls an Ubuntu paradigm and theory. The proposed paradigm and theory emerge from both the surface and deep structural experiences of the Bantu people of Southern Africa. The paradigm and theory are necessarily epistemologically African-centred but also draw out nuances deriving from the linguistic universe of the people of Southern Africa. It is necessary to point out as Ani (1994), Ajamu (1997), Alkebulan (1913) and Nobles, Baloyi and Sodi (2016) have done that language which is a critical element of the surface structure of culture encodes the worldview/deep structure of culture. It plays an epistemological function. In fact, both thought, evident in the concepts we use, as well as behaviour are culturally structured. All thought and behaviour have a worldview imprint (Nobles et al., 2016).

The Ubuntu paradigms, taking the notion of paradigm to mean the guiding assumptions of a research programme is rooted, inter alia, in the now well-known adage and axiom: *umuntu ngumuntu ngabantu* (a person is a person because of other persons/the community) as well as the BaNtu philosophical anthropology or the nature of African human nature from a BaNtu perspective. The Bantu conception of the "self" or "being" is extended. This idea is encapsulated in Azibo's (2018) notion of the I-Me-We versus of selfhood or Karenga's (2003) idea of the sociality of selfdom. The "self," despite a person's idiosyncrasies is never viewed as separate from the group or community. In Bantu philosophical anthropology, the person/human (muntu) is defined as a dynamic, developing a divine energy or force (Ramose, 1999; Mkhize, 2004; Nobles, Baloyi and Sodi, 2016). It is this divine energy which animates

the "self;" always becoming and belonging to the cosmos pervaded by God, the Great Spirit/Creator.

Parenthetically, the Bantu identify themselves as the "people of the Spirit" (Nobles, Baloyi and Sodi, 2016). It is this spiritness which leads to the correlative dictate spirituality which encapsulates concepts such as caring, forgiveness and duties to others and community harmony, etc which define Bantu personhood/Ubuntu.

It is such conceptual infrastructure rooted in the deep structure/worldview that the research programme is constructed. Furthermore, the theory envisaged in the paradigm is African-centred as it promotes knowledge production and knowledges which enhance African agency, harmony, growth and development. The objective of Bantu theory is essentially the psychic and cultural development of the Bantu people as Bantu. The theory eschews any form of development that derives from the despiritualised and desacralised culture of Caucasians/Europeans.

By way of conclusion, it is important to note that the theory does not conceive of Ubuntu as a phenomenon which is given. If Ubuntu is not nurtured by the community in all areas of people/Bantu activity (economics, politics, education, law, religion, etc.), it can be either weakened, distorted or even lost. The imposition of the colonial system of Caucasian imperialism in Southern Africa whose essence is anti-Ubuntu has subjugated Ubuntu, but has not succeeded in completely demolishing/annihilating it (Mkhize, 2004).

2.12.2.1 The Application of Ubuntu

A major field of research has been the conception and application of the philosophies of Ubuntu among the indigenous communities of Southern Africa. The idea of Ubuntu is regarded as indispensable to the African socio-ethical reflection, and reveals the joint rootedness and interdependence of persons (Chachine, 2008). Ubuntu is a notion that speaks of the interdependence of humans in a communal environment, inspires people to offer themselves to others and is deeply concerned with communality and collectivism. The term is derived from the IsiZulu aphorism Umuntu Ngumuntu Ngabantu, which translates as 'a person is a person through others' (Tutu, 2004). Ubuntu obligates a person to care for others and to relate to them in kindness, generosity and brotherhood. As a communal African worldview, Ubuntu contrasts with the more individualistic and self-centred worldview of Western culture. According to Christopher Roederer and Darren Moellendorf, for example,

“(t)he Nguni word Ubuntu represents notions of universal human interdependence, solidarity and communalism which can be traced to small-scale communities in precolonial Africa, and which underlie virtually every indigenous African culture” (Roederer & Moellendorf, 2004).

Ancient African wisdom and the origins of moral Ubuntu date back to the period 1 500 years before the discovery of the Ten Commandments (Koka, 1995, cited in Broodryk, 2005). Ubuntu was then captured in the holy Netchar Maat, which was associated with seven cardinal virtues, or the key to human perfectibility, namely, truth, justice, prosperity, harmony, balance, reciprocity and order (Mark, 2016). From these basic virtues of ancient African wisdom, practical guidelines, such as the following for correct daily living, were deduced: not to steal, not to murder, not to do any harm or cause pain to others, not to lie, not to cause terror and to be faithful.

Since that time, these principles have been passed down verbally from one generation to the next. The guidelines were the fundamental ethical laws of African communities, and they were used to instruct Africans on proper behaviour (Broodryk, 2000, cited in Broodryk, 2005). Ubuntu can be shown in the way someone thinks, the way they talk, and the way they behave. If someone thinks positive and passionate thoughts, the thoughts will eventually come out of their mouths. What a person thinks and says will, in turn, impact what that person does. The practice of Ubuntu will have a favourable effect on the way one interacts with other people, particularly with one's elders, children and those in need. All these things are going to be done on a regular basis (Broodryk, 1998, cited in Broodryk, 2005). In a nutshell, the quality known as Ubuntu is exemplified in every human action that prioritises the development of the local community as its primary focus. It is impossible to use the word "Ubuntu" to describe any action that is in any way detrimental to the community or antisocial in nature. The following are some of the defining characteristics of Ubuntu:

- Relatedness
- Communalism
- Spiritualism
- Holism

Ubuntu prioritises the following:

(a) Relatedness and Otherness

When it comes to the ethics of Ubuntu, it is hard to place enough emphasis on the significance of other people. A person is the ontological and social product of previous people's interactions with one another. Ubuntu is predicated on two guiding principles. The first one is something along the lines of "a person is a person through other persons" (Shutte, 1993). The first maxim is a translation of the same statement that emphasises the necessity of diversity and plurality. The second maxim is a translation of the same statement. It says that "the otherness of other human beings is what makes a human being a human being." The linguistic, historical, ethical and cultural differences that exist among people and are essential to the formation of human society (Ramose, 1999). Ramose places strong emphasis on the significance of the idea of otherness, which includes the connotation of a relationship, to highlight the significance of human interactions in the culture of Ubuntu (Ramose, 1999). He sees that the African worldview is predicated on the concept that "a human being is a human being via the otherness of other human beings." This remark has significant bearing on Ubuntu Ethics because it is the "otherness" of "another human" that contributes to the demonstration of one's own humanity.

(b) Home as a primary focus of learning Ubuntu

The essence of what it means to care in the Ubuntu tradition can be found at "home." It has been noticed that Ubuntu is experienced daily as a reality by children, teenagers and adults in African community life (Broodryk, 1997, cited in Broodryk, 2005). This observation was made by Broodryk. This African tradition originates in the home, which is a place of interpersonal warmth where Ubuntu stories are told to young stars to transfer morals; where Ubuntu life lessons are learned, where the sick are cared for, where informal counselling is provided to those who are in distress, and where a generally caring atmosphere is maintained. According to Murithi (2000), one of the prescriptions of the indigenous paradigm to conflict resolution is that peace processes must also include local populations to be effectively grounded in their realities and address their grievances. This is because communalism, which is at the core of Ubuntu, implies that the interests of the individual are subordinate to the interests of the group. This indigenous method of resolving conflicts is one that created local institutions and mechanisms through processes of internal and external discourse to respond to new social, political and economic circumstances as they arose. A traditional African structure known as Ubuntu is founded on the principles of humanity, care, respect, compassion and other linked principles. These principles work together to ensure a pleasant and quality human community living in the spirit of a family.

(c) Ubuntu is concerned with commonality and collectivism

One of the critics of the western approach to peacebuilding (1997) has pointed out that liberal peacebuilding has not been a successful model for achieving effective peace in war-torn states throughout the world. According to Paris, the very process of political and economic liberalisation has caused destabilising side effects in war-torn governments. These impacts have hampered the consolidation of peace and, in some instances, even sparked further violent wars. According to Muyingi (2013), Ubuntu could be described as a community-based mindset in which the welfare of the group is greater than the welfare of a single individual in the group; furthermore, individuality, or the sense of self, is recognised as being important in the concept of Ubuntu. As a result, individualism is discouraged in Ubuntu. On the other hand, this is not the same as individualism, which is the promotion of one's own interests at the detriment of those of others (Broodryk, 2002). It is widely acknowledged that the concept of Ubuntu is essential to the development of African socio-ethical thinking, and demonstrates the interconnectedness and mutual dependence of individuals (Chachine, 2008). The concept of Ubuntu emphasises the interdependence of individuals living in close quarters with one another. Ubuntu is a philosophy that emphasises the importance of community and collectivism. It encourages people to give of themselves to help others. Using television, the government of South Africa disseminated African humanism to all of its citizens in an effort to lessen the likelihood of violent conflict. Under the philosophy of Ubuntu, South Africa's efforts to construct a single, unified nation were accompanied by the proliferation of catchphrases like "simunye we are one" (Louw, 2001). Ubuntu was successful and helped close the gap between blacks and whites as well as natives and people from other countries. Despite this, it was not as sustainable as it may have been given that those programmes and slogans no longer exist. The absence of humanism has resulted in the resurgence of racism, xenophobia and discrimination between South African Blacks, and other forms of racism. Acts of violence, regardless of who they are committed against, where they take place, or how they are carried out, are considered as a lack of humanism in South Africa. As a consequence of this, xenophobia and bigotry are seen as a failure to practice Ubuntu. (Eliastam, 2015; Mnyaka & Motlhabi, 2009).

The study of conflict resolution, led by the Ubuntu theory, will make certain that the approach to problem-solving is humane and assumes some type of collective responsibility. This will happen when the entire community is involved in problem-solving using a bottom-

up rather than a top-down approach, which is typically associated with many policies in Africa. This will be the case when the problem-solving is done using a bottom-up rather than a top-down approach. It is important to provide communities the opportunity to weigh in on potential solutions to an issue and to come to a consensus over those potential solutions. As a result of the widespread belief that this indigenous method of conflict resolution is a non-violent one, violent protests that impede development have ceased, and it is generally accepted that Ubuntu results in a responsible community that cares for its members.

The ancient African worldview known as Ubuntu is founded on the principles of humanity, care, respect, compassion, and other linked principles. These principles work together to ensure a pleasant and quality human community existence in the spirit of a family (Broodryk, 2004). In addition to this, Olowu (2018) found that most African nations place a premium on social harmony as the preeminent ideology behind social control

(d) The Examples or Evidence and Validity of Western Individualism

Individualism can be seen in a society through the institution of the nuclear family, whereas collectivism can be seen through the institution of the joint family. The United States (US), the United Kingdom (UK), Germany, France and Australia are some examples of countries that demonstrate individualism. Other countries that do so include Canada and New Zealand. Africa, China, Japan, India, Brazil and Russia are just few of the countries that adhere to the collectivist political philosophy. "The degree to which people have their own autonomous definition of who they are is known as individualism." (Triandis, 1995; Gelfand and Realo, 1999). It is an ideology that, at its foundation, supports the idea that one should be good to oneself. It promotes the idea that an individual should prioritise his or her own aspirations above those of any group to which they belong. It takes a specific person and uses them as a benchmark for further debate and evaluation. It places a premium on the autonomy of the person as well as the accomplishment of his or her goals and ambitions. As a result, in a nutshell, it is possible to draw the conclusion that the theory of individualism does not subscribe to the conventional belief that the norm is for a majority to impose their beliefs on those of a minority. "The degree to which people consider themselves as interdependent on one another and as members of particular groups rather than as independent of other people is the degree to which they are collectivists." (Gelfand and Realo, 1999). The ideology of collectivism is predicated on the idea that an individual has a moral obligation to confine his or her actions to those that are permitted by the collective, or, to speak more generally, by the

society or the nation. Only when his activities reflect the improvement of his group or country will he be able to make a substantial contribution to either of those entities. It places more emphasis on the "good" of the group as opposed to the "good" of the individuals that make up the group. It encourages an individual's commitment to the group to which he or she belongs by providing this opportunity (Gelfand and Realo, 1999).

A prime illustration of the individualism that characterises western societies is the nuclear family, which consists of a mother, a father and any number of children from previous relationships. Whereas African families are characterised by their extended family structures, which include grandparents and parents, cousins or nephews, and in-laws in addition to the biological parents and children of the nuclear family. This exemplifies Ubuntu in a straightforward and compelling way. According to Degbey (2012), the extended family system consists of multiple generations as well as cousins, uncles, and aunts who live near one another or in the same compound. According to Adinlofu (2009), the extended family is made up of several joint, compound, elementary and nuclear families who live in separate but close homesteads. In the same vein, both Degbey (2012) and Adinlofu (2009) pointed out that the extended family acts as an emotional support system for everyone involved. It is a coherent unit that, in an ideal world, ensures the financial, social and psychological well-being of all its members. According to Adinlofu (2009), the extended family ensures procreation and provides for the early care and training of children. Furthermore, the extended family also provides for the maintenance of the extended family. This same family system, according to Degbey (2012), not only defines "social and moral norms and safeguards both material and spiritual customs and traditions, but also provides a variety of role models, preparing the way for adulthood," but also "provides a variety of role models, preparing the way for adulthood." According to Degbey (2012), the dominance of the elders has a rather high degree of social control on the individual, particularly the younger generation. These are some of the advantages of the extended family system that is common in African culture, which is based on the principles of Ubuntu.

Some of the negative effects of the nuclear family system, which is yet another illustration of western individualism, include feelings of loneliness and isolation in its members. When both parents have demanding careers, there is little to no time left over for the parents to spend with their children. As a direct consequence of this, some children may experience feelings of isolation. Some of them try to fill the hole by spending an excessive amount of time watching

television or using electronic devices, but this simply causes them to adopt the lifestyles that they see portrayed on television, such as those depicted in gun movies. In this kind of existence, the presence of a member of the extended family, such as a grandparent or an aunt, is deeply missed. Children would receive counselling inside an extended family, which would lead to respect, partnership, sharing and caring for one another among the members. As a result, the gap that the researcher is currently striving to address by introducing the function of Ubuntu was opened by the western individualistic worldview, which has become the modern life's worldview of most of the African peoples.

It is impossible to overstate how important families are in African culture. It serves as the principal organisational structure for the community's social activities. The community's cohesion is a necessary condition for its overall oneness. Family life instills both social and moral norms, which is not surprising given how important it is. Within the context of the extended family, the nuclear family plays a role. It is interesting to note that children have their own rights and responsibilities in relation to their parents, just like parents do in relation to their children. As the head of the family, the husband is responsible for certain responsibilities and enjoys certain rewards, but the woman is also responsible for certain obligations towards her husband. According to Igboin (2011), marriage is the single most essential institution for beginning the process of having a family in this unit.

2.12.2.2 Ubuntu is known by different names in Africa

Ubuntu is also observed in numerous African communities, albeit under different labels and names in terms of conceptual clarification from a linguistic perspective. The term Ubuntu comprises the *u-*, the abstract noun prefix *bu and* and the noun *-ntu*, meaning 'person,' or 'personhood' and 'humanness' (Kamwangamalu, 1999).

The word is common in the Nguni languages of Southern Africa., and words with similar meanings occur throughout sub-Saharan Africa (Murithi, 2006). Examples include *botho* (Sesotho or Setswana), *bumuntu* (kiSukuma and Kihayi in Tanzania), *bomoto* (Bobangi in Congo), *gimuntu* (kiKongo and giKwese in Angola), *umundu* (Kikuyu in Kenya), *umuntu* (Uganda), *umunthu* (Malawi) and *vumunhu* (Xitsonga and shiTswa in Mozambique). Moreover, Murithi (2006) further observed that Ubuntu appears in diverse forms across all African societies, especially in the languages of East, Central and Southern Africa (Mapadimeng, 2009).

Furthermore, according to Mvuselelo (2009), Ubuntu has been interpreted in different ethnic groups. For example, Sesotho (Lesotho and South Africa) *Motho ke motho ka batho* 'A person is a person by other people'; IsiZulu (South Africa) *Umuntu ngabantu* 'A person is a person through or by means, of other people'; Xitsonga (Mozambique and South Africa) *Rintiho rinwe a rinusi hove* 'One finger cannot pick a grain'; Sesotho (Lesotho and South Africa) *A botho bag ago bon ne botho seshabeng* 'Let your welfare be the welfare of the nation'; Chichewa (Malawi) *Mwana wa nzako ndi wako yemwe* 'Someone's child is your child'; the Setswana (Botswana and South Africa) *Moeng goroga re je ka wema* 'Come guest, we feast through you'; and, lastly, Tshivenda (South Africa) *Muthu ndi muthu nga vhanwe* 'A person is a person through other people'. All these meanings from different societies and groups in Africa, therefore, convey the notion that a person becomes a person only through relationships with and recognition by others, with significant implications for day-to-day interaction between community members. Ubuntu is people-oriented, as opposed to the Western socio-political order that promotes elitism. Thus, Ubuntu is an ancient African metaphilosophy in sub-Saharan Africa that principally means 'I am myself through you.' Ubuntu is derived from the South African Bantu languages; its root being *ntu*, which signifies primal being. Ramose provided an analysis of the prefix (*ubu-*) and the stem (*ntu*). According to him, the prefix 'evokes the idea of be-ing in general.' *Ubu*-specifies a oneness, while *ntu* specifies a concreteness. *Ubu-* is oriented towards *ntu* as a being becoming whole. The concept of Ubuntu as a progression into wholeness is the basis of understanding Ubuntu as an ethical concept, and provides a foundation from which to understand the various meanings that have been assigned to the word throughout the twentieth century and into the twenty-first century (Tschaepe, 2013).

2.12.2.3 Ubuntu guides human behaviour in Africa

In addition, Ramose (1999) explains that Ubuntu is not only spoken by those who speak Bantu, but it can also be found in other parts of sub-Saharan Africa. For instance, the concept in Senegal represents a similar sense of social hospitality and responsibility. Teranga is practiced in that country. The philosophy of Ubuntu is predicated on the idea that one person's happiness should be another's priority. In the post-apartheid era in South Africa, Hailey (2008) stated that there has been a revived interest in Ubuntu, and several studies have focused on its utility in post-apartheid peacebuilding. In sub-Saharan Africa, there is a need for research on the similar characteristics and value of Ubuntu, and there is also a need for universal discourses surrounding African humanism (Young, 1990). Ubuntu is an African

philosophy that aims to strike a balance between oneself and others, as well as between that which is destructive and that which is creative, as well as between that which is good and that which is evil (Masina, 2000).

The aim of Ubuntu, as practiced in South Africa, is to encourage interpersonal collaboration for the benefit of the community. On the other hand, the individual competing inclinations of its members have the potential to disrupt the community's peace, security and harmony. In addition, Ubuntu puts emphasis on the community as a whole and praises it, while minimising the importance of the individual. The practice of Ubuntu reaffirms the value of the community as well as the solidarity that exists between men and women. In the years immediately following the end of apartheid, the government of South Africa implemented Ubuntu as a means of making amends for the unfairness, intolerance, hatred, violations of human rights and inhumanity that had been institutionalised under the apartheid system (Graybill, 2004). The Truth and Reconciliation Commission (TRC) was established in terms of the Promotion of National Unity and Reconciliation Act 34 of 1995 to investigate cases, grant amnesty to individuals who were willing to fully disclose heinous acts, and positively transform society. This act was passed in 1995.

The Act stipulates that the aim of the Commission shall be to advance national unity and reconciliation via the cultivation of a spirit of understanding that is unconstrained by the disagreements and schisms of the past. Reconciliation was emphasised by Chairperson Tutu as the most important objective of the organisation. Tutu, who was guided in his thinking by the tenets of the Ubuntu philosophy, believed that offenders should readily acknowledge their wrongdoing, come clean about their transgressions, and seek forgiveness from their victims. This, he reasoned, would pave the way for reconciliation not only between individuals but also within society (Graybill, 2004). In a society that is racially and socially divided, such as the one that history has established in South Africa, Ubuntu plays a creative role in repairing social bonds, which is one of its primary purposes. It is of critical importance in the process of cultivating an atmosphere of harmony and reconciliation. Ubuntu may be able to assist in the facilitation of the healing process by instilling the mentality necessary to construct a nation that values cultural diversity as one of its most prominent and enduring traits (Msengana, 2006). In light of the evidence presented above, it is clear that the truth and reconciliation commission was founded on the Ubuntu concept. This school of thought places strong emphasis on human connections, forgiveness and truthfulness. Ubuntu was necessary

to begin a new life in South Africa in which people could face the future together without fear due to the broken relationships that existed among the population. However, in order for reconciliation to be successful, the truthfulness-based philosophy of Ubuntu required individuals who were contrite and could ask for forgiveness from an honest place in their hearts. As a consequence, Ubuntu is intertwined with religious practice. Philosophy is the academic discipline that places emphasis on the significance of the truth. The fact that the black culture and the white culture were both represented in the Truth and Reconciliation Commission in South Africa contributed to the commission's failure. Ubuntu extends a sincere apology, which is supported by a pledge to take action in the future to demonstrate that the expression of regret is not only lip service and that the company is, in fact, sorry. This can involve giving the person you got into a fight with a cow, goat, or sheep; alternatively, it might involve doing chores for them. The individual with whom you are at odds will not regard you as a slave but rather as a person who requires Ubuntu in exchange for their assistance.

2.12.2.4 Ubuntu influenced the South African Constitution

The concept of "Ubuntu" is also reflected in the Constitution of the Republic of South Africa from 1996, which emphasises the need for understanding rather than vengeance, for reparation but not retaliation, and for "Ubuntu" rather than victimisation. The Constitution of the Republic of South Africa also emphasises the need for understanding rather than vengeance (Graybill, 2004). According to Lutz (2009), one of the most essential aspects of Ubuntu is the high degree of harmony and continuity that is ingrained in the system. This is because Ubuntu exemplifies human interdependence and strengthens the norms of reciprocity, suppression of self-interest, and the virtue of symbiosis. The building of peace using Ubuntu is hence predicated on reciprocity, exclusivity and a shared destiny between different people or groups (Murithi, 2006). Ubuntu provides individuals with a means by which they can forgive others and themselves, as well as a rationale for letting go of the need to exact revenge.

Ubuntu offers a road map that may be used by societies and their governments to create rules and regulations that will encourage peaceful relationships and the rebuilding of peace in communities that have been traumatised or are emerging from war. According to Sigrun (2010), Ubuntu is an approach for conflict resolution that is employed in Africa, and incorporates five steps. After an inquiry has been completed, those who were responsible for

the wrongdoing are instructed to apologise, demonstrate genuine regret, and take responsibility for their actions. The people who did the wrong thing are told to make amends or pay compensation, while those who were wronged are told to have mercy on the victims. As the procedure draws to a close, everyone is given the instruction to prioritise reconciliation.

2.12.2.5 Indigenous Conflict Mechanism Used in some of African Communities

It is argued that Ubuntu recognises four characteristics of being human, namely human dignity, equality, universal brotherhood and the sacredness of life, which provide the most desirable state of life in community-based living. These characteristics are as follows: human dignity; equality; universal brotherhood; and the sacredness of life. Similar to the Ethiopian context, as Endalew (2014) pointed out in an apt manner, various indigenous conflict resolution mechanisms have been practiced for many centuries, and indigenous conflict resolution mechanisms are deeply rooted in the various ethnic groups of Ethiopia. In addition, indigenous conflict resolution mechanisms have been practiced for many centuries in Ethiopia. Many different methods of dispute resolution that are unique to Ethiopia have been successfully used for many centuries (Gowok, 2008; Endalew, 2014). These indigenous methods of dispute resolution are strongly ingrained in a variety of Ethiopian ethnic groups. They derive their legitimacy, rather than from the values of the state, from the norms and standards of the people's cultural traditions, and they are identified with those traditions. In addition, because Ethiopia is composed of several different ethnic groups, its native systems for resolving conflicts are distinct for each of those ethnic groups. As a direct consequence of this, their implementation is not standardised across the entirety of the nation (Endalew, 2013). Endalew (2014) acknowledged that Elders, also known as *"Shimagelle,"* as well as other individuals who were nominated on an ad hoc basis to settle disputes, played a significant part in the process of conflict resolution. Even in modern times, these methods are widely used by a variety of different ethnic groups to resolve a wide variety of conflicts in addition to a substantial number of other issues. For instance, the *Oromo* practice the *"Gadaa"* system, which was developed to guide the social, political, economic and religious lives of the *Oromo* people in Ethiopia — and for managing resources such as water, as well as its contribution to conflict resolution among individuals and communities — while the Amhara and other ethnic groups practice the *"Shimagalelle"* system. The *"Gadaa"* system was developed to guide the social, political, economic and religious lives of the Oromo

people in Ethiopia (Gowok, 2008). The *Gadaa* legal system recommends avoiding the imposition and execution of statutory laws that seek to supplant customary legal systems. Instead, mechanisms were sought out in order to learn from the Lubas, who are elders who are knowledgeable in the *Gadaa* system, about the customary mechanisms of conflict resolution in order to integrate them into the enactment or implementation of statutory laws. This was done in order to integrate these mechanisms into the *Gadaa* system. Even after going through the processes and receiving the punishments imposed by the criminal court, certain indigenous Ethiopians have a tendency to employ the indigenous conflict resolution system for reconciliation and to keep acts of revenge under check (Endalew, 2014). Indigenous conflict resolution mechanisms have been marginalised since the 1950s and 1960s, when the imperial regime was engaged in the extensive codification and overhaul of the existing laws with the goal of unifying and modernising the laws. This is despite the fact that these mechanisms have wider popular acceptance throughout the country. Indigenous dispute resolution processes, including those pertaining to family relations and interpretations of contracts, were incorporated into the enactments that were being codified at the time. This was the case so long as these practices did not directly contradict the Codes (Bahta, 2014). The legal system does not acknowledge indigenous practices of dispute settlement, and those practices are not well organised (Endalew, 2014). In addition, the process of development in Ethiopia does not provide the appropriate amount of attention to safeguarding, developing and making use of the indigenous conflict resolution mechanisms that already exist.

2.12.2.6 Ubuntu as relevant for conflict resolution

The indigenous conflict resolution methods of the many ethnic groups that make up African states are distinct from one another due to the multi-ethnic nature of African states. According to Lutz (2009), the Ubuntu ideology recognises elders as the keepers of the culture and history of the land. As a result, persons who were appointed based on honour to settle disputes played an essential role in the process of conflict resolution. Even in modern times, many different ethnic groups still put these methods into practice to resolve conflict as well as a wide variety of other issues. The practice of Ubuntu in Eastern, Central and Southern Africa is the most interesting example because it is more than just a method for resolving conflicts; rather, it is a way of life that seeks to explain what it is to be human. This makes the practice the most intriguing example (Lutz, 2009). Therefore, a person who possesses Ubuntu is believed to be generous, hospitable, kind, loving and sympathetic towards others. According to Nabudere (2005), Ubuntu societies established systems for resolving

disagreements, encouraging reconciliation and peace-building, and repairing past wrongs, all with the goal of preserving social coherence and harmony. Therefore, the entirety of society is actively engaged on a variety of fronts in pursuit of a solution to an issue that is perceived as posing a risk to the social cohesiveness of the community.

Additionally, the accomplishments and failures of a given community belong to each individual member of the community, which is another aspect of communal solidarity (Graham, 1999; Mbiti, 1970; Metz, 2011). Lutz (2009) compares this concept to that of a team sport, arguing that performing well for oneself also means performing well for the purpose of the team, and that if the team is successful, then each individual member of the team is successful as well. We "see our lives as bound up with the good of the particular community in which our identity has been established" when we live in this way (Nkondo, 2007:90). On the basis of this concept, the presumption is made that everything that is beneficial to the community is also beneficial to the individuals that comprise the community (Cornell & van Marle, 2005; Gyekye, 2010; Menkiti, 1984; Pietersen, 2005). As a direct consequence of this, the interests of the community are prioritised over those of the individual (Cornell & van Marle, 2005; Gyekye, 2010; Menkiti, 1984; Nkondo, 2007; Tschaepe, 2013). Therefore, according to this conception of personhood, an individual should act or behave in accordance with what is beneficial for his or her community, thereby displaying solidarity, valuable membership and thus Ubuntu (Gyekye, 2010; Metz, 2011; Ruch & Anyanwu, 1981).

According to Metz (2011) and van Niekerk (2011), two expressions of communal solidarity are valuable activity in the community and membership in a valuable organisation. Because it demonstrates a commitment to the interests of the community and reciprocity with the community, both of which are requirements of communal personhood, solidarity is regarded as a fundamental component of what it means to be a person (Menkiti, 1984; Metz, 2011; van Niekerk, 2011; Tschaepe, 2013). One fails to demonstrate solidarity and, by extension, fails to be a person if they are uncaring, uninterested or hostile towards other members of the community or the community as a whole (Metz, 2011). This plays a significant role in the formation and preservation of a robust communal identity, which, in turn, assures the holonomy of the community and, as a result, its continued existence as a whole and that of all of its members (Metz, 2011; Osagie, 1985; van Niekerk, 2009). According to the definition provided by Menkiti (1984), a community is "not an addition "we," but a totally fused

collective "we" (p. 179). Acts of solidarity, also known as simunye, are considered by some academics to be examples of Ubuntu, which is a manner of demonstrating one's personhood by demonstrating reciprocity with and dedication to the community (Ramose, 1999a; van Niekerk, 2009).

2.12.2.7 Ubuntu as an African worldview

According to Kamwangamalu (1999), authorities on African traditional values and worldviews confirm that most Africans share the emphasis of Ubuntu on community. Ubuntu is guided by the notion that whatever happens to the individual happens to the entire group and, conversely, whatever happens to the entire group happens to the individual. As a consequence, the life of the individual is absorbed into the life of the community, on the idea that the community is responsible for the production of the individual (Mbiti, 1970). As a result, the Ubuntu philosophy has its roots in many facets of the culture of a particular community or location. Ubuntu and culture are the same thing. They are the socially learned and shared assemblage of behaviours, perceptions, attitudes, worldviews, value systems and beliefs that influence the texture of our lives as members of a certain community. Ubuntu and culture are synonymous terms. When someone like Kamwangamalu (1999), for example, discusses the culture, they are typically referring to one of the following four things: norms, values, beliefs or expressive symbols. According to Griswold (2008), norms are the ways in which people behave in a particular society; values are the things that people hold dear; beliefs are the ways in which people think the universe operates; and expressive symbols are representations, often of social norms, values and beliefs.

Akinola and Uzodike (2018) attested to the fact that Ubuntu is essential, given that all postcolonial African countries have experienced some form of conflict or another. Despite the fact that the nature, scope and depth of the conflicts vary, Akinola and Uzodike (2018) found that all postcolonial African countries had experienced at least one form of conflict. Additionally, disagreements are inevitable in human interactions; nevertheless, cultures that make greater use of Ubuntu have a greater tendency to manage and resolve disagreements more effectively than those that do not. For instance, both the precolonial dispensation in East Africa and the Yoruba and Bornu Kingdoms of West Africa have histories of brutal wars, although the southern African region maintained a decent level of peace throughout this time period. Even though the notion of Ubuntu is most usually linked with pre- and postcolonial Africa's Southern and Eastern areas, similar and various variants of Ubuntu have been found

in other parts of Africa. In other words, the concept of Ubuntu is not exclusive to Southern and Eastern Africa (Ezenwoko & Osagie, 2014). In West Africa, the Igbo community practiced similar expressions of humanness such as accommodation, compromise and fairness (Ezenwoko & Osagie, 2014), whereas the Yoruba community reflected the concept of omoluabi (someone governed by humanness) in both interpersonal and intergroup relationships. In West Africa, the Igbo community practiced similar expressions of humanness such as accommodation, compromise and fairness.

By situating the individual within the context of a relationship, as opposed to the Western-imposed system that prioritises excessive individualism, restorative justice works towards the goal of achieving social equality on the basis of the rights to dignity, equal concern and mutual respect. This efficient strategy for obtaining justice and peaceful cohabitation in disconnected and chaotic communities preached the principles of Ubuntu as practiced by indigenous Africans in the time before colonial rule. The persistence of intergroup antagonism, community feuds, domestic violence and insurgency reinvigorated calls for the incorporation of Ubuntu into the current court system and into the management of day-to-day interpersonal relationships (Nabudere, 2005). The framework of restorative justice is one that is less formal, with the major emphasis being placed on rebuilding relationships between offenders, victims and the communities in which they all reside (Morris, 2006). The use of culturally specific principles within the contemporary judicial system could engender sustainable peace in communities and in the world at large. The failure of the liberal model to resolve conflict and sustain peace has called into question the continued jettisoning of Ubuntu in Africa. This philosophy attracted global attention through the reconciliation work carried out in post-apartheid South Africa and has great potential for conflict resolution in Africa (Sigrun, 2010). It also believed by most Africans and non-Africans that Ubuntu holds great promise for facilitating enduring peace in the volatile South African socio-political sphere. Ubuntu's understanding of the indivisibility of humanity creates great capacity for forgiveness and reconciliation. Ramose (1999) concurred that African philosophy has long been woven around Ubuntu, which creates a family atmosphere. Ubuntu creates philosophical empathy and kinship among and between Africa's indigenous communities.

2.12.2.8 Ubuntu and reconciliation

According to Hailey (2008), the former President of South Africa, Thabo Mbeki, said that Ubuntu encourages members of the community to act in solidarity with the vulnerable, the

weak, and the destitute and helps them behave in certain ways for the common good. According to Hailey (2008), Ubuntu not only assists in the resolution of urgent problems but also plays a long-term role in the resolution of conflict. Tutu (2004) discovers in Ubuntu the basis for preferring restorative over retributive justice, which he expresses as "prioritising reconciliation over justice" (Graybill, 2004). Nelson Mandela, a former president of South Africa, is credited with interpreting the concept of Ubuntu as the profound African sense that one is only human through the humanity of others. Mandela believed that this concept should serve as the basis for building a better world (Metz, 2018). Mandela went on to say that the only way a society could be altered was by embracing reconciliation and cultivating understanding, and even love, amongst the many groups that make up the community (Akinola & Uzodike, 2018).

The majority of Africans share the common belief that a person who possesses Ubuntu is open and available to others, affirming of others, and does not feel threatened that others are able and good because they have a proper self-assurance that comes with knowing that they belong to a greater whole, which is diminished when others are humiliated, tortured, oppressed or treated as if they were less than who they are. This belief stems from the fact that most Africans share the common belief that a person should not dehumanize others (Tutu, 2004). The fact that Tutu is a believer in Ubuntu explains why it was used to mediate the settlement of fiercely contested interests in the immediate aftermath of apartheid and in the establishment of the Truth and Reconciliation Commission (TRC). Ubuntu is often thought of as a cultural concept; nevertheless, it may also be applied to politics, business, management and corporate governance. The interaction of these factors contributes to the incidence of conflicts in Africa.

Idoniboye-Obu and Whetho (2013:17) define Ubuntu as "a value system expected to inform human behavior in the context of the treatment of others, especially the treatment of the governed by political leaders." Ubuntu is a value system that is expected to inform human behaviour in the context of the treatment of others. In addition, Ubuntu is known as a "management and leadership philosophy," and as a result, the abandonment of its doctrine explains the avarice, corruption and kleptomania that have characterised the sociopolitical and economic realms of Africa (Idoniboye-Obu & Whetho, 2013:17). For instance, allocating resources according to the Ubuntu philosophy would not only assure the most effective use of those resources, but would also promote fairness and equity in the distribution of society

values and the resources they provide. Khomba (2011) and Murithi (2006) added more credence to the idea that Ubuntu may be explored as a legitimate guiding philosophy for public administration in Africa. This resulted from the hypothesis that one of the primary causes of war in Africa is the inefficient administration of the continent's public resources. The research study conducted by Khomba pushes the boundaries of what is currently known by investigating how Ubuntu can contribute to management and organisations in order to realise what he refers to as "an African management system" (Khomba, 2011). Khomba (2011) went on to say that a community's practice of brotherly and sisterly concern, which is bolstered by collaboration, caring, and sharing, has the potential to tackle issues such as poverty, deprivation, and isolation, all of which are factors that contribute to conflict. Metz (2012; Metz, 2007) provides the following definition of Ubuntu with this theoretical formulation: "An act is wrong to the degree that it fails to establish community; an act is appropriate to the extent that it produces harmony and minimises disagreement" (Metz, 2019).

Reconciliation is an outcome that naturally follows from practicing Ubuntu, and it leads to authentic results. If it does not create genuine outcomes, then the person who is seeking for reconciliation is either doing so for political reasons or for reasons that are not socio-spiritually motivated. When we say that reconciliation is managed politically, we imply that it is handled in a manner that is connected to the government of a country or public affairs in that country, such as by following a policy or a rule established by the government. Therefore, the attempt at reconciliation in South Africa was unsuccessful since there was no genuine attempt at reconciliation based on the genuine Ubuntu principles. Metz (2017:221) mentioned the Truth and Reconciliation Commission, which is separate from the tales that South Africa's Constitutional Court and other philosophers have evoked. He believed that the Truth and Reconciliation Commission (TRC) did help to bring about some reconciliation amongst the various racial groups in South Africa and that the people of South Africa were in a better position in terms of their relationships as a result of the TRC having been established. On the other hand, it is abundantly obvious that a communal reconciliation was by no means completely achieved, and that, if anything, in the course of the most recent few years, there has been a regression. While I do think that the TRC could have accomplished more if it had taken a more holistic approach, I also hold that there were limits to what could have been realistically expected of it to do on its own. It was impossible for it to do everything that needed to be done. In this paper, I suggest that many additional agents, in particular big

groups of white people and important enterprises, might and should have taken up the cause of achieving reconciliation in a much more active and engaged manner. Even if Metz is on the right track when he advocates for communal healing, I still believe that the way South Africa took towards reconciliation lacked a meaningful application of the Ubuntu philosophy. The ineffective educational system in place in the country is to blame for the erroneous application of Ubuntu because it continued to be taught rather than building the groundwork for the country's guiding concept.

2.12.2.9 Ubuntu and social cohesion

Because Ubuntu places such a strong focus on community cohesion, it may be difficult for non-Ubuntu users to become fully integrated into some communities. In addition, Sigrun (2010) pointed out that the use of Ubuntu widens the gap between communities because it may lead to a level of in-group bias due to enhanced bonding as a result of danger, conflict or other considerations. This may cause an increase in the gap between communities. Many times, the needs of individuals have to take a back seat to the requirements of maintaining group cohesion. Ubuntu, with its heavy focus on community, has the potential to be manipulated in order to legitimise what Louw (2002:18) referred to as the "totalitarian communalism" of African culture. This communalism "frowns upon elevating one individual above the community." Ubuntu could be used in this way because it emphasises the superiority of its own members over those of other groups, including non-Africans, non-Black Africans, and other individuals referred to as "outsiders." In this way, communalism has the potential to stir up racial tension. The tenets of Ubuntu do not address instances of structural violence nor do they criticise institutions that promote or engage in violence, such as the police. Despite this, its tenets have the potential to establish a rock-solid basis for reducing the severity of violent conflict and facilitating the healing of wounds in the aftermath of armed conflict. In addition to this, Ubuntu functions as a shield that defends the social fabric from the upheaval that is a natural consequence of the transition that is associated with globalisation and the contemporary state (Mvuselelo, 2009).

Although it is true that Ubuntu can be a helpful tool in creating solidarity or social cohesion, it is also necessary to state that communal conflicts will continue to exist unless the government eradicates the homelands mentality. Louw (2002) wrote about the excessive focus on community and how it could lead to the abuse of Ubuntu by legitimising the "totalitarian communalism" that is prevalent in African cultures. This communalism "frowns

upon elevating one individual above the community," and could lead to the abuse of Ubuntu. Louw (2002) warned about the excessive focus on community and how it might lead to Ubuntu being exploited by legitimising the "totalitarian communalism" that is prevalent in African cultures. Totalitarian communalism "frowns at elevating one individual above the community," which Ubuntu does. Due to the proximity of the two warring factions in Malamulele and Vuwani to one another, the hostilities in those two areas were remarkably similar to dictatorships.

Ubuntu encourages a sense of community among its users. Mbiti (1969) notes that there is an implicit but obvious bond between individuals as a result of the fact that one becomes aware of one's own existence, duties, obligations and rights in and through the community. This means that when one suffers, one does not suffer alone but rather suffers along with the entire group. The philosophy of Ubuntu holds that human society should be viewed as an organism, with each individual portion being valued for the unique qualities it brings to the whole. As a consequence, Mbiti (1969) stated that whatever occurs to one member of the group affects the entire group, and whatever happens to the collective affects each individual member of the group. The sense of belonging is strengthened by the two-way, interactive relationship that exists between an individual and the community. Ubuntu is dedicated to respecting the standards that are established by the community. The living and their ancestors share community values in a way that demonstrates the living's commitment to fellowship with their ancestors and those values that have enabled them to live life in harmony with everything else in the community. Community values are shared in a way that shows the living's commitment to fellowship with their ancestors and those values that have enabled them to live life in harmony with everything else (Tutu, 2009). The objective of Ubuntu is social coherence for the sake of protecting, nurturing and cultivating all forms of human existence.

2.12.2.10 Ubuntu Opposes Most Ingredients of the Modern State

The Western rule of law, the judicial system, and constitutionalism are not built on forgiveness; rather, they are built on punitive measures. Ubuntu, on the other hand, contradicts the majority of the components of a contemporary state, such as the rule of law and the judicial system. It functioned properly when society was homogenous; but, the concepts of pluralism, individual sovereignty, democratisation and cultural globalisation make it difficult for it to make a comeback and to be adopted in the political discourse of the

modern day. The modern global order is characterised by the amalgamation of unfamiliar cultural belief systems, the infiltration of Western culture, societies that are culturally similar to one another, and splinter groups that are opposed to one another within a community. This is because the modern global order is interwoven and interconnected. Ubuntu is likely to compete with other philosophies of interdependence, such as communitarianism, socialism and humanism, as a philosophy that educated and urbanised Africans aspire to. The type of interdependence that is suggested by Ubuntu may no longer be a practicable way of life. However, as a philosophy that educated and urbanised Africans aspire to, Ubuntu is likely to compete with other philosophies of interdependence. In his research, Hailey (2008) contends that Ubuntu has been eradicated as a result of urban displacement, and he calls into question its very existence as well as African humanism. His theory is based on the apparent prejudice, intolerance and xenophobia that was pervasive in rural and urban regions of South Africa before and after apartheid. Further, it is suggested that this debunks the idea of rural innocence, and investigates the suspicions, prejudices and intolerance that were prevalent in rural regions, which are the very places where Ubuntu should have been the dominant value. In addition, Hailey (2008) investigated the potential for inhumanity that exists within each person, and pointed out the widespread prevalence of this mindset in both rural and urban areas. Once more, the xenophobic violence that occurred in South Africa in 2008 and 2015 and resulted in the deaths of many foreign nationals illustrates the myth of Ubuntu in countries that push for its incorporation into the modern state's socio-political framework.

2.12.2.11 Ubuntu and effective education

Broodryk (2006:15) states that the education or school reflects the values and beliefs that the society considers worthy, so the school transmits those values and ethics as the school staff and learners are part of the society. Values are an integral part of the society, and society understands itself and judges its worth through value systems by taking the education of the individual into consideration. The core values of Ubuntu in education as described by Broodryk (2006:32) provide a supportive basis or a frame of reference from which both teachers and learners engage in the assessment process. Seemingly, education is regarded as the key to development in all areas of society, whether human capital, modernisation, social reproduction, environmental conservation, religion, or even politics (Harber & Serf, 2004:6-7). According to Letseka (2011), the whole education process centres around Ubuntu as a philosophy or set of ethical principles that capture the belief system of South Africans according to which people take responsibility for others and accept their authority and

guidance in order to progress. Ubuntu in education gives learners the primacy to humanness and adopt a more holistic view in learners instead of reducing their abilities or potential. According to Msila (2008), the school outcomes are influenced by Ubuntu personality values that are embraced within the school. Where pupils have more Ubuntu qualities, there is greater desire to learn. Ubuntu manifests itself whereby a teacher or a leader listens to learners' stories. When Ubuntu manifests itself in our schools or education, the teacher encourages learners to do critical thinking and self-reflectivity; the teacher and education department usually engage with relevant concepts for change in the education system. Msila (2008) states that the discipline and togetherness in schools underpin Ubuntu as it is the learner's behaviour towards their peers and adults that shows dignity or lack of it. Ubuntu is a weapon used by schools or society to challenge the inequality and injustices. In order to fully realise the spirit of Ubuntu in education, according to Young (1990), it is good to engage members of our communities. This is the first step towards achieving the values of being a caring nation, with recognised democratic values and a social justice system that is based on equality, non-racism, non-sexism and human dignity in education. Ubuntu means that a person is a person through other people and Ubuntu societies develop mechanisms to maintain social cohesion and harmony. Then we say that Ubuntu led to the achievement of social justice in education. For example, the teacher in the school that practices Ubuntu respects and values all the learners' needs. According to Letseka (2011), the whole education process centres around Ubuntu as a philosophy or a set of ethical principles that capture the belief system of South Africans according to which people take responsibility for others and accept their authority and guidance in order to progress.

2.12.2 Theories of Conflict Resolution

It is vital to present various theories that other researchers used to understand conflict resolution. This will assist in broadening the perspective of the researcher in the choice of the theory in support of the study, namely, the Ubuntu theory. There are theoretical insights into the nature and sources of conflict and how conflicts can be resolved through peaceful methods to effectuate durable settlements. The following discussion deal with some of these theories.

2.12.3.1 Functionalism

The functionalist viewpoint seeks to explain social institutions as collective ways of satisfying individual and societal need. Because it frequently focuses on the ways in which

social structures (such social institutions, for instance) satisfy social demands, functionalism is also sometimes referred to as structural functionalism. The major theoretical approach in sociology known as functionalism, which also goes by the name the functionalist perspective, posits that each individual contributes to the general performance and stability of society, a view known as the functionalist perspective (Crossman, 2020). Because it sees society as more than the aggregate of its components, functionalism places emphasis on the macro level. The components of society are interrelated and exist for the purpose of performing essential functions for the society as a whole. Therefore, the entire society is impacted whenever even a single unit or institution experiences a problem. For example, the family, which is the smallest unit of society, serves the purpose of rearing law-abiding individuals who are also able to contribute to the work of other institutions such as education, healthcare and the economy. Taxes, which the family is obligated to pay, are the means through which the government carries out its duties towards society. If families are not functioning properly, then both the stability and the productivity of the entire community will suffer (Brown, 2021).

The conceptual framework that is known as functionalism was developed by Emile Durkheim, who was interested in the problem of how societies may keep their order within themselves and continue to exist across time (Brown, 2021). He sought to explain social stability through the concept of solidarity and to differentiate between the mechanical solidarity of primitive societies and the organic solidarity of complex modern societies. He did this by focusing on the similarities and differences between the two types of solidarity. According to Durkheim, more traditional or primitive societies were held together by a mechanism that he called "mechanical solidarity." This meant that members of the society lived in relatively small groups that lacked differentiation, where they had strong family ties to one another and performed daily activities that were very similar. Values and symbols that were universal to the group served as the glue that held these communities together. In contrast, Durkheim noticed that contemporary communities have a complicated division of labour where people execute many varied daily duties. While traditional family links are weaker in modern cultures, modern societies do exhibit a complex division of labour. Durkheim postulated that the advent of the modern industrial civilisation would lead to the disintegration of the conventional mechanical solidarity that was the foundation of primitive societies. However, modern societies do not spontaneously disintegrate. Instead, contemporary societies are based on organic solidarity, and because of the vast division of

labour, individuals of the community are compelled to contact and engage with one another in order to produce the things that they require (Brown, 2021).

The functionalist perspective continues to attempt to explain how societies can preserve the stability and internal coherence that is necessary to assure their continuing existence throughout the course of time. According to the functionalist point of view, societies are compared to organisms, with the many social institutions acting as the equivalent of the body's organs in order to ensure the society's survival and reproduction. It is generally accepted that different aspects of society would, in the absence of conscious effort, cooperate to ensure that overall social balance is preserved. A change in one social institution will likely result in changes occurring in other social institutions because of the functional integration that occurs when social institutions come together to form a stable system. Institutions that are unable to function properly and do not make a positive contribution to the general upkeep of a society will be eliminated (Brown, 2021).

(a) Social Institutions

The functionalist approach to social analysis views social institutions in terms of the roles they play in society. To put it another way, in order to gain an understanding of a component of society, one needs to inquire, "What is the function of this institution?" and "How does it contribute to social stability?" As a result, the question "What is the function of education for society?" can be posed to education. A comprehensive response to this question would be quite difficult to provide and would call for an in-depth investigation into the history of education; however, one answer that is readily apparent is that education prepares individuals to enter the workforce and, as a result, keeps an economy operating. We are able to have a deeper comprehension of social life if we dissect the roles that the various components of society and the social order play (Brown, 2021).

2.12.3.2 Structural Functionalism

As functionalism can also be called structural functionalism is an offshoot of functionalism that makes the additional claim that deviant behaviour plays an important and positive role in society by, in the end, contributing to the cohesiveness of various populations within a given society (Urry, 2000). Deviation is useful in determining what kinds of behaviour are acceptable and what kinds are not. The theory of structural functionalism involves the drawing of lines and the establishment of limits. The members of a society can benefit greatly

from this essential function, which reaffirms the cultural values and conventions of the society to its members. Deviant behaviour has the potential to not only clarify the moral bounds of society but also to foster societal solidarity through the creation of a "us-versus-them" mentality in relation to persons who engage in deviant behaviour. Finally, deviation from the norm is recognised as a mechanism that contributes to the evolution of society over time. Deviant behaviour can upset the social equilibrium, but in the process of society regaining its equilibrium, it will change the rules that it considers acceptable. Deviant behaviour can contribute to the long-term social stability of a society if it is met by a shifting of the norms in response to it.

(a) The Strength of Structural Functionalism

The ability of functionalism to perceive social stability or social integration in terms of the functional duties of societal stakeholders or societal institutions is one of the tenets that contribute to the philosophy's strength (Urry, 2000). Every person who plays a role in the community is named and given the responsibility of providing members with a certain set of social services. It is natural to anticipate that disagreements may arise here. Even the most deviant actions can end up being beneficial in the long run. These are activities that are carried out on purpose with the intention of departing from the cultural standards of that specific civilisation. The lesson that can be learned from this theory is that it is possible to form a lasting unity even in circumstances where conflict has already broken out; for instance, where Vatsonga and Vhavenda have chosen to engage in a "violent" conflict that goes against the cultural norms of Ubuntu in an effort to restore social order. This is against the Ubuntu ideology, which states that it is unacceptable to intentionally harm another person. However, when disagreements arise, the Ubuntu philosophy comes into play, bringing with it the strengths of reconciliation, negotiation and forgiveness.

(b) Weakness of Structural Functionalism

The criticisms levelled against functionalism centre on its tendency to minimise the impact of individual agency and its inability to satisfactorily explain social transformation. The basic units of study in the functionalist viewpoint are society as a whole and the institutions that make up society. Only in connection to the roles they play within social systems can individuals be considered significant (i.e., their social status and position in patterns of social relations). A number of opponents have an issue with the inclination of functionalism to assign societal requirements to individuals. They make the point that, in contrast with living

beings, society does not have requirements; rather, society is simply alive in the sense that it is composed of individuals who are still alive. Because it places less emphasis on the contributions of individuals, functionalism is less likely to acknowledge the ways in which human acts can transform social institutions (Holmwood, 2005).

It is also argued by detractors that functionalism is unable to explain social change due to the fact that it places such strong emphasis on maintaining social order and stability in society. According to the logic of functionalists, if a social institution already exists, then it must serve some kind of purpose. However, during the course of time, institutions undergo change; some become extinct while others take their place. It is difficult to use functionalism to explain why a function of some aspect of society might change or how such a change might occur because functionalism focuses on aspects of social life in relation to their current functions rather than their historical functions. This is because historical functions are less relevant to understanding the present functions of social elements (Holmwood, 2005).

2.12.3.3 Conflict Theory

(a) The Strength of Conflict Theory

Karl Marx's concepts, which state that society is a living thing that is always evolving as a result of class conflict, serve as the foundation for conflict theory. The conflict theory perspective sees social life as a competition, in contrast with the functionalism viewpoint, which views society as a complex system that is always trying to achieve equilibrium. Individuals within a community are said to be in constant competition with one another for few resources when the conflict hypothesis is considered (e.g., money, leisure, job opportunities, etc.). The intense rivalry that arises from limited resources is at the core of every social interaction. Human relationships are characterised by competition rather than by the ability to reach a consensus. Some people and organisations have more resources (i.e., power and influence), and use these resources to maintain their positions of power in society. Broader social structures and organisations (such as religions, governments, and so on) are a reflection of the competition for resources and the inherent inequality that the competition entails.

(b) The Weaknesses of Conflict Theory

Unsurprisingly, conflict theory has been called out for the predictable reason that it has been attacked for its emphasis on change while neglecting societal stability. The perspective of conflict theory is diametrically opposed to that of Ubuntu theory, which maintains that social order and stability are the norm. Some detractors concede that civilisations are always undergoing shifts and transformations, but they argue that the majority of these shifts are incremental or modest rather than revolutionary in nature. For instance, rather than undergoing a communist revolution, several modern capitalist states have opted to establish comprehensive social service programmes rather than going through with it. Despite the fact that conflict theorists frequently centre their attention on social transformation, they have, in point of fact, also produced a theory to explain social stasis. The viewpoint of conflict theory maintains that the imbalances of power and the distribution of rewards are inherent in the systems of every society. People and organisations that stand to gain from a certain structure are motivated to work towards ensuring that it is preserved. For instance, the affluent may oppose measures such as affirmative action or public funding that would make access to higher education simpler for a greater number of people in order to maintain their unique access to this level of education.

According to the findings of this investigation, one of the issues with the theory of conflict is that it places a great deal of importance on the fact that members of various social groups in a society do not share resources in the same manner. At each and every stage of the Ubuntu development process, emphasis is placed on the fair and balanced distribution of available resources. Ubuntu places a strong emphasis on the community in this sense. The concept of Ubuntu frowns upon competitive behaviour and materialistic ambition.

2.12.3.4 Conflict Transformation Theory

There is a connection between conflict transformation theory and the thinker John Paul Lederach, who referred to the process of constructing peace using the phrase "conflict resolution" (Lederach, 1997). It is necessary to transform or replace destructive or negative communication patterns with constructive or positive contact patterns in order to make progress towards the goal of fostering peace. In the same vein as Bush and Folger, Lederach emphasised the need to transform the disputing parties by enabling them to comprehend their own circumstance and requirements while simultaneously encouraging them to acknowledge the circumstance and requirements of their adversaries (Dixit, 2004). This idea places emphasis on the significance of culture as an aspect to consider while resolving conflicts. At

the present time, conflict management processes that are classified as either traditional or alternative forms of dispute resolution are considered to be entirely unique and independent occurrences in and of themselves. The idea of conflict transformation focuses on the realistic approaches that may be taken to resolve various kinds of conflicts, including those that are interpersonal, industrial, communal or international, amongst others. This particularism is a reflection of the belief that human disputes and the management of such conflicts are fundamentally different depending on the environment in which human interactions exist (Bichel, 2009). The idea of John Paul Lederach is an excellent illustration of how to bring together various aspects of life, including culture, identity, communication and the settlement of conflicts. Lederach believes that the most effective way to handle problems is by looking at them through the cultural lenses of the parties involved. They should be regarded as social and cultural creations whose meanings are subject to change as people's knowledge, perceptions and models of what is at stake shift through time.

Ajanawa and Alemei (2018) went on to say that the socially constructed nature of conflict provides opportunities for conflict transformation in constructive ways. These directions can modify views and social interactions, which can lead to outcomes that are mutually beneficial. The process of looking for resources and origins within the cultural context itself is essential to the transformation process. In order to accomplish this, particularly in cross-cultural contexts, Lederach and Stock (1993) articulated an approach in which the participants and their knowledge are seen as the primary resource for the resolution of conflicts.

Schalk, Curseu, Boros, Meslec and Curşeu (2010) found that understanding the impact of cross-cultural diversity on cooperation and the conflict resolution processes in teams is an essential component for the success of teams and the overall performance of organisations. Up until quite recently, the majority of research on this topic was carried out by teams that were geographically spread, and involved participants hailing from a variety of cultural backgrounds. As a result of globalisation and the rising mobility of the world's population, today's teams that are operating inside a single cultural environment are becoming increasingly cross-culturally varied. When individuals are required to coordinate their activities in order to complete distinct jobs, cooperation is an absolute necessity (Schalk et al., 2010). The "cultural syndrome" of individualism against collectivism has been found to be a substantial difference between cultures in a vast number of research. The collectivists

comply more with group norms than the individualists, and they have more cooperative groupings than the individualists (Wagner, 1995). Therefore, attitudes towards conflict and the management of conflict are influenced by the disparities in cultural values that exist between civilisations that are collectivistic and those that are individualistic. Collectivists view conflict with members of other groups as inevitable and unavoidable.

It is believed that the Lederach approach views problems in terms of local practices rather than in terms of external norms. This is in contrast with the traditional approach, which views conflicts in terms of external standards. Additionally, the portrayal of culture leads the path to a major solution, and it would be helpful to make this objective the focal point from which to analyse existing approaches to conflict resolution and analysis. Paffenholz (2013) proposed that the investigation and consideration of specific characteristics of any culture is an important piece of information on the path to conflict analysis. However, the inclusion of culture or material related to culture alone is not sufficient to conduct a conflict analysis. It is also vital to take into account historical factors because they provide the foundation for cultural constructs.

As the preceding discussion implies, there is a need for examination of the application of history in the modern world as part of the process of conflict resolution. This analysis is in addition to the need to examine economic, social and political aspects (Butler, 2009). The purposeful application of history in the process of conflict resolution is possible. The ways in which people thought about things in the past may be able to help us understand the current situation as well as problems in general. Without disregarding the effects of structural and material parameters, it is safe to argue that the actors' interests will be largely derivative of their self-definition and identity, confirming the necessity of a historical perspective in conflict resolution (Mengesa, Yusuf & Gebre, 2015). In this sense, the theory that underpins the area of conflict resolution takes into consideration history, culture and identity in order to comprehend the origins and dynamics of conflicts, but it approaches these aspects as distinct entities in its analysis and application. In the context of conflict management, mediation and negotiations are two types of discourse that can contribute to the establishment of peace and speed up the process of achieving peace.

(a) Weaknesses of Conflict Transformation Theory

Conflict transformation theory is not without shortcomings. However, in this study only one weakness is identified. Conflict transformation theory lacks conflict preventive mechanisms. It takes history, culture and identity into account to understand the nature and dynamics of conflicts when analysing conflicts.

(b) Strength and Weaknesses of Discussed Theories in Relation to the Ubuntu Theory

It is one of the strengths of functionalism to consider society as a complex system whose elements work together to produce solidarity and stability through social institutions. Another one of functionalism's strengths is that it emphasises the importance of the individual in society. The structures and procedures of social order and cooperation that govern the conduct of a collection of individuals within a specific human collective are referred to as social institutions. Social institutions are also known as organisations. Families, religions, social groups, economic systems, legal systems, judicial systems and punitive systems are all examples of institutions. Other examples include language and the media. In this regard, functionalism is a good theory; however, it falls short when compared to Ubuntu theory. This is primarily due to the fact that the functionalist theory seems to struggle to explain crime and fail to account for social change and individual agency; some people consider it to be conservatively biased. Ubuntu theory, on the other hand, explains crime in a way that is more holistic and comprehensive. As a consequence, one cannot rely on functionalism to bring about conflict resolution in circumstances including crime and social transformation of African communities. In these communities, the situation was primarily characterised by acts of violent crime, in addition to a change in cultural patterns and connections, which is what we mean when we talk about social transformation. The Ubuntu idea actively opposes violent and criminal behaviour by placing emphasis on lovingkindness and harmonious interpersonal connections. However, Ubuntu comprises the same kinds of social institutions and the human collective that, for the purposes of this research, were utilised to reestablish equilibrium and Ubuntu.

Another method for resolving issues that arise from interactions between individuals is known as conflict theory, which was developed using Karl Marx's theories. According to conflict theory, social existence is a competition, and the primary concerns of the theory are the unequal distribution of resources, power and inequality. In contrast with the functionalist theory, conflict theory is more effective at describing social change but is less successful when it comes to explaining social stability. The conflict hypothesis has been called into

question due to its inability to provide an explanation for social consistency and gradual shifts. In this aspect, it does not fit the requirements of the current study appropriately because it does not explain social stability. This study aimed to achieve social stability in Malamulele and Vuwani through its participation in those communities. Ubuntu is still the most applicable concept to this investigation due to the fact that it places emphasis on social cohesion and harmony. It avoids confrontation and persistently pursues cooperation and peacemaking among people who hold conflicting viewpoints.

On the other hand, Conflict Transformative Theory is strikingly similar to the Ubuntu Theory that served as the Foundation for this Research. Lederach claimed that the most effective way to deal with conflicts is to do so through the cultural frameworks of the parties involved. In this sense, it is essential to rely on the customs and traditions of the local culture rather than on norms imposed from the outside. This theory has some merit since it recognises the significance of the cultures of the parties involved in the dispute. This is the theory's strongest point. The problem with this theory is that, while it does an excellent job of finding and evaluating cultural behaviours that can be beneficial in conflict resolution, it does not provide any preventative strategies to deal with conflict, which is a hurdle. Ubuntu has a lot of depth when it comes to figuring out and employing different cultural practices that could be useful in the process of resolving conflicts. In terms the findings of this research study, the fact that the Vhavenda and Vatsonga hold the same cultural worldview of Ubuntu may make it simpler to find a solution to the tension that exists between the two groups. In order to conduct an analysis of the conflict that occurs within the communities, this study made advantage of the culture that both the conflict transformation and Ubuntu theories have in common. In addition, Ubuntu has preventative mechanisms that make it a better choice than the theory of conflict transformation. These mechanisms include teaching young children to respect one another, to be kind, to share, and to love through a variety of cultural activities. These activities include extended family practices, eating together, teaching folklore and many more. Ubuntu is a better choice because it promotes the good life (Metz, 2014).

2.13 Strengths and Weaknesses of the Available Literature

The above literature is not without limitations. The strength and the limitations are discussed below.

2.13.1 Strengths of the Literature

This literature review has several strengths, one of which is that the review method was successful in highlighting the primary causes of conflict in South Africa as well as the conflict resolution strategies that were utilised to successfully resolve those conflicts. Some of the tactics that were identified include negotiating, telling the truth and reconciling. This literature review discussed some of the relevant theories of conflict resolution, such as functionalism or structural functionalism, conflict theory, and conflict transformation theory, in order to make it clear why the Ubuntu theory is the most appropriate for this study. This is another one of the study's strengths. All of the above-mentioned ideas have their own unique advantages and disadvantages, which qualify them as viable topics for debate within the scope of this investigation. One of the primary considerations that led to the selection of these hypotheses as topics for discussion was the fact that they have strong connections to the African philosophy of Ubuntu.

2.13.2 Weaknesses of the Literature

Most of the information provided in this body of literature portrays Western methods of resolving conflict. For example, the dependency on external forces in conflict resolution or the dependency on troops that the international military would send to mediate the conflicts rather than developing internal cultural strategies to deal with conflicts is one of the weaknesses of this body of literature. When it comes to resolving conflicts, these multinational institutions have, for the most part, failed to produce the results that were expected of them. The vast majority of the numerous conflict resolution solutions that were adopted originated in the West, which meant that indigenous processes were not considered. Even in the era that followed the conclusion of the Cold War, the indigenous techniques of conflict resolution in Africa have shown enormous success in achieving their goals over the course of several decades.

One more deficiency in the body of knowledge is that the majority of studies on conflict resolution are analysed through the Eurocentric lens of theoretical methodologies, with little focus on African methods of identifying societal problems. This is a significant gap in the research that has been done on the topic. As a result, this research does not have access to relevant material on Afrocentric studies or the part that Ubuntu plays in resolving conflicts.

2.14 Conclusion

This chapter offered analysis of the previous research that was considered pertinent to the investigation being carried out. Following the introductory section of the chapter, the researcher went on to discuss methods of conflict resolution before going on to explore potential causes of conflict and providing solutions to these problems. In the literature review, the researcher considered the topic of conflict resolution from three different vantage points: national, continental and global. Theories that were thought to be pertinent to the investigation of wars in Africa were evaluated and discussed. The literature review not only gathered pertinent material about the topic, but it also forcefully discovered a gap in our understanding, which is indicated by the tendency to rely on Eurocentric ideas when studying conflicts. This gap was recognised by the review. In this chapter, we took a critical look at a number of theoretical frameworks, including functionalism, the conflict theory, and the conflict transformation model. These theories do not place emphasis on culture, with the exception of Lederach's model of conflict transformation. Lederach's model views conflict in terms of local practices rather than external standards, and therefore believes that cultural settings should be applied when analysing conflicts. However, due to the significance of the African culture of Ubuntu to the investigation of the conflicts in Malamulele and Vuwani, credit was given to the culture of Africa. In the following chapter, the researcher will describe the research methodology that was utilised in the study.

CHAPTER THREE
DEMARCATION OF THE STUDY AREA AND ITS HISTORICO-POLITICAL FEATURES

3.1 Introduction

This chapter focuses on the background to the Malamulele and Vuwani conflict. The chapter is brief. It does not unpack in detail the background of political, economic, social and cultural history of the area. The chapter focuses mainly on the key socio-political anthropological features of the area of study. The main objective is to provide the structural context of the problem under investigation.

3.2 Demarcation of the study area and its historico-political features

The map below provides some of the current features of the area of investigation.

Figure 3.1: Vhembe District Map (Adapted from Municipalities.co.za (n.d.))

Figure 3.1 is a map of Vhembe District, showing the four local municipalities, namely, Makhado, Thulamela, Musina, and Collins Chabane. The Collins Chabane Local Municipality was the municipality chosen for the study. The Malamulele and Vuwani communities are found within the borders of Collins Chabane Local Municipality.

Vhembe District is one of the largest districts in Limpopo Province. Two cultural groups and languages dominate the eastern part of Vhembe District, namely, Vhavenda and Vatsonga-speaking people. The 2011 census shows that 84% of the residents of Vuwani are home language speakers of Tshivenda, while 8% are Xitsonga speakers, and 8% are speakers of other languages, such as Sepedi, Sesotho and English (Kanyane et al., 2016).

It is of paramount importance to highlight the background of the conflict that existed in Malamulele and Vuwani since 2006. This conflict began during the advent of democracy, which sought to do away with structures created by the apartheid system such as the homeland system or Bantustan. The democratic government sought to achieve this by decentralising power by forming the municipalities. The government formed nine provinces divided into municipalities which were in turn divided into local municipalities. Vhembe District municipality was one of the five municipalities that were formed in Limpopo Province. Under Vhembe District Municipality were Musina Local Municipality, Makhado Local Municipality, Thulamela Local Municipality, Mutale Local municipality which was dissolved and replaced with Collins Chabane Municipality. Thulamela municipality was at the centre of the Malamulele-Vuwani conflict. The predominant Xitsonga-speaking people of Malamulele complained about the poor supply of municipal services in Malamulele, more especially in areas where Vatsonga lived.

Although Thulamela Municipality was operating on the grounds of social integration between Vatsonga and Vhavenda, which fell within the entire vision of the then newly formed democratic government, which sought to promote unity in diversity, it appears that this was not appreciated by these two groups. It is within this vision that the new South Africa developed the preamble to the Constitution of South Africa which declares that: ‘’We the people of South Africa… believe that South Africa belongs to everyone who live in it, united in diversity’’ (Constitution of Republic of South Africa, 1996). This is also reiterated in the motto on the National Coat of Arms by the /Xam expression! ke e: /xarra //ke, which literally means diverse people unite. It thus enjoins the citizens to unite in a sense of belonging and pride (DAC, 2012).

The democratic government could not, within a short period, uproot the deep-rooted hatred, tensions and rivalry created by apartheid government between these two groups (Veil, 1989). It is well known, but perhaps not aptly documented, that ethnic consciousness or tribalism in the then Northern Transvaal was fermented or orchestrated by the white settlers. The

unfortunate past histories of unresolved ethnic or tribalistic tensions and conflicts that were deliberately created by the white settlers (Voortrekkers) in the northern parts of South Africa is well known. The Vatsonga and Vhavenda coexisted in peace in before the arrival of the Voortrekkers in the area (Mugovhani, 2021:1). The arrival of the Voortrekkers and the impact of their sojourn on the two language groups are highlighted, particularly the policies and the resultant episodes, such as The Natives Land Act, The Group Areas Act, Apartheid and Separate Development and The Bantu Self Government Act that culminated in the creation and establishment of two separate territories, one for Vhavenda and another for Vatsonga (Muller, 1963:53–65) and forced removals. This was an attempt by the white settlers and the resultant white apartheid government to divide these nationalities so that they would weaken them to rule them easier ('divide-and-rule'). They did not care about the seeds of tribalism that they were sowing between these two language groups. Inevitably, that was a recipe for anger, hatred, contestations, tensions and irresolvable conflicts, which are still manifesting themselves at present through the recent media coverage of Malamulele and Vuwani uprisings, and the resultant creation of a new municipality, which necessitated another forced removal under the democratic government (Mugovhani, 2021: 1). Forced removals refer to the moving of people from their established places of abode against their will (Baldwin 1975). During the 1960s and 1980s, the apartheid (National Party) government implemented a policy of resettlement, which forced millions of people to move to their designated 'group areas' (Platzky, 1985). Force was used to ensure that this Act was successfully realised. Heavily armed police forces were used to drive people out of their established villages and load their belongings onto government trucks, and taken to large empty tracts of land to begin life from scratch (Desmond, 1972). Many lost their families and precious possessions because of these 'forced removals' (Muller 1963:53–65). It is significant to mention that Vatsonga did not leave their low-lying areas without a fight. There were several skirmishes of passive resistance, resulting in clashes between Vhavenda and Vatsonga, particularly in areas such as Mashau, Bungeni and many other villages (Vho-M.F. Mugovhani, Vho-Geda Rambau and Vho-R.A. Mugovhani [Ha-Mashau at home of Rev M.J. Mugovhani] pers. comm., 30 July 1985). This firmly bore the seeds of Tsonga–Venda antagonism. The white Afrikaner settlers (Voortrekkers) thereafter occupied most areas previously occupied by black people of the Northern Transvaal.

In 1959, the Apartheid Government formally promulgated the Bantu Self-Government Act (Vail, 1989:33). Through this conscious 'divide-and-rule' tactic, the two language groups

were forced to settle in separate territories under the auspices of the separate development (Apartheid) policies. Ten self-governing territories for different black ethnic groups were established as part of the policy of apartheid (http://www.worldstatesmen.org/org/South African homelands.html). Black people were thereby packed into small pockets of homelands, whilst the white people took the largest portion of the country. The Bantu Self-Government Act formally declared a pseudo independent territory of Vhavenda. It was formally known as the Thohoyandou Bantu Authority in 1962. In 1969, the Venda territory became the Venda Territorial Authority, whilst the Tsonga territories became known as the Shangaan-Tsonga National unit. In 1973, the two homelands were granted the self-government status, with Vendaland under Patrick Ramaano Mphephu (great-grandson of Makhado) as Chief Executive Councillor and Vatsonga homeland became Gazankulu under Hudson William Edison Ntsanwisi as Chief Councillor (N.G Mugovhani personal recollection). Although Vendaland was eventually declared as an "independent" country from White South Africa in 1979 under 'President' PR Mphephu, the Tsonga-Shangana Gazankulu was only given self-rule but not independence from South Africa under H.W.E. Ntsanwisi as Chief Minister (E.T. Mugovhani [Pro-Makhado Task Group] pers. comm., September 2018). With the advent of the new democratic South Africa in 1994, the two homelands were re-integrated into the new Republic of South Africa.

The political changes introduced by the ANC government in the area were in line with its policy of social integration and nation-building, which sought to alleviate and do away with the racial and ethnic division deliberately engineered by the racist apartheid regime for the purpose of entrenching Afrikaner supremacist rule. In pursuance of Afrikaner separatist rule, this culminated in the creation of the two Bantustans, Venda and Gazankulu for Vhavenda and Vatsonga, respectively. However, the separation of these groups was not entirely possible because from time immemorial they had lived together. However, the creation of the Bantustan led to the evolution and creation of identities which were conflictual. The ANC policy of creating new political structures could not, within a short period of time as pointed out, heal the pathological identities created by the oppressor. The Malamulele-Vuwani conflict must be viewed in the context of an area pervaded by apartheid-engineered ethnic fractionalisation and frictionalisation.

After a long time of existing independently, the Vhavenda and Vatsonga had to start working together again in the democratic government. Both of these groups had experience of living

and working in the homeland system. The tension and rivalry created by the apartheid regime was unresolved by the democratic government. Xitsonga-speaking people who live in Malamulele strongly believed that poor service delivery was done deliberately by Vhavenda, who took the advantage of power in Thulamela Municipality. Vatsonga believed that Thulamela Municipality was under the control of Vhavenda-speaking leadership because of the following reasons; both Vhembe District Municipality and Thulamela Municipality are based in the former capital city of Venda, Thohoyandou.

Literature shows that there is no Xitsonga connotation in the name "Thulamela", instead the name is ascribed to Venda and Karanga origins to mean "a place of giving birth" in Venda and "a crest or treeless hilltop" in Karanga (South African History Online, SA; Wild Card, 2015). All these caused a serious tension among Vatsonga-speaking communities to the extent that some reluctantly visited Thulamela Municipality mainly because they were legally designated to fall under it. They criticised the Municipality for poor service delivery and exclusion. This formed the basis for the demand for a new municipality by Vatsonga speakers (Mathonsi, 2017).

Although the people of Vuwani, who are predominantly Tshivenda speakers, had the same problem of poor service delivery from both Thulamela and Makhado Municipalities, they turned their backs against the Xitsonga-speaking communities and chose to fall under Makhado Municipality. Makhado Municipality is also occupied predominantly by Vhavenda-speaking communities. Vuwani community members blamed the Municipal Demarcation Board (MDB) for not communicating with them when drawing the new boundary for the new Collins Chabane Municipality (Rasila, 2017). According to Rasila (2017), when the people of Vuwani were asked why they do not want to fall under Collins Chabane municipality, they said:

> We cannot be ruled by Vatsonga in our own land, because even Malamulele is our own and so, we cannot be ruled by Vatsonga, no ways. We can rather fall under Makhado municipality, that we can do.

He recorded a Xitsonga-speaking man who was asked whether the decision to move out of Thulamela was the right decision or not. He said:

> In fact, we tried to work patiently with Vhavenda-speaking, but because they could not escape from the past, they still say ‘Shumela Venda’- Aspire for Venda, for that we cannot aspire for Venda. They proved that by channeling

> all major developments to Venda. All our equipment including construction vehicles are taken from Malamulele to develop Venda, so it cannot work.

As I went on collecting data on the history of the conflicts, I asked the real reason of the conflict as it was now clear that these two groups have something which they are fighting for or against. That is where a participant in Vuwani voiced out something which helped me to map clearly the area of which the study was to be undertaken, he said:

> All of Vhembe district municipality consist of all territories that were part of the former Venda Bantustan, however, two large densely populated districts of the former Tsonga homeland of Gazankulu, in particular, Hlanganani and Malamulele were also incorporated into Vhembe.

The above statement shows that Malamulele falls under former boundaries of Venda. This denotes the problem of the demarcation board. In one way or another, the demarcation board contributed to the problem. It clearly shows that the Municipal Demarcation Board failed to consult democratically with stakeholders like traditional leaders, CoGTA and other relevant stakeholders so that consensus could be reached about the boundary and the naming of the district municipality to avoid future conflicts. It also shows the ignorance of the former apartheid governors who granted the permission to demarcate the land without considering the ownership of the land.

The Vhembe boundary is the other main cause of the conflict between the Vatsonga and Vhavenda group because they did not change the previous boundaries created by apartheid government. It is not known whether the former governors of apartheid government did the same problem of not consulting Vatsonga chiefs when demarcating Venda homeland boundaries. The Vatsonga traditional leaders acclaimed Vuwani to be an area which is rightfully theirs with the name Pfukani, which the Vhavenda interpreted as Vuwani during the forced relocation of Vatsonga speakers.

The reason Vuwani residents refused to be incorporated into Collins Chabane Municipality was because they were of the feelings that the MDB favoured Vatsonga again by forcing them to fall under Vatsonga. It is clear that the issue of falling under Collins Chabane was viewed by Vhavenda in terms of the history between them and Vatsonga, whereas the MDB viewed the case democratically. That is why even though they had the same service delivery problem, they opted to fall under Makhado.

3.3 Conclusion

This brief chapter mainly discussed the demarcation of the area which comprised the justification for selecting Malamulele and Vuwani as a case study and their historico-political features. These are the two communities which, for many years, has been staying together despite the different ethnicity. Their peaceful integration was only interrupted by the adventure of colonialism which was later aggravated by apartheid policies relating to homelands or Bantustans. This is where the ANC came into the picture by opposing the dehumanisation and division of people in terms of race and ethnicity. The success of the ANC led to the disbandment of homelands and Bantustan policies, leading to the full integration of people again. This integration came with new unforeseen predicaments which became reasons for selecting these two communities as a case study for scientific investigation.

CHAPTER FOUR
RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

4.1 Introduction

The term "research methodology" refers to a body of knowledge that makes an effort to either explain or comprehend the process of conducting research, and as a result, establishes a framework for that process. The many processes that are often taken by a researcher when researching a research subject are referred to as the method, and these steps, along with the accompanying logic (what and why), are described (Walwyn, 2016). Methodology refers to the process of selecting a suitable research design for an investigation, which incorporates the overall plan, framework and approach of the research endeavour. According to Leedy and Omrod (2005), the process of choosing what kinds of data will be collected and how they will be analysed is part of the design process for a research project. This is accomplished by the application of a certain research methodology.

4.2 The Research setting

The research was carried out in Collins Chabane Local Municipality, which is located in Vhembe District of Limpopo Province in South Africa. The investigation into conflict between Malamulele and Vuwani, both of which are local communities in Collins Chabane Local Municipality in Limpopo Province was carried out by the researcher. These communities came into conflict with one another. The province of Limpopo is located at the very top of South Africa's peninsula. It shares boundaries with the countries of Zimbabwe, Botswana, and Mozambique on the international stage. In addition, it is surrounded, on all sides, by the provinces of Gauteng, Mpumalanga and the North-West. It is located within the expansive valley that is formed by the Limpopo River. When entering the province from the north, one arrives in Polokwane, which is the provincial capital. Along with the Kruger National Park, the area to the east of the province is home to some of the most prestigious game reserves in Africa. Traditional leaders and chiefs still form a strong backbone of the province's political landscape. Established in terms of the Limpopo House of Traditional Leaders Act, Act 5 of 2005, the main function of the Limpopo House of Traditional Leaders is to advise government and the legislature on matters related to custom, tradition and culture, including developmental initiatives that affect rural communities (www.gov.za.).

In this piece of research, a case study methodology was used. Case study research is a type of qualitative research that examines a limited system (one or more instances) at a time through the lens of the researcher. The utilisation of extensive, in-depth data collection, reporting case descriptions, and case-based themes are among the instruments employed (Yin, 2014). A case study makes an effort to gain insight into the real-life experiences of other people and to comprehend the significance of such experiences (Merriam, 2009). The case chosen for investigation was the Malamulele and Vuwani conflict.

The process of designing a study provides the researcher with assistance in planning and carrying it out in a manner that provides assistance to the researcher to obtain the intended results, thereby increasing the chances of obtaining information that could be associated with a real-world scenario (Burns & Grove, 2001). It is believed that case studies were beneficial for both the development of exploratory descriptive research and for assisting in the understanding of both objects and social processes. The results of these kinds of investigations are helpful for a variety of reasons. In the first place, they are able to get latest information regarding an element of the social reality, the items, as well as additional objects sharing comparable qualities. The findings of case studies are also be used as a point of contrast in other research in order to test how true and generalisable the findings of the case studies are. This indicates that case studies are beneficial not only for developing ideas but also for validating and demonstrating them (Flyvbjerg, 2004).

"The focus is on obtaining insights and familiarity for later exploration or when research problems are in the preliminary stage of examination," according to the definition of an exploratory research design provided by the National Centre for Biotechnology Information (Yin, 2014). The findings of this study are usually not conclusive and cannot be generalised to the entire population of Malamulele and Vuwani; nonetheless, they could be utilised to establish an understanding of the baseline information on the causes of the violence as expressed by the participants in the research.

4.3 Research Design

A research design is a plan that lays out how a research endeavour is carried out (Yin, 2014). The researcher has concluded that the design consisting of a case study is the one that is most suited for this investigation. Case study research is a type of qualitative research that analyses a contained system through the eyes of the researcher (one or more cases at a time).

Collecting extensive, in-depth data as well as reporting case descriptions and case-based themes are both instruments that are utilised in the design of case studies (Yin, 2014). This design made an effort to glean knowledge from the events that the participants had really lived through and to derive meanings from those experiences for the people who took part in the research (Merriam, 2009). Exploratory case studies are used to get insights into a scenario that is not very obvious and that has not drawn substantial examination and research in the past. This is done in order to gain a better understanding of the problem (Yin, 2014). Methods of qualitative research such as phenomenology, case studies, ethnography, grounded theory and historical research are utilised in this work (Creswell, 2003; Creswell, 2013). According to Welman, Kruger and Mitchell (2007), interpretation in conducting a case study necessitates conducting in-depth research on only a select few of the unoccupied units of analysis. In addition, the researcher acknowledged that the approach of the case study was used in order to minimise the amount of time and money that was restricted. In addition, the conflict between Malamulele and Vuwani was selected as the topic of the case study since the phenomenon that is being examined appears to symbolise many other similar occurrences in the South African environment.

The researcher chose the Malamulele-Vuwani conflict as a case that is investigated by gaining insights into situations that were not noticeably clear and that had not attracted any serious investigation in the past. The Malamulele-Vuwani conflict was chosen because it had not attracted any serious investigation in the past. The researcher had the intention of informing other researchers who might want to investigate situations in the future by drawing on the information that was disclosed in this research about the application of Ubuntu and its role in conflict resolution. Therefore, the researcher designed this study as an exploratory study in order to lay a foundation for future descriptive and explanatory research.

4.4 Research Population

According to Walliman (2011), population in research does not simply mean the number of people; rather, it is a collective term used to describe the total quantity of things (or cases) of the type that are the subjects of your study. Therefore, the population consists of certain types of objects, organisations, people or events. Within any population, there would probably be certain groups that were of interest to one's study.

Limpopo is one of South Africa's nine provinces, and consists of five districts, namely, Capricorn, Mopani, Sekhukhune, Vhembe and Waterberg districts. Within each district are local municipalities. Thulamela Local Municipality is one of the four local municipalities in Vhembe District. The other three local municipalities are Musina, Collins Chabane and Makhado and the now defunct Mutale municipality. Vhembe District Municipality was the unit of focus of this study and was of concern with regard to the exploration of Ubuntu in conflict resolution. Vhembe previously compromised four local municipalities, namely, Musina, Thulamela, Makhado and Collins Chabane Municipality. The Municipal Demarcation Board's (MDB) demarcation decision disestablished the Mutale Local Municipality and established a new municipality called Collins Chabane Local Municipality (LIM345), which comprises portions of Thulamela and Makhado local municipalities. The implementation of the demarcation decision resulted in the disestablishment of the Mutale Local Municipality, while retaining the four local municipality model in Vhembe District Municipality (High Court of the Republic of South Africa, 2016).

The population of this study comprised different stakeholders living in Vhembe District, who had knowledge of conflicts and the role that Ubuntu could play in reducing them. These stakeholders included politicians, traditional leaders, religious leaders, indigenous knowledge holders, youth leaders and bureaucrats found in the location of the study.

4.4.1 Sampling

This study employed purposive sampling (Zikic, 2007), which involves selecting the most knowledgeable and experienced members of a community to serve as participants in the study, particularly those who have first-hand information on the issue under investigation (Wellman, Kruger & Mitchell, 2005).

4.4.2 Criteria for the Selection of the Participants

In order to be selected, participants should have witnessed the violent protests in Malamulele in 2014 – 2016 and have knowledge of Ubuntu. People were selected to share their perspectives of Ubuntu on the conflict situation between Vhavenda and Vatsonga. This was considered in order for them to respond based on what they felt and witnessed during the protests. In order to be selected, participants should have stayed in Malamulele and Vuwani for a period dating back to early 2000s, which makes it almost sixteen (16) years from the period when the municipal demarcation was made to join Malamulele and Thohoyandou

areas to form Thulamela LM. In this context, this period is considered adequate for the residents of Malamulele to have experienced the alleged poor service delivery.

4.4.3 Participants' Selected Biographical Data

Table 4.1: Profile of Participants (n = 20)

Pseudonym	Group	Gender	Age	Place of origin	Occupation
Arthur Dhliwayo	Venda	Male	71	Vuwani	Lecturer
Lindelani Tshisikule	Venda	Female	56	Vuwani	Lecturer
Tshilande Khumbelo	Tsonga	Female	30	Malamulele	Finance auditor
Vincent Xihundla	Tsonga	Male	33	Malamulele	Police official
Jackson Chauke	Tsonga	Male	66	Malamulele	Traditional leader
Tinas Mabasa	Tsonga	Male	34	Malamulele	Politician
Nkhumeleni Phaduli	Venda	Female	35	Malamulele	Teacher
Vuma Vukile	Tsonga	Male	34	Malamulele	Teacher
Ramufhi Vhusani	Venda	Female	29	Vuwani	Businesswoman
Solani Machebele	Tsonga	Female	50	Vuwani	Self-employed
Chuma Titus	Tsonga	Male	52	Vuwani	Pastor
Davhana Daniel	Venda	Male	75	Vuwani	Pastor
Khauli Aifheli	Venda	Male	56	Vuwani	Traditional leader
Makhense Thomas	Tsonga	Male	46	Malamulele	Politician
Maviligwe Buyani	Tsonga	Male	57	Malamulele	Traditional leader
Ailwei Muthundinne	Venda	Male	29	Vuwani	Unemployed youth
Isaac Sono	Venda	Male	27	Malamulele	unemployed Youth
Michael Rammbwa	Venda	Male	66	Vuwani	IKS knowledge holder
Nobela Mafanato	Tsonga	Female	34	Malamulele	Self-employed
Mudau Elsie	Venda	Female	32	Vuwani	Self employed

Table 4.1 presents the profile of participants who witnessed the violent protests in Malamulele in the years 2014 – 2016 aged between 27 and 71 years. A majority of the participants were males (65%). Most interestingly, the participants were community members whose livelihood patterns render them close to any news or developments in the community as local teachers, self-employed, traditional leaders, pastors and politicians.

This section discusses the importance of each demographic variable as identified in Table 4.1.

4.4.4 Importance of Demographic Variables

4.4.4.1 Gender

The researcher recognised that the views of both males and females are equally important on social phenomena regardless of the fact that females have been disadvantaged and considered inferior, especially in traditional patriarchal societies (Lerner, 1989). The researcher concurs

with Corner and Repucci (2009) that African women find it difficult to participate in some social issues due to obstacles such as their lower literacy levels, limited exposure to politics, policy issues and decision-making processes. Such obstacles are entrenched barriers of patriarchal societies that impede females from taking part in issues (Corner and Repucci, 2009). For example, during the protests, the males were found to be dominant in taking the lead mainly because of the general assumption that men in such cases are viewed as playing a leadership and heroic role, and that this is where they take risks (Connell and Messerschmidt, 2005). In this study, women's views were taken into consideration because they too could contribute as far as business, education and socio-political life is concerned with regard to the application of Ubuntu. While female residents did take part, it was male residents that were in the forefront of the protests in the quest for the establishment of a new municipality in the area. The researcher's intention was to have equal representation of males and females. However, due to issues such as the dominance of males in traditional leadership, religious leadership and task team membership, at least seven (7) females formed part of the sample.

4.4.4.2 Employment Status

Nwachukwu (2011) conducted a study on the impact of people's socio-economic status on their participation in developmental programmes. The study confirms that employment status and income levels have a significant impact on people's involvement on societal issues. People without any form of income who are dependent on government for basic services are most likely to be easily influenced to embark on protest actions. In accordance with the judgmental sampling method chosen, most of the people who were selected are employed. This was due to the anticipation by the researcher that these people would have more insights on the research problem under investigation because of their occupational status. In respect of this study, the researcher sought to have three (3) sub-groups of people under the employment status group to be interviewed in order to share their views on the research problem. The three sub-groups were employed people (75%) with regular basic incomes, unemployed people (20%) without regular income and pensioners (5%) who rely on social grants.

4.4.4.3 Educational Level

The researcher did not necessarily choose the respondents based on their qualifications, but because of the high likelihood that the chosen sample would be able to provide responses that would enhance the quality of the findings. This is notwithstanding the fact that the

respondents' education level was important in analysing the research problems such as the one at hand. Educated people would normally prefer to apply logic when they demonstrate their discontent rather than take to the streets where they would burn tyres in an attempt to influence others to do the same. In terms of the manner in which the protests were organised, it was probably the case that the protesters were influenced by knowledgeable people who would not want to be seen protesting themselves. The researcher noted that 30% of the respondents were under-graduates, 35% had at least a degree/national diploma (graduates) and 35% held post-graduates' qualifications. The researcher considered that a combination of views across the three (3) variables under educational level would be important to give a sense of diversity in terms of views regarding the research problem.

4.4.4.4 Age

One of the statements articulated by Kishita, Fisher and Laidlaw (2015) is that attitudes on social phenomena are, to a particular extent, guided and influenced by people's age. The study was more relevant by including the youth aged between 20 and 35 years. Although adults were there in the violent protests, the youth comprised the majority of perpetrators of barricading roads, burning schools, vandalising shops and stealing. Including them would bring balance in the study and their views particularly relating to why they were engaging in the acts of violence and how they understand Ubuntu in relation to violence. The study also sampled elderly people from different occupations as shown in the table above, so that they could give a holistic view of conflicts in Malamulele and Vuwani with reference to how Ubuntu can be used to end the conflicts. Although the elderly and the pensioners supported the protests, they were not as actively involved as the youth. This made it important for the researcher to have a sample of various age groups in order to obtain their views.

4.4.4.5 Indigenous Knowledge holders

The researcher deliberately chose elderly people to contribute to the study with their experience and knowledge of Ubuntu. Elderly people have lived experiences of the changes over time. It was pivotal to include them since the conflict between the two groups which once lived together happened before them and they could share their experience of how they lived together in harmony. They could tell what went wrong between these two groups. They could tell the forward on what could be done to ensure that the existence of Ubuntu is cherished by the two communities.

4.4.5 Sample size

Participants aged between 20 and 80 years were selected and asked to participate in the study on a voluntary basis. A total number of 20 individual participants were interviewed, namely, five adults between 35 and 80 years old from each community (Malamulele and Vuwani) and 5 youths between 20 and 35 years old from each community. The reason for including youth was to obtain their views on their understanding of Ubuntu and their reasons for engaging in conflict. Adult participants, on the other hand, could provide historical information of how Ubuntu was practiced in the past and whether its principles were applicable in the modern day Malamulele and Vuwani.

In an ethnographic study, participants are selected on the basis of their being knowledgeable about and experienced the phenomenon under investigation. In selecting participants, this study employed purposive and snowball sampling criteria. Purposive sampling involves selecting the most knowledgeable and experienced members of the community who interpreted meanings of the cultural domain in the most relevant manner (Wellman, Kruger & Mitchell, 2005). Snowball sampling involves making use of the network that exists between participants (Bernard, 1995; Babbie, 2007).

4.5 Data Collection

4.5.1 Semi-Structured Interviews

For the purpose of this investigation, a case study methodology was selected. In addition to participating in focus group talks, the researcher also conducted semi-structured interviews. Between forty-five and sixty minutes were taken for each individual interview. According to Bernard (2006), interviews conducted as part of qualitative research involves verbal contact in which the researcher communicates with participants. Bernard expressed this position in the context of qualitative research, and made the observation that the researcher takes notes, makes an effort to remember discussions in their entirety, and records the conversations so that they can later be transcribed. All of the interviews were performed in the participants' native language, which was either Tshivenda or Xitsonga. The researcher then translated all the answers into English.

Interviews that are semi-structured combined aspects of structured interviews with those of unstructured interviews. They are more adaptable than the structured interview and more

planned than the unstructured interview, both of which compare favourably to the unstructured interview. A semi-structured interview was conducted without the use of a prepared plan or standardised questions such as an interview schedule; however, the researcher did have a list of topics and questions to cover in the course of the interview. Because of the versatility of this style of interview, the interviewer was able to ask the interviewees questions about their perspectives while the group was having a conversation. These questions also brought insights into other avenues that had not been previously considered (Gray, 2004). The researcher was able to cut down on the amount of time spent conducting interviews while still gathering information that was correct thanks to this method.

When the researcher was speaking with high-level bureaucrats and elite members of a community—people who were accustomed to the efficient use of their time—semi-structured interviewing was more useful. This demonstrated that the researcher was fully in control of what was required of an interview, but it left both himself and his respondents free to follow new leads. People who were accustomed to the efficient use of their time found it more reassuring that the researcher was able to maximise the use of their time. A semi-structured interview was also able to demonstrate that the researcher was well-prepared and capable, while at the same time demonstrating that they were not seeking to exert an excessive amount of control over the process (Bernard, 2006). For the purpose of this investigation, the researcher relied on a combination of the semi-structured interview approach and an interview guide. The interviewer was able to keep their attention on the interview's goals, and to maintain consistency over multiple interviews with participants thanks to the use of an interview guide (DeJonckheere & Vaughn, 2019). Interviews were conducted with many community stakeholders, including traditional leaders, ward councilors, religious leaders, and mayors, all of whom were accustomed to making effective use of their time. This was the case in the current research endeavour as well. However, in using semi-structured interviews, the researcher needed to keep in mind that the interviews should be based on a semi-structured topic guide, which, in turn, should not be considered some sort of rule book. This was important to keep in mind as the researcher moved through the process of using semi-structured interviews. In order to spark a discussion, the questions had to be open-ended, and the prompts had to be designed to assist in making the discussion easier to follow. It is clear that the focus is not just on answering the researcher's questions; rather, it is also on creating a conversational discourse that helps people learn more about the people, relationships,

actions, situations and processes that are important to the problem that is being studied. The focus is not just on answering the researcher's questions; rather, it is on creating a conversational discourse (Zikic, 2007). The most crucial factor in deciding to use the method of interviewing was the need to learn from people who had direct experience of the conflict, what their genuine reactions were like as it was being played out in the actual world.

4.5.2 Participant observation

The researcher used another anthropological ethnographic method of data collection known as participant observation. Participant observation as practiced in anthropology involves researchers immersing themselves in the native life-way in order to gain experiential knowledge of what they are studying. It is that discipline's most central and distinctive method for producing knowledge about social life. Participant observation requires fieldworkers to embrace rather than to try to mitigate their role as the personal vehicles of research. Participant observers thus pay close attention not only to what community interlocutors tell them, but also to what they do not say or would find unsayable in order to help make their very different 'common sense' explicit: just as speakers were rarely able to articulate the grammatical principle that they have internalised, 'tacit' aspect of culture remains outside our awareness or consciousness, but could be uncovered in a course of fieldwork (Dewalt 2011: 1). The role of the researcher was to contemplate and to record their experiences and observations in the field, as they use their field notes, memories and embodied knowledge to write ethnography for academic audiences when they return home. Identifying and developing relationships with key informants was considered as another role of the researcher in this study. As is common in qualitative research, key data for the study comprised field notes observations (Okely 1995).

The choice of this method was influenced by the benefits associated with its use as articulated by Dewalt and Dewalt (2002:92), the goal for design of research using participant observation as a method is to develop a holistic understanding of the phenomena under study. In addition, participant observation was used as a way to increase the validity of the study, as observations may help the researcher have a better understanding of the context and phenomenon under study.

Subsequently, Whyte (1979) as cited in Kawaluchi (2005) notes that while there is no one way that is best for conducting research using participant observation, the most effective

work was done by researchers who viewed informants as collaborators. To do otherwise, he adds, was a waste of human resources. His emphasis was on the relationship between the researcher and informants as collaborative researchers who, through building solid relationships, improve the research process and the skills of the researcher to conduct research.

In this study, the researcher applied this method from the angle of 'observer as participant.' 'Observer as participant' means the role of the researcher as an observer would have minimal involvement in the social setting being studied. However, some connection to the setting was there but the observer was not naturally and normally part of the social setting (Gold, 1958). The key role of the researcher in this stance was to collect data, and the group being studied was aware of the researcher's observation activities. In this stance, the researcher is an observer who was not a member of the group and who was interested in participating as a means for conducting better observation and, hence, generating more complete understanding of the group's activities (Kawaluchi,2005:6).

Consequently, the researcher visited the key participants in their communities on a basis of agreements with them. The researcher developed good relationship with them in order to make them feel more comfortable to speak freely. The researcher's role was to observe and take notes of the whole setting during an interview such as verbal and non-verbal expressions of the feelings of the participants in order to gain the holistic view of the problem under investigation. However, Ratner (2002) argues that some qualitative researchers believe that one cannot be both objective and subjective, while others believe that the two can coexist, that one's subjectivity can facilitate understanding the world of others. He notes that, when one reflects on one's biases, he/she can then recognise those biases that may distort understanding and replace them with those that help him/her to be more objective. In this way, he suggests, the researcher was being respectful of the participants by using a variety of methods such as interviews to ensure that what he/she thinks was being said, in fact, matches the understanding of the participant.

4.5.3 Focus group discussions (FGD)

Focus group discussions entail an exploration of the research problem by means of an open discussion. Group participants were selected by the researcher and allowed to interact with each other and the researcher within the context of the research problem under investigation

(Creswell, 2014). Both young people who were active in the protests and elders who hold special knowledge about the use of Ubuntu, were interviewed. There were three discussion groups in the study. Each group comprised between 8 and 10 participants, aged between 20 and 80 years. Kumar (2011) suggested that the appropriate size of a focus group should be between 8 and 10 members. Moreover, there was a procedure for the discussion so that every member was given an opportunity to express their opinions. The researcher also agreed with the group about recording the discussions. Recordings provided evidence of the data that was analysed for the purposes of drawing a conclusion about the research issue. The advantage of focus group interviews was that they are easy to apply, are less time consuming and provide a source of rich information.

There was one focus group from each community, namely, Malamulele and Vuwani. All focus group discussions were conducted in two indigenous languages, Tshivenda and Xitsonga, and were later translated into English by the researcher. The focus group discussions were guided by predetermined questions that were based on the objectives of the study (Appendix A).

White (2005) indicated that group members should introduce themselves and tell the group a little about themselves. In this study, the researcher planned to introduce himself to the group members. This introduction included a welcome, an overview of the research topic and ground rules. The researcher encouraged the group members to speak one at a time in order for the group to grasp each other's views clearly, since the researcher was taking notes and capturing exact phrases and statements made by participants, which were useful in the analysis of data (White, 2005). Not much focus group interviews were conducted in this study because of Covid-19 rules, which forbade group involvement at that time. However, those groups which were allowed by the government were marked by challenges which included poor attendance. The focus groups comprised ten participants in Malamulele and eight at Vuwani. All interviews went on smoothly and contributed to the study in a distinct way. Participants were emotional as they spoke more especially on issues that triggered the conflicts. They recognised the significance of Ubuntu in conflict resolution regardless of the decline of Ubuntu in the lives of mainly the youth. Emphasis was on restoration of Ubuntu with the help of the government.

4.6 Data Analysis

The Thematic Content Analysis (TCA) method was deployed using a deductive approach to analyse data. This means that the researcher consulted the data with some preconceived themes anticipated to be found in the data, based on the research theory (Broun & Clarke, 2006). This method is a qualitative analytic tool used to categorise data. Afterwards, data were analysed and reporting themes that emerged from the data were noted (Broun & Clarke, 2006).

The thematic approach makes considerable use of inductive reasoning, organising data into categories or themes and identifying patterns (relationships) between the categories (White, 2002). Thus, interviews and discussions were broken down into themes that were used in the analysis of data (Elliott, 2007). The following steps were taken in this study: step 1: familiarisation with the data; step 2: generating initial codes; step 3: searching for themes; step 4: reviewing themes; and step 5: defining and naming themes (Brown & Clarke, 2006).

The table below identifies the themes which emerged from data analysis.

Table 4.2: The study themes and sub-themes

Main themes	Sub-themes
Discussion of ubuntu in the context of the causes and course of the Malamulele and Vuwani conflict.	• Ethnicity and identity issues (tribalism). • Perceived Inappropriate Distribution of Resources'. • Legacy of colonialism/apartheid. • Selfish agendas and poverty • Poor communication between authorities and people. • View that violent protests attract attention. • Antagonism/ethnocentrism and stereotyping.
Discussion on Ubuntu in the context of results and outcomes of the Malamulele Vuwani conflict.	• Social disintegration. • Poor service delivery and economic challenges. • Knowledge of Ubuntu philosophy
	• Ubuntu as a social pillar. • Ubuntu as an economic pillar. • Ubuntu as a religious pillar. • Ubuntu as a cultural fabric. • Current state of Ubuntu and Future Prospects. • Ubuntu as a backbone of education.
The Significance of Ubuntu in conflict resolution	• Ubuntu fosters solidarity, respect, and dignity • Ubuntu promotes peace and stability • Ubuntu generates reconciliation • Ubuntu produces law-abiding citizens
A tentative Ubuntu Conflict Resolution Model (UCRM).	• Stage One: African-centered principles of conflict resolution. • Stage Two: Determination of immediate and short-term strategies of Ubuntu Conflict

	Resolution. • Stage Three: Long-term strategies of Ubuntu Conflict Resolution. • African-centered curricular which enhance Ubuntu values. • Culture adaptation. • African communalism. • Cooperative economics. • Bantu history. • Extended family system. • Political transformation.

4.7 Research Procedure

All logistical arrangements were addressed by the researcher for interview meetings with the sampled participants. The researcher honored all the logistical arrangements and appointments with the participants for interviews where the researcher agreed to visit them at the places which they suggested, such as homes and during their leisure time at the soccer grounds. The participants were requested to sign consent letters before they were interviewed. The interviews conducted with each respondent took an average time of one hour. This was inclusive of the time one spent in clarifying interview questions and probing in instances where more clarity was sought from the respondents. The whole data collection process lasted for a period of eight months inclusive of weekends. Each interview was captured in field notes after obtaining permission from the participants. Attempts to audio-tape interview proceedings were made also with the permission from the participants. However, the first five (5) participants indicated their discomfort regarding the recording arrangement due to the sensitivity of information which they were going to provide. However, after telling them that pseudonyms would be used, they all agreed to be tape-recorded. Some participants pointed out that they had never taken part in a study. As such, they did not know the fate of their participation. Somehow the researcher understood the political sensitivity of the issue investigated and security concerns of the participants. This made the researcher to reassure them of their confidentiality. Taking notes was one of the tools which the researcher used during interview discussion. This was outlined as one of the low-risk tools of the study according to the participants.

Issues such as credibility, authenticity and trustworthiness of the study were taken into consideration as a standard practice in interpretive qualitative studies. As guided by Shenton (2004) and Anney (2014), the researcher ascertained the quality criteria by ensuring

credibility, transferability and confirmability of the study. On credibility, the researcher attempted to demonstrate that a true picture of the phenomenon under investigation is presented without exaggerating or under-reporting. On transferability, the researcher provided details on the context of the fieldwork to ensure the justification of the findings. As far as confirmability is concerned, the researcher demonstrated that findings emerged from the data gathered and not from the researcher's own predispositions. During the research process, ethical considerations were adhered to as outlined in Chapter One.

4.8 Quality Criteria

Trustworthiness is a term used to describe quality criteria in a qualitative study. Guba (1981) described four major concerns relating to trustworthiness that the quality criteria must address, namely, credibility (truth value), transferability (applicability), dependability (consistency) and confirmability (neutrality). In a qualitative study, provision must be made for measures that ensure that these four criteria are met (Framback, Van der Vleuten & Durning, 2013).

There is consensus that qualitative researchers must convince readers of the trustworthiness of their studies (Saldana, 2013; Creswell, 2014). Babbie (2013) and Bryman (2012) were of the opinion that criticisms levelled at qualitative research include the difficulty experienced in determining the credibility, transferability, dependability and confirmability to ensure the trustworthiness of qualitative research. Therefore, this study aligned itself with the criteria used to judge the quality of qualitative studies, including credibility, transferability, dependability and confirmability.

4.8.1 Credibility

Credibility is the extent to which a study's findings are trustworthy and believable to others. In this study, the research process was detailed, transparent and open to the scrutiny of other researchers (Mikes, 2011). This was achieved by collecting data for an extended period of time, using triangulation and multiple data sources. Participants were asked for feedback on the data and on the interpretation of the data (member checking) (Frambach, Van der Vleuten & Durning, 2013).

4.8.2 Transferability

Transferability refers to the extent to which the findings can be transferred to or applied in different settings. The research process applied in the study was presented clearly to others so that validity of the findings was ensured. Procedures used to collect and analyse data were explained in order to make findings meaningful to others and more applicable in different settings (Shenton, 2004). This was done through an explanation of the sampling strategy. For example, case sampling was clearly explained and the resonance of the findings with existing literature was discussed from different settings (Frambach, Van der Vleuten & Durning, 2013).

4.8.3 Dependability

Dependability is the extent to which the findings are consistent in relation to the contexts in which they were generated. Data were collected until no new themes emerged, thus ensuring data saturation (Frambach, Van der Vleuten & Durning, 2013). In this study, data were continuously re-examined using insights that emerge during analysis (iterative data analysis).

4.8.4 Confirmability

Confirmability is the extent to which the findings are based on the study participants and settings, instead of the researcher's biases. A diary was kept reflecting on the process and the researcher's role and influence. Reflexivity in this study was optimised by allowing the participants to exercise freedom of speech and were free to answer the questions without intimidation (Frambach, Van der Vleuten & Durning, 2013).

4.9 Ethical Considerations

4.9.1 Permission

Permission from Turfloop Research and Ethics Committee (TREC) to conduct this study was applied by the researcher to ensure that the ethical standards of the institution were maintained during the operationalisation of the study. A certificate of ethical clearance was received and presented to the informants as evidence that the study was specifically undertaken for academic purpose.

4.9.2 Confidentiality and privacy

All researchers have an ethical obligation to reduce foreseeable risks. These risks could include physical, emotional or informational risks, including pain, discomfort,

embarrassment, emotional distress and breach of confidentiality, stigmatisation and ostracism (Singh & Wassenaar, 2016). The researcher ensured that no harm was done to anyone. Moreover, in this research, there was a possibility of harm, such as psychological harm to some participants, since some of them could have been victims of the violence that occurred in Malamulele and Vuwani during the time of violent protests. The confidentiality of all participants was prioritised. The researcher used pseudonyms in the study. A pseudonym is a fictional name assigned to give anonymity to a person (Given, 2008). Fictional names were given to participants in order to protect them from possible psychological, emotional and physical harm.

4.9.3 Voluntary participation

The study offered voluntary participation. Participants were not forced to participate, and were able to terminate their participation at any time without being forced to provide reasons for doing so. All research participants were requested to participate in the study on a voluntary basis before they commenced with the participation. They were asked to sign informed consent forms, and told that they could withdraw from the study any time if they wish to do so without fear of prejudice. Gatekeepers' permission was sought in order to gain access to the social institutions, their data and their personnel (Singh & Wassenaar, 2016). Permission to conduct the study was requested and obtained from all gatekeepers involved, namely, Vhembe District Municipality, Collins Chabane Local Municipality and Malamulele police station.

4.9.4 Plagiarism

All sources of ideas, concepts and theories used in the thesis have been acknowledged. The entire text was submitted to Turnitin software to verify the percentage of plagiarism after completion of the version of the thesis (Maxwell, 2013; Babbie, 2014; Beckett & Maynard, 2013).

4.10 Limitations of the Study

As has already been mentioned, this research study employed the qualitative research method, designed as a case study using the interview research technique in the area of Vuwani and Malamulele. The researcher was unfortunately not allowed by the University of Limpopo to go and collect data from the participants of the study in the field during the COVID-19 lockdown restrictions, where people often were not allowed to move out of their

homes, and were sometimes given time restrictions when they are allowed to move out of the house. This situation limited the researcher from obtaining sufficient data. As a consequence of the limitation, telephonic enquiry was often used, particularly for follow-up questions, because the researcher lives far away from the location of the study, Vuwani and Malamulele. However, the researcher managed to include all ethnic groups available in these communities, mainly Vatsonga and Vhavenda-speaking people. In addition, representation according to gender, age and the role of the participants in the communities was included. The researcher would want to hear what members of the African traditional religion had to say about the role of Ubuntu in conflict resolution, since their perspectives about Ubuntu would make a difference in the study. However, under the circumstances, this was not possible.

4.11 Conclusion

In this chapter, the researcher described the methodology adopted in the study. The application of the qualitative method allowed for the collection of comprehensive information. The researcher immersed himself in the Malamulele and Vuwani communities and ensured that the definition, interpretation and experience of participants predominated. The researcher was very conscious of the quality of the research and, therefore, took important steps to ensure the validity of the study. A discussion on the results follows in the next chapter.

CHAPTER FIVE
DISCUSSION ON UBUNTU IN THE CONTEXT OF THE CAUSES AND COURSE OF THE MALAMULELE AND VUWANI CONFLICT

5.1 Introduction

The discussion in this chapter focusses on the 'voice' and narratives of the research participants in order to grasp and unpack their insight into the causes and course of the Malamulele -Vuwani conflict. Central to the discussion is an attempt to grasp how the research participants link Ubuntu with the causes and course or unfolding of the conflict. The researcher frames the discussion by deploying the conceptual and theoretical infrastructure afforded by the Ubuntu African-centred paradigm.

It is important to restate that this study is exploratory. Exploratory studies are carried out on problems which have not received sufficient scientific investigation (Babbie, 2010; Pellerin, 2012). In an exploratory study, the focus is on providing a broad mapping of the disposition of the problem through teasing out broad and general concepts embedded in the problem. Pellerin (2012) suggests that in such a study, the researcher conducts preliminary data collection and analysis in order to lay a foundation for future descriptive and explanatory studies. There is no attempt in such studies to provide intimate and through descriptive information on the characteristics of the phenomenon under study as in descriptive studies or strict causal relations of variables embedded in a phenomenon as in explanatory studies. This naturally affects the quality of data collected and the depth of the subsequent discussion. The discussion remains essentially tentative and broad, eschewing taking definitive positions or conclusions.

5.2 Causes of the Malamulele and Vuwani conflict

In this case study, participants focused on the conflict which they viewed to be grounded in a type of ethnicity which was pathological. This ethnicity, in the view of most research participants, was engineered by the oppressor to destroy the united opposition of the colonised.

5.2.1 Ethnicity and Identity Issues (tribalism)

In the study, the participants gave different responses concerning the causes of conflicts. Some participants related the cause of conflict to the problem of ethnicity. An overwhelming response pointed to the problem of ethnicity as the main cause of conflict between the two groups. Various interviews were conducted in Malamulele and Vuwani. One of the interviews was conducted with Arthur Dhliwayo, who gave a short narration of the problem taking place in Malamulele and Vuwani from a naturalistic mood. I made the appointment with him about this interview, and he made himself available on a Saturday. It was a sunny day. He wanted to be assured of the anonymity before he could answer my research questions because he argued that this research study is very sensitive. As a researcher, I assured him that no one will trace him because the name and surname I gave him was fictitious. Then he agreed to participate in the study. I asked him about the cause of the conflict in Malamulele and Vuwani. He related the problem as follows:

> *"Vatsonga and Vhavenda were ethnic groups which were previously falling under the homelands which had to form one municipality to put to an end to the homeland system. There were structures in the demarcation of the municipalities which were comprised of members of the ethnic groups. So, there was dominance of certain groups over those structure."*

Furthermore, Michael Rammbwa who is an IKS knowledge holder who stays in Venda calmly said:

> *"In this case, people from the other side of Levubu (Vhavenda) became dominant. They were able to influence where resources should be used and where services could go. In most cases they directed services to areas their own people lived (Venda)"*

This contributed to a dissent and discontent amongst those who were not benefiting from the dispensation. In this scenario, the Vatsonga became unfortunate, and the conflict glowed. In a similar study, it was also found that identity is one of the fundamental human needs that underlie many intractable conflicts. They arise when group members feel that their sense of self is threatened or denied legitimacy and respect (Ntem, 2022). Since identity is essential to one's self-esteem and helps a person interpret the world, any threat to identity is likely to produce a strong response. One of the participants gave a remarkably interesting scenario. She was vibrating as she pointed to issues of ethnicity and identity issues;

> *"At Old Mutual Malamulele shopping complex there was board on which the following was written: Ro tanganedzwa – a Venda inscription which means 'everybody is welcome' that caused a stir. Those Vatsonga who read*

> *'ro tanganedzwa' exclaimed, 'zhiii! Kwala ka Malamulele?' – 'here at Malamulele? ro tanganedzwa' here! It was vandalised immediately till to date Old Mutual is not there at Malamulele because of that"*

Another study which supports the present findings added that typically responses of ethical issues is both aggressive and defensive and can escalate quickly into an intractable conflict because threats to identity are not easily put aside. Such conflicts tend to persist (Kormoh, 2020).

The divisions created by the Homeland system led to the development of forms of social and cultural identification which were conflictual. Conflictual forms of ethnic identity tended to be consolidated and deepened in the competitive struggle for the control of inadequate financial resources meant for the delivery of services (water, electricity, roads, etc.), particularly in those African semi-urban and rural communities such as Malamulele and Vuwani, which were poorly served or neglected by the former racist Afrikaner-Apartheid rulers and their subordinate African homeland-leaders.

The apartheid government was responsible for forming the identities which have become clear in the terms of the language that was used to explain the source of the Malamulele and Vuwani conflict. Vincent Xihundla, who is a Xitsonga-speaking male was recorded repeating the observation noted above. He said, angrily:

> *The issue of Venḓaness and Tsonganess is a serious one here. Here at the Malamulele Shoping Complex at Old Mutual (as a way of advertisement), the words 'Roṭanganedzwa,' meaning 'Everyone is welcome' in Tshivenḓa. The Vatsonga who read the advertisement responded in their language, 'zhii! Kwala ka Malamulele?' (Here at Malamulele! Roṭanganedzwa, here). It was venḓalised by the Vatsonga.*

Although few politicians and some traditional leaders are denying the problem of ethnicity in the Malamulele-Vuwani conflict, participants emphasised it as the main cause of the current conflict. Vincent Xihundla added:

> *What people needed was mainly not getting their own municipality but to be out of allegedly Vhavenda led Thulamela municipality. Although Thulamela municipality is comprised of both Vhavenda and Vatsonga-speaking people, to Vatsonga people it has Vhavenda-speaking identity. The reasons they gave were related to the location of the municipal offices which were based at Thohoyandou; the former capital of Venda homeland, and the dominance of Vhavenda-speaking people in leadership and managerial positions and service delivery which favoured former Venda homeland areas.*

To show that they were not simply looking for their own Municipality but being carried by the intense spirit of ethnic identity or what they referred to as Tsonganess, Vincent Xihundla added:

> *Why did Vatsonga-speaking who stay at Bushbuckridge which is in Mpumalanga Province were aggrieved as the matter of conflicts between Vhavenda and Vasonga was discussed on Munghanalonene FM? They said 'ya le ka Malamulele ya hi borha, vatshangana va kahina va xanisiwa, se hi lava ku yi nghena'? Which means 'the case of Malamulele is boring us, our own Shangaan people are troubled, we are about to involve ourselves in it'. This shows that it was an ethic boundary or identity conflict. Why they did Shangaan at Bushbuckridge refer to the issue and not Vhavenda-speaking at Musina area?*

As a consequence of ethnicity, suggestions were made by Xitsonga-speaking people that they had rather join Greater Giyani Municipality or have their own municipality. They threatened to shut down everything, which they finally did with force. Shops were closed, schools, roads, and government services were disrupted except hospitals and clinics. Mr. Vuma Vukile, a Xitsonga-speaking male who is highly educated said:

> *The issue of the Malamulele-Vuwani conflict is clearly influenced by tribalism. There are Vhavenda-speaking who were saying we cannot be ruled by Vatsonga. And Vatsonga were equally responsible for tribalism when they said we do not want to be ruled by Vhavenda. Between these two tribes, no one is free from tribalism; they are both responsible for it. For they are uncritically stating that they cannot be rule by another ethnic group. Vhavenda regard themselves as a superior group to Vatsonga whereas Vatsonga vehemently deny that.*

A critical reflection on the above information is that the homeland system had a negative influence on both Vhavenda and Vatsonga. This is why Vatsonga who live in Bushbuckridge felt directly affected by the conflict between Vatsonga and Vhavenda. This is the reason Vatsonga-speaking people wanted to join Greater Giyani Municipality, which was the former capital of Gazankulu homeland. The same feelings were evident in Vhavenda in Vuwani community when Collins Chabane Municipality was established. They said, "*rine a ri todi uvha vhalanda vha Vatsonga*" meaning they do not want to be the servants of the Vatsonga (Rasila, 2017). As such, they expressed themselves as people who wanted to join Makhado Municipality, which was a Vhavenda dominated municipality. This confirms the bigger problem which the South African government is facing nationwide. The problem of ethnic identity needs urgent attention before the country gets worse than what it is at present.

Ethnic identities were also evident in the people's attitudes towards the language one used to address public gatherings. A Tshivenda-speaking police Brigadier who provided protection to Minister Pravin Gordan when he came to address a gathering of *Vatsonga* in Malamulele was reported to have used his own language in controlling crowds: '*A hu ṭuwiwe hafha*' (Get out of here). A young *Shangaan/Tsonga* female security guard chided the brigadier: '*I chini ku ṭuwa? Laha a ku ṭuwiwi fambiwa, hi lwa na maendlele malamo which* means what is 'ku tuwa' meaning - to get away. Here we in Xitsonga "famba" means to go not to "tuwa" in Tshivenda which means to go. The female security guard was, in fact, insisting that the police Brigadier was supposed to use Xitsonga to control Xitsonga-speaking crowds instead of his own Tshivenḓa language. She used two words which mean the same things, *ku famba* and *u tuwa* which means to go. The fact is that she understood everything that the brigadier was saying but she just did not want to act on what was being said simply because he spoke Tshivenda to address Vatsonga speakers. She affirmed that those were some of the actions which Vatsonga-speaking people were fighting against. This denotes a fundamental problem of ethnic identity or tribalism which young people are engaging in. She undermined the right of expression and of speech of the brigadier. The law recognises eleven official languages, including Tshivenda. But a Mutsonga in Malamulele objected to the use of this language where both Xitsonga and Tshivenda are spoken. This, no doubt, was an indication of the high level of ethnic tension at this stage in the conflict.

When a new municipality, Collins Chabane Municipality, was carved out of Thulamela Municipality which was perceived by the *Vatsonga* to be dominated by the *Vhavenḓa*, the Vhavenda of Vuwani who found themselves within the new municipality, in turn, became hostile to the new municipality because they perceived it to be a *Tsonga* municipality which would protect the interests of the *Vatsonga* to the detriment of their own. Khauli Aifheli, a *Venḓa* traditional leader, observed as follows:

> *The coming of the new municipality appeared more like it came specifically for the Tsonga/Shangaan and as such it could not earn the support of the Vhavenḓa speaking people. Vhavenḓa of Vuwani perceive the new municipality as representing Vatsonga. First, it honoured the late Minister Chabane who was a Tsonga man and second, it was headquatered at Malamulele which is a Tsonga town. During the memorial service of Mr Collns Chabane… the Vatsonga elites said to the then President Jacob Zuma, 'since you say you respected Collins, give us a municipality and we shall name the municipality after him.' The municipality was later granted*

> *and named after Collins Chabane. This became a cause of concern for the Vavhenda in Vuwani.*

The conflict was, as pointed out above, worsened by competition over limited resources and the perception which had become entrenched since the apartheid years that the allocation of resources was driven by ethnic considerations. Nobela Mafanato, a self-employed *Tsonga* female in Malamulele claimed that when funds became available to Thulamela Municipality to build a sports stadium in Malamulele, the funds were diverted to Thohoyandou to build the stadium there. She observed further:

> *... That is why say we cannot rely on such people for development in Malamulele because they lack Ubuntu ... Because of things like this we demanded our own municipality so that we can develop our own communities and we did that through violence because the government was not listening.*

A twenty-nine-year-old *Venḓa* youth at the centre of conflict in Vuwani, Ailwei Muthundinṉe added another dimension to this conflict over resources:

> *I blame political entrepreneurs for the whole conflict or those who benefit economically from the government through tenders. They are thinking of themselves at the expense of other people ... especially the poor and uneducated people.*

This lends credence to the notion that, while interventionism in problems of this nature appropriated and adapted elements of African ethnicities, both constructed and traditional, in order to produce politically beneficial ones, Africans also appropriated and modified these elements in order to suit their needs, thereby becoming active participants in this creative process. This idea is reinforced by the fact that, while interventionism utilised both constructed and traditional elements of African ethnicities in order to produce Indigenous societies that were historically influential, it made use of ethnicity as a means of publicising tribal histories, tribal narratives, and tribal myths, thereby constructing ethnic affinities and fortifying ethnic relationships. During the 1930s and 1940s, colonial leaders like Awolowo and Macaulay in Nigeria helped to support efforts that were similar to those already being made (Falola, 1999). In addition to that, these actions have had enduring repercussions on how conflicts are currently resolved in South Africa.

5.2.2 Perceived Inappropriate Distribution of Resources

The conflict in the area under study was caused by the perceived economic imbalance in terms of the distribution of funds to the two different tribes. Cheru (2002) optimises that if sustained peace is the goal, conflict resolution in Africa must move beyond military response, and focus on addressing the root causes of conflict. At the most fundamental level, the absence of justice is frequently the principal reason for the absence of peace. Ethnic discrimination, denial of basic rights, extreme economic inequality and other manifestations of justice are forms of 'structural' violence, (which) plants the seeds of physical violence and, in many cases, deadly conflict. A concerned teacher who was from Malamulele emphasised that the root cause was economic imbalances, as he illustrated:

> *"Look here! The Vatsonga-speaking from Malamulele began to complain that they not benefiting from developments given the state of their roads and other infrastructures"*

Furthermore, the issues of ethnicity as well were not separated from those of economic imbalances between the two tribes. This was shared by many participants as they concurred on the following quotation:

> *"Vhavenda were the ones taking the advantage over the Vatsonga-speaking using the resources of Thulamela municipality thus why Vatsonga-speaking felt ethnically discriminated. Together with "Shumela Venda" slogans which means - always aspire for Venda, used by other members made a huge negative impact to this problem."*

Given the above, it can be clearly argued that societal conflict can be exacerbated by the perceived imbalance distribution of resources. In a different study conducted in Nigeria, it was observed that despite the predictions of the neoclassical theory of economic growth, poor countries have lower investment that led to slow growth rates compared to rich countries (Akinola & Uzodike, 2018). To explain these empirical regularities a game-theoretic model of conflict between social groups over the distribution of income was also discovered to be key (Omona, 2020). This study subscribes to the same view that one of the major causes of conflict in Africa remains the scramble to acquire power and amass resources by one group of elite of an ethnic group at the expense of the others. To add to this argument, one participant (Khauli) reiterated:

> *"There was an opportunity for building the new stadium at Malamulele. Instead of building it at Malamulele they planned to build it at Thohoyandou and they removed the old materials used in building Thohoyandou Stadium and used them to build Malamulele stadium. This is unfair, they were*

supposed to renovate Thohoyandou stadium and build a new stadium using new materials at Malamulele"

Furthermore, Khosa and Mulovhedzi (2020) reiterated that colonialism has also imposed on African states and communities self-centred leadership that has exploited the divisions and colonial legacies and the illegitimate character of the postcolonial African state to aggravate tension and fuel violence of diverse nature.

The study identified feelings of social exclusion and deprivation that led people to protest. It seems to be true for the people of Malamulele that governments tended to ignore citizens when they raised their concerns peacefully, until they escalated their concerns to violent protests. This is when their concerns were attended to (Stewart, Barron, Brown & Hartwell, 2006). The protests started peacefully and finally raised their level to the point of violence and total shutdown. This was confirmed by the statement by a Vuwani resident Elsie Mudau, a self-employed youth. She said:

Inappropriate service delivery caused all these conflicts in Malamulele and Vuwani. The protests started small and grew big because the authorities were ignoring what people in Malamulele and Vuwani were saying.

According to the research of eminent scholars such as Khosa, Ted Gurr and Montrel Marshall, the majority of African wars can be traced back to a mix of factors, the most significant of which is economic deprivation (Marshall, Gurr & Khosa, 2001). Jacob (2015) adds that due to the fact that African state frontiers are more fluid now than they were at independence, thousands of migrants fleeing economic and political persecution move freely throughout the continent. As a consequence of this, it is possible that the perceptions of various states and their citizens will shift, which will result in variations in ideologies and values, which could ultimately lead to conflicts between different groups.

5.2.3 The Legacy of Colonialism/Apartheid

The review of literature revealed that apartheid is one of the key causes of the present societal conflicts. These conflicts are believed to revolve around ethnic identity. The divide and rule strategy benefited the whites at the expense of Black people. Hatred and ethnocentrism were created among Blacks. As Vhusani Ramufhi observed:

"The Vuwani community was informed by the MDB that they are no part of Makhado municipality; they now part of Collins Chabane municipality which is based at Malamulele area. Being part of Collins Chabane

> *municipality would appear like we are Tsonga speaking while we are not. I was one of the people who resisted that change because I am a Venda, so we refused as community members because Collins Chabane is a Tsonga man"*

Some participants in Vuwani agreed that, besides the fact that they were not contacted by MDB, ethnic identity statements had been made and, to some extent, they appeared to have influenced their decision. Aifheli Khauli further said:

> *"The coming of a new municipality appeared more like it came specifically for the Tsonga/Shangaan and as such it could not earn support from Vhavenda."*

In this scenario, it can be clearly seen that the problem goes back to the former homeland system of the apartheid government. Thus, even though South Africa is a free country, it is not free from ethnicity. Lelo (2020) emphasised that the policy of separate development which sought to assign every black African to a homeland according to their ethnic identity is a key cause of societal conflicts.

To sum up the legacy of apartheid in causing conflicts, studies have revealed that colonial governments introduced laws of separating Blacks and Whites. The laws included the Group Areas Act (no 41) of 1950 that extended the provision of the Native Land Act of 1913. The Act gave the government authority to forcibly remove Africans from areas not designated for their racial group according to the act (Kormoh, 2020; Lelo, 2020). Equally important, the Bantu Authorities Act of 1951 established African homelands and abolished the National Representative Council Act of 1936, which was enacted by General Hertzog with the aim of dealing with issues and problems that Africans encountered in the Union of South Africa. These Acts divided Africans who started competing amongst themselves for the scarce resources. This stimulated ethnicity (Khosa & Mulovhedzi, 2020). In Nigeria, for instance, Langer, Mustapha and Stewart (2009) observed that, since the late 1950s, different ethnic groups have been in competition over representation in government and state institutions. Often this led to feelings of discrimination on the basis of ethnicity, race or religion among the groups that were inadequately represented, which, in turn, provoked tensions and conflicts, culminating in the Nigeria's civil war (1967–1970).

5.2.4 Selfish Agendas and Poverty

The data collected show that selfish personal agendas caused conflict in the society in which some individuals hid behind violent protests to pursue their own agendas. These individuals

pretended to support protests and incited violence for their own gain. The individuals are said to have coordinated violent activities during protests in pursuit of their selfish interests. Most participants concurred with the comment made by Aifheli Khauli:

> *"It is our African solution to protest, and these protests are planned by a leader to be peaceful so that the authorities can here our disgruntlement. However among the protesters, I feel some are not honest as they would make the protests to escalate into violence. For example, during the same protests, there are some who take advantage of lawlessness to commit crime like house breaking, theft and some can go as far as rape and assault, as you know during a violent protest. There is a minimal police presence"*

In a similar study by Bilali and Vollhardt conducted in 2019, it was revealed that sometimes leaders of protests do not want violence during protests, but the protesters might assume that violence will be beneficial by producing outcomes that are desirable for some. Thus, the blame is shifted to these individuals who take advantage of the situation to enrich themselves. Given that there are collective political agendas to be achieved during protests, some people participate to get personal gains like political positions. Such people are key in causing conflicts. These selfish agendas are also believed to be exacerbated by poverty and unemployment. A study by Akinola and Uzodike (2018) purported that poverty causes conflicts between ethnic groups. Participants in this study indicated that people who are living in poverty see an opportunity to loot during protests. Bilali and Vollhardt (2019) further attested that poverty and unemployment may play a significant role in violent protests.

In this study, politicians were reported to have abused the power entrusted upon them for their selfish gains. Politicians hid their intentions, the acquisition of money and power, and used ethnicity as a weapon to achieve their goals. The majority of innocent people unknowingly marched down the roads, damaging properties because the politicians told them that a Tshivenda-speaking person was robbing them or that a Xitsonga-speaking person was trying to rule them. According to the participants, politicians mobilised people using ethnicity in order to gain economically through the control of tenders at the municipal level. Tinas Mabasa said:

> *The problem of Malamulele conflict is multi-dimensional. Politicians cannot be left out of these conflicts. Protesters are their subordinates with politicians pushing their selfish agendas.*

5.2.5 Poor Communication between Authorities and People

The violent protesters in this study also blamed the government, which took time to respond to grievances. The failure of the government was found to have contributed to the conflict between the two ethnic groups. Both the Xitsonga-speaking and Tshivenda-speaking people blamed the government for poor communication with them. Vatsonga started the negotiations in 2006 until they resorted to violent protest in 2016 while Vhavenda in Vuwani also blamed the government for not communicating with them when they redrew the boundary (Rasila, 2017). In one of the interviews which I arranged with Tinas Mabasa who, before I interviewed him, said, 'please come during the late hours of the day to my working place and act like you are one of the customers, I will then be able to participate into the research because this research is quite sensitive'. I did as he requested and further assured him of the use of pseudo names, that is where he became freer to respond to my research questions. He summoned me to ignore the noise which was made by school learners who were wearing school uniform since it was late hours and during the week. They were holding bottles of beer and dancing to a loud music right in the shopping complex. I asked him about the cause of the conflict of Malamulele and Vuwani. This was his response:

> *"According to the processes of getting the municipality the answer was 'they are not getting it because they do not qualify.' They kept on knocking the door since the year 2000 until 2006 when conflict began. We as the people of Malamulele realised that without violence the government will not listen to our concrete issues. So I blame the conflict on the government delayed response"*

In a study by Ntem (2022), it was similarly found that weak public institutions, when highly dysfunctional or have even collapsed, resulted in conflicts. Furthermore, such settings may range from failed states to war-torn societies characterised by endemic corruption, strong inequality and a high degree of political instability. Kormoh (2020) also observed that when citizens see the government not paying attention to the concerns raised, they become angry about the unresponsiveness to their grievances and show their disapproval or dissatisfaction through violent protests.

5.2.6 View that Violent Protest Attracts Attention

Participants also opined that conflicts are usually caused by community members who are seeking the attention from the government. This may result in violence pursuit as the only means to attract the response from the government. Participants indicated that violence is the

only way that can force the government to respond. Most of the participants concurred with the following view by Makhense Thomas:

> *"Sometimes government officials sleep at work, if they do not see conflicts of this nature sometimes they will keep us waiting forever. So, I think the need for attention from government authorities was key in the Vatsonga and Vhavenda conflict. Community members need a listening ear"*

It would appear that collective violence becomes a way of interacting with government when non-violent routines seem not to work (Bilali & Vollhardt, 2019). The violent protests are therefore used as a mechanism that forces the government failure to include the community in decision making about critical issues of concern.

When the government continued to ignore the people of Malamulele, community members resorted to the strategy of total shutdown of services in the whole town. The last strategy was to unleash violence until the government decided to respond to their needs. Throughout the country, protests have become the culture of South Africans while seeking attention of the government. The destruction caused by the Malamulele-Vuwani conflict in Malamulele alone resulted in the burning of schools and the destruction of roads, road signs and shops. Property worth billions was also destroyed in Vuwani. The government can save these billions for development by listening to people and take the necessary steps.

5.2.7 Antagonism/Ethnocentrism and Stereotyping

Another major finding that emerged from the study is ethnocentrism and stereotyping. Stereotyping is proof that a person lacks Ubuntu when relating to the other. In terms of Ubuntu, everybody is equally important. Both Vhavenda and Vatsonga in one way or another experienced stereotyping. A lot of negative stereotypes emerged and caused conflict in Malamulele and Vuwani. Statements uttered by Tshivenda-speaking people: "*we cannot be ruled by the Tsonga''* and raised by the Xitsonga-speaking people, "*muvhexa a ngha kahle''* which means a Venda speaking person is not good provoked people to respond in a negative way.

5.3 Conclusion

The preceding chapter was a discussion of Ubuntu in the context of the causes and course of the Malamulele and Vuwani conflict. As this study was qualitative, the voices of the participants are important as they resonated the causes and course of the Malamulele and

Vuwani conflict. It was one of the objectives of the study to cover the causes of this conflict. The researcher did not leave a stone unturned about collecting the data pertaining to the causes of conflict. Ethnic identity issues/tribalism was one of the main causes of the Malamulele and Vuwani conflict. The way they spoke and their gestures conveyed the message to the researcher that ethnic identity/tribalism is a growing challenge in South Africa. Although some participants denied the existence of tribalism, many signs of tribalism were observable by the researcher. They include statements such as ‘‘we cannot be ruled by the Tsonga – we cannot be ruled by a XiTsonga-speaking person’’ and “muvhexa a nga kahle- a Tshivenda-speaking person is not good’’. All these statements reflect hatred of another group, yet it is not scientifically proven that the other group is indeed not right and cannot lead. Some of the causes involves the need for attention and selfish agenda by the individuals. It is high time that the government takes note of such attitudes. While many participants viewed the problem as caused by government’s delay in attending or listening to people, more emphasis could be placed on the government to take heed of people’s concerns in order to avoid such conflicts. The legacy of apartheid cannot be left out as participants have alluded to them. Apartheid left scars which are healing slowly. Moreover, the uneven distribution of services by the current government was seen as one of the major causes of conflicts.

CHAPTER SIX
DISCUSSION ON UBUNTU IN THE CONTEXT OF RESULTS AND OUTCOMES OF THE MALAMULELE VUWANI CONFLICT

6.1 Introduction

In this chapter, the focus is on the results, and the broader and deeper outcomes of the Malamulele-Vuwani conflict. The chapter seeks to provide insight into the changing and evolving understanding and appreciation of the significance of Ubuntu in the lives of Vatsonga and Vhavenda in the painful vortex of the destructive conflict.

6.2 Social disintegration

The study participants indicated that when a conflict escalates into a violent protest, there are a lot of adverse outcomes, and these includes the breakdown in the social relationships of the affected people. The conflicts destroyed human capital evident from their negative impact on education and health outcomes. The majority of the participants concurred with the following statement by Nkhumeleni Phaduli:

> *"Given the mass distraction of schools and roads barricaded, a lot of kids stopped attending schools and these kids joined the protests which then affect their psychology regarding the societal values of Ubuntu. This conflict created hate and hooliganism, you see. Remember for individuals to be socially okay, they need to receive health services, but all these where disrupted, thus putting the health of these people at risk".*

These social consequences of conflicts often far-reaching and long-lasting, help to explain the negative effect of conflicts on healthy growth. From a psychological point of view, it is believed that the children who are exposed to violence during their upbringing, whether the exposure is through witnessing violence or being victims, are more likely to adopt these strategies as an acceptable means of solving problems and thereby engage in violent tactics as adults to solve problems (Nicholson, 2019). Moreover, the children who grow up in environments where violence was not the norm are unlikely to use violence in their adulthood to solve conflicts. A study in Nigeria by Ntem (2020) observed that with regard to health outcomes, life expectancy is significantly lower during societal conflicts, partly due to direct conflict-related deaths. However, other health indicators such as maternal mortality also

deteriorate. In a conflict scenario, women and children are often disproportionately affected by conflicts in terms of higher malnourishment rates among children.

Conflicts divide people and destroy good relationships, according to Karl Marxs' conflict theory. Conflict situations create the chances for two parties involved in a conflict to resolve their differences. In saying this, Karl Marxs agrees with a British anthropologist Gluckman's (1975) observation: "Every social system is a field of tension, full of ambivalence, of cooperation and contrasting struggle." Stressing the difficulty of actually achieving social unity, he suggested that rituals are really the expression of complex social tensions rather than the affirmation of social unity; they exaggerate very real social tensions that exist in the organisation of social relations and then affirm unity despite these structural conflicts. He especially pointed to what he called "rituals of rebellion" rites in which the normal rules of authority are temporarily overturned (e.g., Zulu women boldly parading around in men's clothes at a festival, doing things usually forbidden to them in a normally patriarchal culture). Gluckman suggested that such ceremonies are ritualised rebellions that channel the structural conflicts caused by men's social subordination of women. Hence, they have the cathartic effect of releasing social tensions, thereby limiting discontent, and diffusing the real threat contained in such discontent.

It is clear from the view by Vatsonga people that a temporary denial of ideals of Ubuntu and embarking on conflict with Vhavenda had a cathartic effect. This was following many years of knocking at the door of the government without an answer. They finally achieved what they wanted, a new municipality named after their hero, Collins Chabane. Amazingly, the conflict with the people of Vuwani ended. They are working together again. Social disintegrated which was compromised was now restored. In this case, Ubuntu is a dependent variable. It depends on the values imparted on us which will guarantee us not to embark on violence which led to social disintegration. This means that planners of Malamulele-Vuwani protests would have taken another route of non-violent protest if they had ideals of Ubuntu and still achieve what they wanted to achieve. This is why Ubuntu is a theory or worldview whose teleology is harmony within and between ethnic groups.

6.3 Poor Service Delivery and Economic Challenges

The conflicts in Vuwani and Malamulele resulted in disruptions and poor service delivery since most key infrastructures like roads were barricaded, and linking routes were destroyed.

It, therefore, becomes difficult for economic activities. Health services were also negatively affected. A university lecture, Lindelani Tshikule concurred:

> *"Due to the problem caused by barricaded roads, ambulances were failing to transport sick people from one hospital to another though hospitals and clinics were allowed to operate. There were reported many death cases than normal at that time"*

Health is one of the basic needs which protesters are not supposed to temper with. Perhaps that is the reason why clinics and hospitals were not burnt. However, hospitals and clinics are not operating in a vacuum. They are affected by the barricaded roads. In the case of Vuwani and Malamulele, cases of deaths linked to the impact of the protests were reported. That was due to the slow movement of referrals and supply of medicines.

A similar study Bilali and Vollhardt (2019) reported that during an ethnic conflict in Iran, schools were torched and vandalised. As a result, learning was severely compromised, examinations were disrupted and thousands of pupils stuck in a state of paralysis, not knowing if they would pass the final year examination due to the destruction and negative impact of the violent protests.

The protests affected social relationships between Vhavenda and Vatsonga as it perpetuated hatred between them. Vatsonga burnt Vhavenda shops at Malamulele shopping complex. In an interview, Vincent Xihundla, a policeman, said:

> *"Another shopping complex at Malamulele was burnt to ashes just because it was owned by a Venda speaking person. Another Venda speaking man who was farming in Malamulele are, his goats and pigs were brutally killed in a way that showed me that there is no longer Ubuntu in our people"*

Davhana Daniel reported what many participants said regarding the result of the conflict. He said:

> *'Traffic station was closed, home affairs services were not available, bumpy roads were not attended to and the problem of water increased".*

In another study, similar findings were made in which school buildings were burned down. As such, the children were left with no shelter to protect them from unfavourable weather conditions at school (Khosa & Mulovhedzi, 2020). Properties that helped the community were destroyed and this included the banks (Khosa & Mulovhedzi, 2020). Furthermore,

Akinola and Uzodike (2018) noted that the violent protests may produce long-lasting consequences that cannot be reversed, and that violent protests hinder development.

6.4 Knowledge about Ubuntu

6.4.1 Understanding the Cultural Pillar of Ubuntu

Questions centred on the identification of the pillars of Ubuntu and its cultural dictates in terms of conduct, character and everyday behaviour in community provoked enthusiastic responses, especially among the elderly participants compared to the general lack of interest among the youth. Jackson Chauke, a Tsonga traditional leader, identified the cultural pillars of Ubuntu as follows:

> *The Vatsonga and Vhavenda … regard the human being as a spiritual being that does not have color and whose source is God. What kept the groups together for a long time is not merely intermarriages … it is the understanding of a human being having a spiritual source... It is the spirit that lives in the conscience which constantly tells you that this one is my brother or sister who I must love and care for. They understood that they are of the same spiritual essence.*

The identification of spirit and spirituality in this narrative and the discounting of intermarriages as central in the definition of what it is to be human from an Ubuntu perspective is very important as we will observe in the discussion below. Khauli Aitheli, a Venda traditional leader used the well-known adages and axioms from different language groups to capture his understanding of the essence of humaneness and Ubuntu:

> *The saying 'muthu ndi muthu nga vhaṅwe vhathu' (Venḓa) is similar in Tsonga language, 'munhu i munhu van'wani vhanhu,' which means a person is a person through other people, is the same in all South African cultures, Zulu, Sotho, Tswana, Xhosa and Ndebele. This is how a human being is regarded according to our cultures. It is believing that is better than an animal… when you meet a person you are bound to say 'ndaa" … if you are a woman you say 'aa'… for a Tsonga you say 'ndhawini' to greet. It brings culture shock if you just pass another human being without greeting.*

It is interesting to note that this narrative, apart from directing attention to the historically developed common wisdom of all Bantu groups in South Africa as this relates to the notion of humaneness and Ubuntu, introduces the complex dimension of gender and "greeting" in coming to grips with conduct and behaviour which is appropriate in the context of defining Bantu axiology and cosmology.

Other concepts which constantly emerged in the discussions about the cultural pillars of Ubuntu were "collectivism," "togetherness", "unity" and collective responsibility. None of the participants in this study proffered a conceptualisation of humaneness and Ubuntu which contradicted or fundamentally differed from the above. However, there was a controversial view expressed by Michael Rammbwa, who, ironically identified himself as an Indigenous Knowledge System (IKS):

> *If I work in Johannesburg having power to employ and receive a bunch of applications, all qualifying according to job requirements and employ some from KZN (KwaZulu Natal), Mpumalanga, and Northwest provinces and failed to employ my younger brother or cousin or villager, that would not be Ubuntu according to our culture. My mother/father… would curse me… and accuse me for not having Ubuntu. It is in Ubuntu philosophy to recognise your brothers…he quoted the Tshivenda proverb, mmbwa i poswa kurambo nga i i ḓivhaho which means one would give first preference to the person he knows. He added another proverb, Nahone u naka a hu fani na u ḓihwa which means you can be beautiful but when it comes to opportunities, those who are known are given first preference. But on the other hand, there are equality principles (Batho-Pele Principles) which mean people first, which require equality at all costs without looking at gender, race/ethnicity, … disability or nationality according to the equity policy of the government…*

This view was immediately countered by the same person as above who observed that:

> *Ubuntu commands me to be truthful at all times … it does not support corruption … Ubuntu needs the heart full of the Spirit of God … when we judge, we must be fair at all times … never consider nepotism.*

A critical discussion of findings on participants' understanding of the nature of Ubuntu and humaneness based on the guiding assumption of the Ubuntu paradigm and theory suggests that on the whole, the older participants had a relatively clear grasp of the foundation of the Muntu/Bantu (person/persons) and the correlative cultural dictate spirituality. They drew a clear distinction between the spiritness of the Muntu (person) which in Bantu philosophical anthropology defines the nature of African human nature as spiritual, which underpins the relational dimension of Ubuntu as in the wisdom: 'I am because we are, since we are therefore, I am! Spirituality as a relational phenomenon anchors the self "I-Me" in the community; the "I-Me-We" nexus of self-hood or extended-self explicated by Azibo (2018) as well as Karenga's (2003) sociality of self-hood. We must note, however, that Ubuntu as

conceptualised in South Africa does not negate individuality (Ramose, 1999). Individual excellence and intelligence are highly valued and are linked to the development of the community. What is negated is individualism, which is characteristic of the de-spiritualised and desacralised (Caucasian ethos and praxis (Ramose, 1999; Mkhize, 2004; Ani, 1994; Prinsloo, 1998).

Furthermore, spirituality as a relational concept emerges in the differences in the mode of male and female greetings, which connote respect for the integrity of the genders. There are no implications of superiority-inferiority in these modes of greetings, '*ndaa*' (male) and '*aa*' (female). It is also interesting to note that a participant referred to "cultural shock" experience when a person passes another person without greeting. This, inter alia, is a manifestation of the centrality of greetings as a manifestation of Ubuntu. Greetings become a manifestation of care, solidarity, togetherness, communal concern and an expectation of harmony and health in the community.

While there is a relative clear grasp of Ubuntu among the Vhavenḓa and Vatsonga of Malamulele and Vuwani, there also seems to exist creeping confusion regarding its meaning. This is evident in the view by an IKS expert, who insists that ensuring that his relatives and people from his village get employed if they apply for jobs at a company where he is in charge of processing applications is Ubuntu. He, of course, does not claim that only his relatives must get employed but that he expected, as a show of Ubuntu, to have them employed and if he does not do so, he will be "cursed." He also seems to be implying that solidarity with those you know provides you with recognition which does not happen in the case of solidarity with strangers. Here, we begin to see the narrowing of the notion of community to one's village, which lays the ground for the development of the scourge of ethnicity and xenophobia, which have wreaked havoc with attempts at building social integration/cohesion in South Africa. The literature review in Chapter Two points to ethnicity and xenophobia as some of the major negative forces threatening Ubuntu in South Africa. If an IKS expert who is supposed to play a vital role of custodian of Ubuntu begins to slide in the direction of corruption and nepotism, as observed by another participant, then Ubuntu has a difficult road ahead.

It is also important to note the confusion and misunderstanding the IKS expert creates in juxtaposing a discussion of Ubuntu with a discussion of Batho-Pele principles, which derive from and are rooted in the South African 1996 liberal democratic constitution. While he does

not openly describe Batho-Pele principles as based in Ubuntu, the mere juxtaposition of the two suggests similarities, which are historically and culturally non-existent. Batho-Pele Principles, which are rooted in the equity policy of the South African government, derive their meaning and functionality from the Caucasian/European individualistic rational anthropology. Ubuntu, based on communalistic assumptions of the African Anthropos, cannot be epistemologically converged with Caucasian rational anthropology without distorting them. The communal and spiritual ethos which underpins Ubuntu has nothing in common with the individualistic materialistic and despiritualised Batho-Pele Principles.

The findings and discussions above have focused mainly on the general cultural-conceptual understanding of Ubuntu of the Southern African people of Malamulele and Vuwani. To achieve a fuller and more comprehensive grasp of their understanding of Ubuntu, it was necessary to pose questions directed towards economic and political processes. In the following two subsections, these issues are tackled.

One of the cultural pillars of Ubuntu is demonstrated in traditional leadership. An IKS knowledge holder revealed the dynamics of traditional leadership and Ubuntu. Michael Rammbwa attested the following:

> *Any traditional leadership during his/her inauguration is mandated with the rules and responsibilities which he/she must carry out as long as he lives as a traditional leader. Those rules can be summaries by one-word Ubuntu because, he would be expected to love all people of all races/ethnic groups, show mercy to the poor, orphans, and widows. Respect all people and show no favouritism.*

As an anthropological study, one of the important tools which I used often was participant observation (Dewalt, 2011). I visited the inauguration of one of the Chief Traditional leaders in Malamulele area. It was during the weekdays when he was inaugurated. Vatsonga people honoured their chief traditional leader by dressing traditionally, dancing and praising him with poets and songs. One of the important things I observed was all the speeches which relatives and government officials delivered, that he must love all people, respect, share with them, welcome people at his palace, show no favouritism, take no bribe, and listen to all people. I also heard one incredibly old lady who said *"tatani wa wena a va ri na rhirhandzu na vumunhu, na wena u endla tano, u rhandza vanhu"* which means your father had love and Ubuntu, you also should do the same, you must love people.

From what Mr Michael Rammbwa and I observed, there is correlation. It is cultural to practice Ubuntu as traditional leaders who, to a certain extent, are expected to forgive their enemies who opposed and persecuted them before and during their tenure as traditional leadership. It is clear that traditional leadership seeks to promote values of Ubuntu, namely, harmony, social cohesion, solidarity and peace among people. Khunou (2009) asserts that the institution of traditional leadership represents the early form of societal organisation. It embodies the preservation of culture, traditions, customs and values. Khunou further noted that in the pre-colonial era, traditional leaders and traditional authorities were important institutions that gave effect to traditional life and played an essential role in the day-to-day administration of their areas and the lives of traditional people. The relationship between the traditional community and traditional leader was especially important. The normal functioning of the traditional community was the responsibility of the traditional authority. The effective role of the traditional leaders was then negatively affected by the encroachment of colonial administration.

6.4.2 Ubuntu as a Social Pillar

Ubuntu was described as a demonstration of humanity that sought to bring African families and community members together. The response was similar from all the participants. All participants gave concurring responses. Makhense Thomas, for example, opined that:

> *"Ubuntu involves creating relationships. It is expressed this way: my brother is your brother, my sister is your sister, my mother is your mother, my father is your father, and my grandmother is your grandmother. When you visit me, you become my responsibility, I will feed you…."*

Further to the above statement, Titus Chuma also gave his view as a Mutsonga pastor:

> *"One with a wheelbarrow will lend it others without, one with knife will do so. That is how it is in Africa. It made things easy and agriculture easy. People used to give each other seeds and help each other to plough their big fields"*

Poovan, Du Toit and Engelbecht (2006) postulated that Ubuntu is a Nguni word from the aphorism; *'Umuntu Ngumuntu Ngabantu'* which means 'a person is a person because of or through others' (Letseka, 2012). To add on the social pillar, Ubuntu can be best explained by the African proverb 'a thumb, although it is strong, cannot pick a grain on its own without the cooperation of other fingers. It would require the collective co-operation of the other fingers' (Poovan, Du Toit & Engelbrecht, 2006). The lesson in this proverb is two-fold. Firstly, the

fingers can be seen as individual persons who act together in a collective manner in order to achieve a certain goal. Secondly, the fingers represent key values that are necessary to form and maintain a collective culture. In the African context, these values are the 'assegais' (Zulu word for weapon or, more concretely, spear), which are used to defend brotherhood, manage society, and guide interpersonal relations (Khosa & Mulovhedzi, 2020).

An interesting view is expressed by a traditional leader, Buyani Mabiligwe, that:

> *The reason African languages are related, is because of the spirit of Ubuntu. Through trading with each other, they try to communicate and learn each other's language. In the process of learning, words were borrowed, and the process still continues today. What they valued was relationship.*

Ubuntu was key to effective communication and the formation of relationships. No one was forced to speak someone's language. That attitude encouraged business and built relationships. Tinas Mabasa was excited to share about Ubuntu, linking it with speaking and learning other people's language. He said:

> *Before and after the conflicts, I saw the spirit of business here at Malamulele. I see Vhavenda speak Xitsonga fluently and happily and I also see Vatsonga do the same. By the way, we are 'vosivara' which means brother/sister-in-law, we intermarried, we are one.*

6.4.3 Ubuntu as a Religious Pillar

Participants defined Ubuntu as a religious pillar among Africans. Ubuntu inspires us to expose ourselves to others, and to encounter the differences of their humanness as a way of informing and enriching our own. It was made clear by participants that all major religions such as Judaism, Christianity, Islamic, Hinduism, Budaism and African Traditional Religion are grounded upon the values of Ubuntu. Davhana Daniel attested that,

> *Ubuntu's main principle is love and is central to all world religions. People committing violence are disobeying the laws of God who expects everyone to love one another because he is love.*

A critical understanding of the issue in Pastor Davhana's statement is that all violent activities stem from disobedience to the law of Ubuntu. Should Ubuntu be adopted by all governments in the world, there would be peaceful integration, which is a result of individuals full of Ubuntu principles.

The meaning of Ubuntu attests to respect for particularity, individuality and historicality, without which decolonisation cannot be. Daniel Davhana's postulation that all world religions are based on Ubuntu is fundamentally mistaken. For instance, Christian nations and churches based all their colonising practices which dehumanised Africans on Christian doctrines. Is there any Ubuntu in colonialism? The Dutch Reformed Church provided theological justification to apartheid in South Africa. Was apartheid Ubuntu? Christian nations and churches enslaved Africans not because they were not true Christians. They did so because they believed that it was their true Christian duty to do so. Ubuntu is a paradigm of thought, and behaviour is a product of African historical and civilisation experience. Europe and Asia have not produced Ubuntu. They have produced philosophies and worldviews which are profoundly and fundamentally anti-Ubuntu. Davhana is a perfect example of a person who is afflicted with a slave mentality or colonial consciousness. This type of consciousness helps Eurasians to perpetuate domination over Africans, who will never rise as long as they worship in Eurasia, churches which are inimical to African culture. Ubuntu is embodied only in African Traditional/Indigenous religions. Any scholar who is committed to the restoration of Ubuntu in the religious realm must move in the direction of African Traditional/Indigenous Religion. Any other direction perpetuates African dehumanisation.

> *"The bottom line about Ubuntu is respect, love, unity, and peace. Life lived with the observance of Ubuntu is purely what any pastor or Christians are required to observe. Giving where there is need, sharing with the poor, forgiving others where they wronged you, and showing kindness to all. That is how important it is"*

Ubuntu is respect for the *particularities* of the beliefs and practices of others. For post-apartheid South Africans of all colours, creeds and cultures, Ubuntu dictates that, if we were to be human, we need to recognise the genuine otherness of our citizens. That is, we need to acknowledge the diversity of languages, histories, values and customs, all of which constitute the South African society. For example, white South Africans tend to call all traditional African healing practices "witchcraft", and to label all such practitioners as "witchdoctors". However, close attention to the particularities of these practices would have revealed that there are at least five types of doctors in traditional African societies (Msila, 2015). And of these five, witchdoctors are being singled out as bad by Africans themselves, since they use parts of human bodies for medicine. Despite our newly found democracy, civil or ethnic

conflict cannot be ruled out. In fact, our multi-cultural democracy intensifies the various ethnic and socio-cultural differences.

6.4.4 Ubuntu as an Economic Pillar

Ubuntu philosophy is a well recognised economic pillar. All participants showed an understanding of the economic ways of Ubuntu. The Vhavenda and Vatsonga subscribe to the same view. An interview with Lindelani Tshisikule captured the following interesting views:

> *"Vhavenda and Vatsonga practised davha or dzunde. Davha in Tshivenda refers to the gathering of the community people for work either in the field or at home ……. say we are going to dzundeni it means they are going to work in the field of the traditional leader. …. the owner of the project would invite people to join him or her for cultivating, harvesting, grinding meals, fencing and many more. People would be clapping and drumming as they sing traditional songs. People used to like davha or dzunde because it was a therapy that removed stress, social and psychological problems. A job that could last for a month if it is done by a family would be finished in one day"*

Arthur Dhliwayo added:

> *"We started hating each other and killing each other for money which was introduced to us also. Our ways of reciprocity was the batter system*"

Michael Rammbwa, who is an indigenous knowledge expert, revealed another economic pillar of Ubuntu. He responded as follows:

> *"Tshitunye is another economic means which was practiced by Vhavenda. Tshitunye means taking a portion of what you have harvested or hunted and giving to the neighbours. For example, if someone went to catch mopani worms, when he comes back, he would ensure that he or she takes some and give them away to his or her neighbours"*

Although some of the economic practices identified by participants are no longer that much active, it is important to note that they existed, and they need a proper strategy to restore them. *Ukusisa* is an activity in which a family in a rural village would "lend" a cow and a bull to a newly married couple recently arriving in a village and wait until an offspring was produced before taking back the original cow and bull (Woermann & Engelbrecht, 2006). The offspring would stay with the newcomers, leaving them both with their own "seed capital" and their dignity. This mutually beneficial transaction is based on kindness, but also with the idea of reciprocity, sharing wealth in the interests of building the community as a whole. It is important to note that the *Xitokofela* is still existing among both groups. Solani

Machebele added it as an economic element of Ubuntu, which is called *xitokofela* in Xitsonga or *tshitokofela,* she said:

> *"Xitokofela is another way of borrowing money from a mutual group of people. The interesting thing is that there is no interest in returning the money. The money which we get we use it to develop our homes or to start businesses so that it will be easy to return the money"*

From a business point of view, some scholars have argued that given that the next step for business worldwide is to embrace what is called 'Ubuntu-premiership', as it is seen as a hybrid of social entrepreneurship and capitalism (West, 2014). Ultimately, nature will lead us back to the core of living, which is the Ubuntu way of life; a life lived in reverence of one's true self and that of others. It can be seen that it is already happening, simply by observing the way the world is embracing healthy living. Furthermore, the Ubuntu economic pillar requires every organisation to set values that are agreeable to all. But true character is doing what you would do for yourself to others as well. This sense of accountability is much needed as it will eliminate the them-and-us attitude, which brings separation and Ubuntu brings a sense of oneness. In recent times, a successful businessman in Pietersburg, South Africa, showed his Ubuntu by buying 100 sewing machines at an auction, which he then made available to men and women in the community who were interested in starting tailoring businesses but did not have the necessary capital (Woermann & Engelbrecht, 2019). He honoured their dignity by making a simple verbal agreement that they would pay him for the machines once there were sufficient profits to begin interest-free payments. This is typical of Ubuntu consciousness and still occurs widely both in rural South Africa and among African communities in the urban areas.

6.4.5 Understanding an Ubuntu Based Economy

Among both the Vhavenḓa and Vatsonga, communalism was the driver and energiser of economic activity, particularly in the area of agriculture. A proper grasp of economic activity comes out clearly in their view of the land and their relationship to the land. A typical view on these issues is expressed by Jackson Chauke as follows:

> *The Vatsonga viewed the land and everything on/in it as a spiritual gift from Xikwembu (God) for the purpose of sustaining life for every human being, so land was invested with the spiritual power/essence of God. Land as the source of life was supposed to be nurtured and not plundered … Every adult person was assured of access to land for use. The land belonged to the community, not private individuals.*

This view led to an approach to economic activity and organisation which complemented it. They developed cultural concepts which captured the communal essence of this economic activity and organisation. Lindelani Tshisikule had this to say:

> *The economic organisation which the Vhavenḓa and Vatsonga were practicing was davha or dzunde. Davha in Tshivenḓa language refers to the gathering of the community for work either in the field or at home .... Dzunde in Xitsonga means the same thing ... Projects which needed and involved many people were considered for davha or dzunde ... The person who invited people for davha or dzunde provided meals and traditional beer for the people ... while people are working the discussed social issues, sometimes incorporating counseling providing psychologic relief for many ... At the end, someone would start a song ... people would be singing, clapping hands and drumming as they danced to traditional songs. People used to like davha or dzunde because it was therapy that removed stress, social and psychological problems.*

Apart from *davha* and *dzunde*, other concepts identified by participants which capture the communal-spiritual dimensions of economic activity were *nduvho*, *musumo*, *tshitunye*, *xiseveseve* and *xitokofela,* which were identified by Khauli Aifheli, Vhusani Ramuthi, Michael Rammbwa, Solani Machebele, respectively. *Nduvho* was a form of tribute (gift) to the livelihood of the traditional leader in recognition of his role as a custodian of order and communal justice. The same applies for *musumo*. In turn the traditional leader shared *musumo* as a form of reciprocal demonstration of solidarity with the community. *Tshitunye,* which is practiced by the *Vhavenḓa,* also involved sharing. If, for instance one slaughtered a cow, neighbours would be given portions of the meat. *Xiseveseve* and *Xitokofela,* which were practiced mainly by *Tsonga* women, were based on the same principle. In the latter two cases, money and goods were pooled together, and participants would each have their turn, monthly, to receive the money/goods which were utilised to satisfy livelihood needs.

These activities and practices point to a worldview in which the production, distribution and consumption of goods and services were subordinated to the requirements of communal welfare and health. Private interest and individual gain did not feature in these types of practices and activities. These practices and activities were, in fact, a manifestation of the wisdom: 'I am because we are, since we are therefore, I am.' The production of goods and services transcended the level of the need for material and biological survival to incorporate the production and maintenance of the communal-spiritual integrity of the community. It was

not the survival of the fittest individual which animated and energised economic activity but communal welfare and health.

It is interesting to observe that in the worldview of the *Vhavenḓa* and *Vatsonga*, work viewed in the sense of plough, sowing, harvesting, etc., was not separated or alienated from social living. While people were working, they were also discussing and resolving critical social issues and problems. The psychological stress precipitated by the challenges of life and living received attention. Song and dance accompanied the activities of ploughing, sowing and harvesting. Work in this case was in essence the spiritual regeneration of life itself. Various economic activities and practices came to symbolise or were in reality symbols of Ubuntu and the transpersonal ontology which grounded this way of life (Ramose, 1999; Mkhize, 2004; Mkhize, 2008).

Participants in this study, through the information they provided on aspects of economic practice as well as their knowledge of the indigenous concepts such as *dzunde* and *davha*, portray a community that has, on the whole, retained the memory of communal Ubuntu traditions in the area of economy despite the imposition over centuries of an anti-African world view orientation which was meant to entrench white supremacy and its imperative of White over Non-White (N/NW) in all areas of people activity (Azibo, 2018; Ani, 1994).

The other important thing raised by the participants in this study regarding understanding the Ubuntu based economy is that the economic activity was therapeutic and purifying in itself. Its purifying mechanism was multidimensional. It purified people physically, psychologically and socially. *Dzunde* and *davha* worked the following therapeutic outcome: the work involved sweating, which is helpful in physical fitness; it involved sharing of problems and solving them because someone would have experienced the problem you might be coming through as an individual, and it involved introducing each other, and knowing other people, which worked good for social relationship. *Davha* or *dzunde* usually ended with eating and drinking and dancing. This had a positive psychological effect as all negative tensions were released. The songs which were sang were direct stories to either the man or a woman, which helped them to be stress-free. As a result, cases like suicide were exceedingly rare because of Ubuntu. This was supported by the lecture, Lindelani Tshisikule, who said:

> *The Vhavenda and Vatsonga used davha and dzunde for many reasons, such as economic gain, physical, psychological, and social*

> *gain. It involved exercise, sharing, and knowing new members of the community.*

A person coming from *davhani* (the place where *davha* activity was conducted) and *dzundeni* (place where *dzunde* was conducted) would be stress-free because of activities which were taking place there. The entire process demonstrated the wisdom of black people encompassed in Ubuntu philosophy.

6.4.6 Ubuntu as a Political Pillar

Participants established that Ubuntu is a key pillar for leadership in the community settings. It was found to be the key fabric in leading the day to day running of the business of villages across the social divide. All participants agreed with Arthur Dhliwayo:

> *African traditional leadership was designed in a way that observed Ubuntu worldview. For those who are poor, there was a cultural way in which they would be taken care of either by the royalty or by relatives. The whole social system would be pervaded by Ubuntu.*

Nzimakwe reiterated to the above sentiment as he postulated that as an ideal, Ubuntu means the opposite of selfishness and self-centredness. In indigenous politics and local leadership, it promotes cooperation between individuals and among cultures and nations. Ubuntu thus empowers traditional leaders to govern and to be valued to reach their full potential. From an African perspective, an Ubuntu style of government means a humane style of government based on collective solidarity and communality rather than individualism and particularity (Khosa & Mulovhedzi, 2020). Furthermore, the principles of Ubuntu as leadership philosophy emphasise collectivism and relationships over material things, including ownership of opportunities, responsibilities and challenges. Michael Rammbwa, an indigenous knowledge holder, also made reference to Ubuntu in solving crimes committed in village settings:

> *"The parents of the offender will sit down with him and question him in order to confirm the guilt. The family would make him admit his guilt before taking him to the traditional leader. The family of the offender would apply the process called u farelwa lufhanga – asking for forgiveness. But if the offence is big they would take the matter to the traditional leader and apply the process called tshipfumelo – taking an animal as a sign of asking for forgiveness to the person who is offended"*

Thus, Ubuntu is a crucial frame to understand African culture. Kormoh (2020) contends that in fact, many scholars and researchers believe that successful institutions and organisations

must be built around the Ubuntu philosophy if managers and leaders are to obtain buy-in from those that they are trying to assist. Although the Ubuntu approach speaks of oneness, the principles are still yet to be realised given that the political system in South Africa should transform from heavy reliance on the west or Europe to formulation of policies and laws (Nicholson, 2020). Thus, policies should therefore reflect Ubuntu values to control the behavioural patterns of our people in the social fabric of the society in all tiers of government, local, provincial and national.

6.4.7 Ubuntu as a Cultural Fabric

The researcher visited elderly people in Vuwani and Malamulele and interviewed them regarding the manifestation of Ubuntu in their cultures. The majority of participants share a similar sentiment as Jackson Chauke:

> *"According to the culture of Vatsonga and also Vhavenda, because they are here with us is that they share the same cultural beliefs on how they regard a human being. They regard a human being as a spiritual being that do not have color and its source is God."*

Furthermore, the view of Ubuntu as cultural which binds ethnic groups together was uttered again:

> *"You know what, Bantu people share similar culture of Ubuntu. It is the spirit that lives in the conscience which constantly tell you that this one is my fellow brother or sister who I must love and take care of. They understood that we are from the same spiritual essence"*

Based on the above sentiment, it can be noted that from the beginning of time, the divine principles of Ubuntu have guided African societies; this supports the argument that Ubuntu is important in Africa and the world at large (Akinola & Uzodike, 2018). Thus, Ubuntu is the core of human value, and without it, mankind is enveloped by greed, selfishness, immorality and pride. The present study further reiterates that Ubuntu as a cultural pillar has made local folks to believe that all the resources which are available in the community belong to all people who live in the community.

Some of the cultural elements that are vital for the understanding of Ubuntu which were interestingly raised by Nkhumeleni Phaduli who resides at Vuwani area include education and child upbringing. She said:

> *Ninety percent (90%) of children and youth in general do not know about Ubuntu and their culture as Vhavenda culture. Most of the youth and children are lawless. They are the once who are vandalising, barricading the roads, and involved in serious violence in our communities*.

When analysing the above arguments, one can talk about the disaster that has befallen South African Youth related to lack of manners and lawlessness. This speaks to the existence of a lawless generation and poor parental guidance. An African family setup is the primary place where a child is taught Ubuntu. He/she learns how to respect elders, share food, care for others and love neighbours. Ms Nkhumeleni added:

> *Both families and schools are having the same problem of reduced parental and teachers' power to reprimand the children. Power has been given to children. If you beat a child, she would report you to the police. This is weakened both parents at home and teachers at school. An African parent had full control of the child and he/she would instill the principles of Ubuntu.*

Critically analysing what Nkhumeleni Phaduli said, one can look at the family as a primary focus of enculturation. Home was an informal school where children are taught or trained all things. When an African child misbehaves, the first question asked is where does he/she come from? Whose child is this? This implies that the indigenous family operated on collectivism and modern families operate in individualism. Africans always believed in the extended family rather than the European decent nuclear family system.

The weakened African family institutions lead to ungovernable schools and mob-violence like what happened in Malamulele and Vuwani during the period of conflict.

6.4.8 Ubuntu as a backbone of education

Ubuntu and education are inseparable in the context of African worldview and philosophy (Young, 1990). The researcher went to a great length to interview educators in Vuwani and Malamulele. The educators reflected on the significance of Ubuntu in teaching, curriculum and in practice. Moreover, the school environment should be kept in the values of Ubuntu. According to Msila (2008), outcomes are influenced by Ubuntu personality values that are embraced within the school. Where pupils have more Ubuntu qualities, there is greater desire to learn. Ubuntu manifests itself whereby a teacher or a leader listens to learners' stories. When Ubuntu manifests itself in our schools or education, the teacher encourages learners for critical thinking and self-reflectivity. The teacher and the education department usually

engage with relevant concepts for change in the education system. In this regard, the government should intervene and start considering Ubuntu in education, thereby strengthening the Constitution of the country.

The researcher conducted an interview with Ms Nkhumeleni Phaduli at her home in Vuwani. It was a well-arranged interview which was held in the afternoon at her own home. When I arrived there, she welcomed me happily together with her husband who is also a teacher. The fact that I am a Christian church leader (pastor) helped me to gain their trust and warm welcome to their family. Before we could commence with the interview, I was asked about the soft drink that I would prefer. In this question, I noted the act of Ubuntu. In response, I told them my preference and they immediately arranged it. I thanked them sincerely, but they forbade me from thanking them. I asked them why, and they said, 'according to our culture you don't have to thank us for giving you food'' they laughed. Again, I noted that they still observed their culture. I was so astonished by the sense of humour which they showed me. We started with the interview. As soon as I introduced myself and my research title, ''The Role of Ubuntu in Conflict Resolution: The Case of Malamulele and Vuwani'' Nkhumeleni started shaking her head, which meant to me that she had a lot to say. Nevertheless, she did not interfere or interrupt me, but concentrated on the issue. I indicated to her that I prepared semi-structured interviews of which the first question sought to understand people's knowledge about Ubuntu, particularly in relation to the current situation of conflicts. This is what she said:

> *I have too much to say, but I will summarise. Ubuntu is well understood mostly by elderly people, most of the youth do not understand ubuntu and how it can be applied. That is why they do not think twice when they want to do violence. What they are doing which is burning schools, looting shops, vandalising private and public properties is just an example of lack of understanding of ubuntu. And ubuntu is the only thing to do to get rid of conflicts and managing a good life.*

Her answer made me feel more curious, I wanted to find out from her as a professional teacher what could be done to resolve the conflicts. She said: 'ubuntu is the only thing to do in order to get rid of conflicts'. She then added:

> *Unfortunately, nowadays schools and some educators, are no longer in good standing as far as ubuntu is concerned. Most of learners are lawless, they cannot respect each other and teachers as well. But it is not too late for the government to implement ubuntu education in the curriculum because education is the only route to*

take to transform our youth. If education can be used effectively, this problem of Malamulele and Vuwani conflict could be handled differently. They would not burn schools; loot shops and damage properties even mock one another.

The above pieces of information which Ms Nkhumeleni Phaduli gave me proved that Ubuntu is a backbone of effective education. As Letseka (2011) alludes, Ubuntu in education is considered to be African cultural capital that provides indigenous knowledge which is important for understanding our African conception of inclusion which in turn promotes inclusivity, equality and social justice in our education system. A responsible child is a product of quality education which begins from home and continue to schools. Broodryk (2006:15) states that the education or school reflects the values and beliefs that the society considers worthy, so the school transmits those values and ethics as the school staff and learners are part of the society. Values are an integral part of the society and society understands itself and judges its worth through value systems by taking the education of individual into consideration.

6.5 The Significance of Ubuntu in Conflict Resolution

Participants established that Ubuntu fosters peace, harmony and solidarity in a societal setup. They argued that promoting solidarity could help resolve conflict in Malamulele and Vuwani.

6.5.1 Ubuntu fosters solidarity, respect, and dignity

The Ubuntu philosophy is key in conflict resolution given that its principles bring together people of different beliefs to promote peace. Jackson Chauke said:

"Ubuntu strengthened solidarity back then. Because in the process of migration, people intermarried and become relatives. Because they are relatives they were bound to live in peace"

Solani Machebele spoke of interdependence as another way that Ubuntu helps to resolve conflicts. She put it as follows:

"Vhavenda and Vatsonga have been depending on each other for certain activities such as agriculture, artistic, economy, etc. Venda is rich in agricultural products such as fruits and vegetables. Malamulele is flat, and the ground is strong which is conducive for business and residential infrastructures. There is much interdependence; a person is a person through another person."

According to previous studies, solidarity spirit is closely related to survival, and it is developed through the combined efforts of individuals in the service of their community (Rapatsa, 2014). Africans, from early childhood, are socialised to understand that difficult goals and tasks can only be accomplished collectively. Moreover, the bonds of solidarity, which to an African consist of interpersonal, biological and non-biological bonds, are created and maintained through spiritual values. Abraham and Prabha (2022) argued that the solidarity spirit permeates every aspect of an African's life and is collectively expressed through singing, initiation and collective worship, traditional dancing, hymns, storytelling, body painting, celebrations, hunting, rituals and family life.

Furthermore, Michael Rammbwa came with interesting information indicating that Ubuntu could help to resolve conflicts:

> *'..... negotiation played a vital role. Traditional leaders, the Malamulele Task Team, and Vuwani Task Team had to sit down and negotiate how Collins Chabane municipality would work with them. Negotiation has always worked among the indigenous people to prevent conflict"*

Elsie Mudau added to the above and shared valuable information about Ubuntu and its use to deal with conflicts in Malamulele and Vuwani. She said.

> *"If a person is greedy, he would attract enemies but if generous will attract friends, respect and people defend him from all criminal activities. This is why Vatsonga lived with Vhavenda in peace. A poor person trying to assist with his own hands is a wise way to forge peaceful relationships and end conflict"*

The above sentiments prove that in a conflict resolution, Ubuntu provides solution with its principle of compassion. Previous scholars define compassion as a human quality of understanding the dilemmas of others and wanting to help them. In the African milieu, however, compassion is the reaching out to others and practicing humanism so that relationships and friendships can be formed (Abraham & Prabha, 2022). From an African perspective, the underlying belief amongst Africans is that all human beings are interconnected and share a common and communal responsibility for each other. Moreover, respect and dignity are considered important values in most societies and cultures. In the African culture, Rapatsa (2014) observed that it is even considered as one of its building blocks. From childhood, Africans learn that behaviour towards those in authority, such as the king, the elders, and other members of the community, should always be respectful and these

members of society become dignified through respect. Thus, respect and dignity, together with survival, solidarity spirit and compassion, constitute the African value system of Ubuntu in conflict resolution. As Africans are empowered to progress within, work in, and even manage African institutions, this value system has to be taken into consideration when managing diverse teams in Africa.

These observations are corroborated by Komuhangi's (2006) views that in contemporary times, there has been a noticeable upward trend in the recognition of the role of indigenous approaches to resolve high-level, mid-level and low-level conflicts, all of which aim to promote harmonious coexistence in society. While the approaches to conflict resolution in African indigenous communities are not monolithic, underlying these approaches is the principle that peace is not only about the ending of hostilities or settling of conflict; it is more about restoring relationships.

6.5.2 Ubuntu Promotes Peace and Stability

It is an African quest for sustainable peace which needs to be built in reconciliation and coexistence based on human rights, and social, economic and political justice, all of which lie at the heart of Ubuntu. It was revealed that the overriding goal of Ubuntu was peace and stability to strengthen societies' capacity to promote positive peace for social solidarity. A participant concurred with Tinas Mabasa by arguing that the use of the same language has proved useful in solving conflict between the two ethnic groups. Joe Sibasa said:

> *"Here at Malamulele there is something that is working for the better in terms of conflict resolution. This is about the use of the language, the general language used here is Tsonga/Shangaan, but we can speak Tshivenda willingly to a Venda who does not know the Tsonga. When we trust others, we can speak their language. I learnt the secret of speaking the language of others as showing love and trust and I saw that working in conflict resolution"*

Drawing from the above views, it can be concluded that sharing the same language can assist two parties in negotiating and respecting each other's cultural values. Cultural attitudes and values, therefore, provide the foundation for the social norms by which people live. By internalising and sharing these cultural attitudes and values, and handing them down to future generations, societies can re-inform and re-construct themselves on the basis of a particular cultural image. Furthermore, Khosa and Mulovhedzi (2020) attested that South Africa is a model of unity through diversity and has sometimes been referred to as the ‘‘rainbow

nation''. Different groups and individual members of South African society will have drawn on aspects of their own individual or group cultures when dealing with the process of transition. Many drew upon their own family values and their religious background. It is believed that the relatively non-violent transition of the South African society from a totalitarian state to a multi-party democracy is not merely the result of the compromising negotiations of politicians. It is also perhaps primarily the result of the emergence of an ethos of solidarity and a commitment to peaceful co-existence amongst ordinary South Africans in spite of their differences. To add more on peace building from an African and Ubuntu philosophy, Jane Ramolobedzi said.

> *"The parents of the offender will sit down with him and introspect him in order to confirm the guilt. The family would make him admit his guilt before taking him to the traditional leader. The family of the offender would apply the process called u farelwa lufhanga – asking for forgiveness. But if the offence is big they would take the matter to the traditional leader and apply the process called tshipfumelo – taking an animal as a sign of asking for forgiveness to the person who is offended"*

Pansiri et al (2021) supported the above comment and attested that Ubuntu leads to conflict resolution and reconciliation mechanisms which also serve as institutions for maintaining law and order within society. These mechanisms predate colonialism and continue to exist and function today. Thus, Ubuntu societies place a high value on communal life, and maintaining positive relations within the society is a task in which all members of the community are involved. Hence, disputes between members of one society are perceived not merely as a matter of curiosity with regards to the affairs of one's neighbours, but in a very real sense an emerging conflict that belongs to the whole community. According to the notion of Ubuntu, each member of the community is linked to each of the disputants, be they victims or perpetrators (Kormoh, 2020). Ubuntu is thus both a given and a task or desideratum in African societies. It is undoubtedly part of Africa's cultural heritage. In summation, Ubuntu is regarded as an effective indigenous response to the violence that has characterised the African socio-political landscape. Ubuntu's utility in achieving peace is pertinent at a time of increased interest in the role that culture plays in determining human relations, especially in terms of peacekeeping. Ubuntu, which encapsulates humanness, fairness, justice and the African value system was "the backbone of much African societies" in the precolonial dispensation and the immediate post-apartheid period in South Africa. Bilali and Vollhardt (2019) posit that Ubuntu helped South Africa to transcend the bitterness, hatred and suspicion

of the past and to make the transition to a more stable society. The quest for peace and security led to the resurgence of Ubuntu, an African humanist ideology, as an indigenous approach to conflict resolution and peacebuilding, given that Africa's contemporary history is dominated by violent conflict, which has prompted many war-torn nations to embrace different conflict resolution and peace-building approaches.

6.5.3 Current state of Ubuntu and Future Prospects

An overly critical domain of investigation which provides some insight into the source of conflict, nature of the conflict, prospects for resolution in Vuwani and Malamulele is the current state of Ubuntu in the population. Two distinct positions emerged in this matter from the information provided by participants. Fifteen participants hold the view that Ubuntu has either been diluted or washed away. Vhusani Ramuthi's response is typical of this position:

> *Ubuntu has been washed away more specially amongst the youth here in Vuwani. You listen to all those negative stereotypes about the Tsonga speaking people … you will realise there no longer Ubuntu. What they do, for instance, burning schools, government buildings, stealing from shop, torching others, and all sorts of evil tell the story about how Ubuntu is gone.*

Vincent Xihundla, a *Tsonga* youth from Malamulele provided a response almost identical with the one above:

> *By merely observing what the protest looked like one can tell that there is no Ubuntu. Looking at the youths blocking roads, destroying innocent people's cars, burning mercilessly government buildings, looting shops, insulting Vhavenḓa is a sign that there is no longer Ubuntu.*

Only five participants, a minority, take the position that Ubuntu has not been thrown away. Lindelani Tshisikule insists that Ubuntu continues to animate the lives of some individuals and elderly people. She observes that Ubuntu remains a potent force in dealing with conflicts and bringing order in the community. Davhana Daniel observes that Ubuntu continues to exist, but it is its transmission which constitutes a major challenge. He blames the South African government/Constitution for giving rights to children which they are not capable of exercising responsibly. He observes that the rights which have been afforded to children seem to be preventing parents from exercising traditional modes of disciplining them such as "whipping". Children, in his view, takes advantage of this situation and engages in actions and activities such as the torching of buildings, which is not only criminal, but also immoral from an Ubuntu perspective.

With regard to the prospects of restoring Ubuntu, divisions similar to those cited above become evident. The majority of participants (fifteen) are confident of the prospects of success in the strengthening and restoring of Ubuntu in Vuwani and Malamulele. This group of participants cited the critical role of parents, educators, traditional leaders, Christian churches, education, indigenous institutions such as invitation schools and traditional dances such as *Muchongolo*, *Makhwaya* and *Xibelane* in the strengthening and restoration of Ubuntu. However, education (curriculum), the Christian churches, and traditional leaders tended to receive more preference than others as key agents of enculturation and socialisation for the restoration of Ubuntu.

Arthur Dhliwayo, for instance, observes that the current curriculum negates Ubuntu because it is based on "Eurocentric values" of "individualism." The upshot of this Eurocentric grounding is that:

> *... Immorality has increased even at our schools. Currently learners are bullying each other ... leading to some learners committing suicide ... an example is what happened at Mbilwi Secondary School. A learner was bullied by another learner so badly that she committed suicide.*

Chuma Titus focuses on the role of Christianity in the revitalisation of Ubuntu. He observes:

> *Ubuntu can be restored through the activities of Christianity ... Ubuntu is a Biblical doctrine according to me. Throughout the Bible, showing kindness, love, generosity, forgiveness, unity, and perseverance are key Biblical doctrines as revealed in Galatians 5:21-22.*

Jackson Chauke, a *Tsonga* traditional leader, insists that initiation schools and celebration of life through culturally meaningful dances like *Muchongolo*, *Makhwaya* and *Xibelane* among the *Vatsonga* would revive Ubuntu. The reinstitution of *Tshikona*, *Malende* and *Tshifasi* would have the same effect on the *Vhavenḓa*.

However, there was a tiny minority (5) among the research participants which views the restoration and revitalisation of Ubuntu as a task which is not possible to realise due to the entrenchment of anti-African Western civilisation in South Africa. Makhense Thomas, a forty-six-year-old *Tsonga* politician from Malamulele puts the blame on capitalism:

> *I think it is too late to try to restore Ubuntu because of capitalism. Ubuntu functions well in communalism where there is no competition for resources. In capitalism and individual can own sources of income and exploit labour for profit. I do not think that ca be reversed.*

Nkhumeleni Phaḓuli, a thirty-five-year-old Tshivenda speaking female teacher from Vuwani holds the same position expressed by the *Tsonga* politician:

> *Ubuntu cannot be restored where money is king. The world has become more materialistic in such a way that everything demands money. People complete for resources in order to get money and this is where moral values are compromised.*

A critical discussion of the current state of Ubuntu and the prospect for its restoration and revitalisation based on information provided by research participants portrays a picture of African people who are aware of the negative impact of Ubuntu that colonial European civilisation has wreaked. In fact, the literature discussed in Chapter Two points to the dislocation of Africans from their history and culture and their placement at the margins of European history and civilisation (Musithi, 2006). Indeed, the deliberate and systematic imposition of institutional structured rooted in colonial-imperialist imperatives, which in the South African case took the form of the broederbond designed Apartheid system, could not but lead to the cultural dislocation of African people who lost power to design their own future guided by their own sense of what it means to be a *muntu/motho* (person). It has been observed in that chapter that Ubuntu weakens and even disappears if it is not nurtured (Ramose, 1999; Mkhize, 2004). Indeed, when the cultural-institutional organs of a people such as initiation schools and religion which encode their personhood are demonised and "Satanized", this results in a condition of psycho-cultural disorientation (Azibo, 2018). When this happens, people begin to orienteer in life and negotiate life with an alien cognitive structure. It is not surprising to note that the majority of participants (15) take the position that Ubuntu has been "washed away". This, surely, is based on their lived experience in a neo-colonial South Africa or what some scholars have branded post-apartheid apartheid (Eliastam, 2015).

However, there is a lingering feeling that Ubuntu is not dead; that it continues to motivate the behaviour of some elders who condemn the youth who carry out protests accompanied by the blocking of road-traffic, the torching of government buildings, the looting of shops, etc. Such behaviour is, however, restricted mainly to the youth who have "lost Ubuntu" in the general view of the participants.

It is interesting to observe that most participants are confident that Ubuntu can be revitalised and restored if proper African-centred initiatives such as curricular designs which infuse Ubuntu values, initiation schools, songs and dances, which celebrate African cultural realities

are strengthened. Indeed, the positive affirmation of African cultural realities would relocate African people to a pathway of active agency which grounds an Ubuntu sense of "Being and Becoming" (Ramose, 1999) and galvanize the entire African continent towards the African Renaissance (Makgoba, 1992).

A problematic view that emerged in the information provided by some participants is the insistence that Christianity can be used to revitalise Ubuntu. Chuma Titus as noted above claims that "Ubuntu is a Biblical doctrine." He also claims that "showing of kindness, love, generosity, forgiveness, unity … are all key Biblical doctrines." He makes reference to Galatians 5:21-22 in support of this claim. Daniel Davhana's position is slightly different. He observes that although Ubuntu is not a Bible principle, "it is more aligned with the Biblical principles of love and kindness." The historical experience of African South Africans/Black South Africans relates to Christianity, and the Bible does not support the claim by Titus Chuma about Ubuntu being in a Biblical doctrine. It must be remembered that the Western/Caucasian missionaries and their churches supported the racist colonisation and subsequent destruction of the cultural pillars of Ubuntu such as reverence of the ancestors and African spirituality based religions, and The-Me-We nexus of African self-hood not because they were not true/genuine Christians but because they were, in fact Christians rooted in Christian theology as it had been developed and interpreted since the time of Roman Emperor Constantine (Ani, 1994; Mazama, 2002; Dove, 2003). Halala (2012), for instance, observed that the Dutch Reformed Church provided theological justification for the apartheid system which dehumanised African people in South Africa. He concluded that both the Catholic and Protestant faiths as practiced in South Africa were active and self-conscious agents of Caucasian supremacist racist domination of African people. He suggests that the notion of Christian colonialism accurately comes to grips with the African experience of Christianity in South Africa.

The Afrocentric/Africentric scholar, Azibo (1994:354) observes that "all modern-day Christendom that derives from Roman Emperor Constantine through Justinian and the German Martin Luther is Eurocentric concept based." This type of Christianity is insidiously anti-African because its fundamental formation and foundation is based on distortions in both African cosmology, axiology, and African religious historicity. This anti-Africanism encapsulated in modern-day Christendom and is the phenomenon that fires and energises it, explains the support that Catholics and Protestants provided to Caucasian conquerors of

African people. The claims made by some participants that "Ubuntu is a Biblical doctrine" and that Galatians 5:21-22 expresses values aligned to Ubuntu and further that the fundamentally untransformed churches in South Africa can help restore and revitalise Ubuntu shows the extent to which some colonised African minds can easily be bamboozled by Caucasian Christian propaganda. There has never been Ubuntu in Westernised/Caucasianised Christianity as practiced in dominant Christian churches. An African-centred search for pathways to restore Ubuntu inevitably leads us to indigenous non-Christian religions grounded in the Ubuntu paradigm and theory derived from the ontology, cosmology, epistemology, logic, axiology and teleology which constitute the deep structure of African culture or the irrefragable African worldview. As long as the African clergy lead their flocks in a theology oriented in alien concepts, Ubuntu is not likely to appear on the African horizon. Given the discussion above, Ubuntu does not need Christianity but it is Christianity that needs an injection of Ubuntu in order to resonate with the spiritness and spirituality of the African people in South Africa.

The view expressed by a minority of the participants that Ubuntu cannot be restored because of the current dominance of capitalism and a Westernised/Caucasionised materialistic ethos is a demonstration of a faulty adjustment of some colonised Africans to oppression. Capitalism as currently structured not as a product of Gods divine command, but the creation of a people who define themselves as White for the purpose of maintaining domination and supremacy over those they define as non-White who constitute the global majority (Welsing, 1991). The fact that today some Africans are passionate and ruthless capitalists who exploit and dehumanise fellow Africans is a product of the alienating processes of colonial White domination; identifying with the White oppressor who has come to be viewed as representing the acme of human phylesis (Fanon, 1963, Azibo, 2015). However, both Fanon and Azibo have charged African freedom fighters with the responsibility to set afoot, or bring about the rebirth of new African man and woman. According to Azibo (2018), this rebirth can be realised only if the African personality or psychological Africanity is revived.

He defines African personality or psychological Africanity as a self-conscious orientation to sustain, maintain, develop and defend African life and culture with a resolute stance to eliminate any force or process which threatens African people. According to this researcher, the restoration of African personality in Southern Africa is inconceivable without the revitalisation of Ubuntu as defined in African philosophical anthropology (Ramose, 1999;

Mkhize. 200; Nobles, Baloyi, Sodi, 2016). For Ubuntu to be fully restored, it will require the government to implement it firmly in the Constitution of the country. Ubuntu is well known to be condemning acts of violence, unscrupulous deeds of people, all sorts of conflicts and all hatred. It promotes peace, reconciliation and unity. On proper restoration of the country, a traditional leader, Jackson Chauke uttered profound words. He said:

> *In the same way that the government promoted gender equality, Ubuntu should be promoted. Although gender cases are still there, but they are reduced. If Ubuntu can be placed properly in the Constitution, and be talked about always on radio stations, Television, and other social medias, we can restore the old good days.*

In the statement made by Mr Jackson Chauke, the hope is there for the proper implementation of Ubuntu. South Africa should go back from where it started. It is never too late to start over again. What is required is to do it according to the words of participant traditional leaders, to popularise Ubuntu, starting with the Constitution and down to its institutionalisation in the public domain. By so doing, xenophobia, ethnic conflicts and racial segregation will be seen differently. A television slogan like '*simunye* we are one' was popularised under the notion of Ubuntu as South Africa sought to build one cohesive nation (Louw, 2001). This is where the country has missed the mark. The youth find themselves not knowing the values of Ubuntu, and Ubuntu itself is not known by most young people. It is only the elderly people who know the depth of Ubuntu. If the African philosophy is important indeed, the government must do something about it. All the presidents of the country give respect to Ubuntu, so it must be revitalised. At the Annual Ubuntu Awards 2020, President Cyril Ramaphosa said, 'as members of progressive humanity – driven by the spirit of Ubuntu – let us continue with our noble effort. Let us spread peace and friendship, let us strengthen the bonds of commerce and trade. Let us give the world a more human face' (South African Government, 2020). Since the inauguration of Nelson Mandela as president, all other presidents of South Africa, namely, Thabo Mbeki, Jacob Zuma and Cyril Ramaphosa point to Ubuntu as the solution to social, economic and political instability. The presidents have particularly referred to Ubuntu as key to ending conflicts that came with the encroachment of colonialism and apartheid.

An insight brought by a traditional leader; Jackson Chauke was about the unpacking of the main purpose of *ngoma* in Tsonga/Mula in Tshivenda, which means circumcision school for boys. He revealed the following: initially, circumcision schools were recognised as a rite of passage from childhood to manhood, so it is no longer like that because even children under the age of twelve go to circumcision schools. In terms of boys passing this stage to manhood,

it has changed but not everything has changed. *Ku laya* meaning to be guided in Tshivenda language, *u layiwa* meaning to be guided, is still relevant even today. That shrine is the place of males only and is a good place where those candidates can be guided through the ways of life, including the values of Ubuntu. Jackson Chauke spoke of circumcision school as the place of great discipline, order, consultation with the seniors, sharing and respect for elders. He spoke of its relevance in today's life yet having challenges of modernity where boys are circumcised in the hospital. He referred to the hospital or private clinics as a place where the focus is on the physical benefit where all the other benefits are neglected such as teaching, guiding and learning to respect. He summarised it as follows:

> *Circumcision is still valuable today because of its holistic focus on training boys not only to become men, but to be responsible individuals in the community. That is why today there are many cases such as women abuse. Men have filled prisons because they lack discipline which we can offer freely if they allow us to do so*

Tina Mabasa added another crucial information, saying:

> *In our area of Malamulele, most of the circumcisions are done by Vhavenda. They promote social cohesion and integration. Any form of antagonism or wrongdoing is sharply punishable. We share food, learn languages and moreover, we visit each other after the circumcision os over. This is where cross marriages take place in substantial numbers. But the challenge is that boys are no longer preferring to go to traditional circumcision schools because of modern illnesses, disturbance of educational programmes, Christian doctrines, and expenses.*

There are a lot of good things that can be learnt, more especially on the subject of Ubuntu and the circumcision schools. Ubuntu values are taught and leaned as any cultural values. Modern boys are no longer getting the values they need as they grow up. The experiences of elders are no longer transferred to younger boys, which causes them to face life with no wisdom that they could get from the elders. The values of Ubuntu such as respect, love, partnership, sharing and integration are taught and observed in circumcision schools. However, traditions are no longer in control of this process. There are no spaces left for boys to attend circumcision schools because of school programmes. Normally, circumcisions in the schools were made public during winter when the schools closed. Boys chose to go to circumcision schools during winter when the schools are closed, but because of winter schools, they choose education than traditional circumcision schools.

The same rites for girls are also available in both Vuwani and Malamulele. Vhavenda have *Musevhetho, vhusha, and domba* and Vatsonga*, vukhomba.* All these schools were basically

teaching them how one conduct herself or know how to respect her husband. Ubuntu was the main theme of all the initiation rites. I can see at least three reasons to expect success for Ubuntu. One reason I take from the analogy with the initiation rites of girls in contemporary urban Zambia, a social context that (despite its poverty and defective infrastructure) is in many respects comparable to, and continuous with, South Africa and Zimbabwe. These initiation rites are cast in a time-honoured rural idiom revolving on female identity, as underpinned by a detailed knowledge and appreciation of the female body, and a celebration and sacralisation of productive and reproductive capacities, often in forms and with emphasis way out of line with current urban life. One would have expected such rites to decline and disappear, but, on the contrary, they are becoming more and more popular, especially among the middle classes: the construction of female identity with powerful, extremely ancient (probably Late Palaeolithic) symbols is apparently of lasting, major concern, even, or especially, in the face of globalisation (Binsbergen, 2001). The South African government should rethink of the socialisation role which initiation schools play as they help people restore and maintain Ubuntu.

6.5.4 Ubuntu Generates Forgiveness and Reconciliation

One of the significance of Ubuntu is forgiveness and reconciliation. Both participants from the communities of Malamulele and Vuwani repeatedly spoke of Ubuntu's most important qualities which are forgiveness and reconciliation. They related Ubuntu as a deep-seated philosophy where people would rely on in managing people's affairs. All the management of conflicts among community members were facilitated by traditional leaders and their cabinets which was formed by the kinsman in the community. The bottom line in those meetings of people who wronged each other in the community was forgiveness and reconciliation grounded on Ubuntu. Vuma Vukile put this issue as follows:

> *Any heavy offence would be taken to traditional courts where the process of forgiveness and reconciliation would be facilitated. For example, the man who violated someone's wife, may be fined a cow or goats before the court. The cow or goats would be given to the husband. The two men would then be persuaded to forgive and reconcile with one another and live with each other again in peace and harmony.*

This was confirmed by Arthur Dhliwayo, who said:

> *"Ubuntu used to be a framework to govern African communities. It was essential for African leadership. Traditional leaders governed people*

> *through observance of the philosophy of Ubuntu. Ubuntu was manifested in reconciliation among people who wronged each other".*

This conciliation and forgiveness was made possible by the society, which was bound by the principles of Ubuntu. Where Ubuntu was systematically adhered to, it was easy to every member of the society to adhere to its principles. This means that from the top structure of traditional leadership down to members of the society, people honoured the ideals of Ubuntu. Tinas Mabasa said the following about forgiveness and conciliation:

> *"Reconciliation and forgiveness are what the South African blacks did in 1994 when they chose to forgive the brutal acts of white oppression. However, the government did not do much to sustain Ubuntu in order to benefit future generations".*

In South Africa, a devastating racial war between blacks and whites could have taken place during the transition to democracy were it not for the application of the non-violent approach of Ubuntu in the negotiation process championed by the former President Nelson Mandela. Had the miracle of the negotiated settlement not occurred, South Africa would have been overwhelmed by the bloodbath that virtually everyone predicted as the inevitable ending for South Africa (Truth and Reconciliation Commission Report, 1998). For Mandela, the spirit of forgiveness encompassed in the Truth and Reconciliation Commission (TRC) was based on Ubuntu. The TRC was basically a tool to create national unity between South African citizens. Former President of USA Barack Obama mentioned Ubuntu in his tribute to the then President Nelson Mandela's commitment to humanism: "Mandela understood the ties that bind the human spirit. There is a word in South Africa ''Ubuntu'' that describes his greatest gift: his recognition that we are all bound together in ways that can be invisible to the eye; that there is a oneness to humanity; that we achieve ourselves by sharing ourselves with others, and caring for those around us" (The Conversation, 2013).

Apart from the commendable actions of Ubuntu which South Africa did to prevent the possibility of war, which the politician, Tinas Mabasa spoke of, as follows as he responded to the question of the significance of Ubuntu:

> *"Ubuntu is not automatic, it can die and even forgotten if not cherished. The present-day South Africa is an example of a nation that has lost its best virtues of reconciliation and forgiveness which are re-known about throughout the world."*

What happened in Malamulele and Vuwani is an example of communities that have forgotten their worldview of Ubuntu. It was a demonstration of a rebellious society which denied its values. It has indeed shown that a lot needs to be done in order to keep alive the ideals of Ubuntu. There are plenty of advocates for the role of *Ubuntu* in conflict mediation, community reconciliation and peacekeeping. While some of this is concerned with its role in helping mediate immediate problems, much is about its longer-term role in resolving conflicts. Significantly, President Mandela's assessment was that a person could only transform a society or community by encouraging reconciliation, and promoting understanding, even love, between all the different constituents. He highlighted the connectedness and interdependence of all the different people in a community whether they are good or bad, alienated or oppressed. Most memorably he wrote that "the oppressor must be liberated just as surely as the oppressed…. When I walked out of prison, that was my mission to liberate the oppressed and the oppressor both…. For to be free is not merely to cast off one's chains, but to live in a way that respects and enhances the freedom of others" (Mandela 199: 544).

Along the notion of Ubuntu generating forgiveness and reconciliation, a learned participant, Mabasa Tinas said:

> *Ubuntu values are not exclusively African; they can also be seen as universal humanistic values*.

According to Bekker (2006) and Engelbrecht (2002), Ubuntu is also known in other societies other than Africa. To some societies, Ubuntu is known as brotherhood. For Van der Colff (2003), these values are general leadership values that should be practiced by excellent leaders. Therefore, the social values of *Ubuntu* can be incorporated into the corporate world to create not only a value-centred and inclusive culture, but also to develop a network of values that are appropriate for the diverse workforce in South Africa. Van Binsbergen (2001) opines that Ubuntu can work precisely because it resonates with the current efforts of government to bring peace after years of destructive conflict.

6.5.5 Ubuntu Produces Law-Abiding Citizens

All the participants agreed on the attitude of a man who has Ubuntu, which is that he/she binds her/himself. In the case of law-abiding citizens, the law of the country, law of the

family, and marriage laws are among laws that a person with Ubuntu observes. Malamulele and Vuwani mainly comprise individuals who have no sensitivity to the laws either of the county or of their families. Respect for someone's property requires some self-respect and fear of human rights. Elsie Mudau was recorded as saying the following:

> *"Violent protests are done by those people who do not obey the laws. The first thing one should have been the fear of God who watches everything and judges righteously. The reason people run away when they see the police van coming is because they do not obey the laws. If you have Ubuntu, you cannot run away from police. When you are guilty, you run away even when there is nobody chasing you".*

When Ubuntu was strong, citizens were law-abiding. Now that Ubuntu has weakened, respect for the rule of law has diminished (Tutu, 2005). However, the potency of Ubuntu is exemplified by South Africa's transition to democracy. The ANC negotiators appealed to Ubuntu, which suffused the entire negotiation process.

6.6 Conclusion

The discussion above was basically the reflection of participants on their knowledge of Ubuntu. As this was a case study of Malamulele and Vuwani, the voices of the people of Vuwani as represented by the purposively chosen samples were captured. Most people of Malamulele and Vuwani indeed showed how much they know and understand Ubuntu. They showed that they could not live without Ubuntu as a guiding philosophy in their lives, but the same Ubuntu showed that it is fading as compared to how it was prioritised in the previous generations, and there is an urgent need for the restoration. The people of Malamulele and Vuwani linked Ubuntu with many important behaviours which an individual can become if observed, such as becoming law abiding citizens, becoming a forgiving and easy to reconcile nation, peaceful, respectful and people who value dignity of others. Although participants concurred that some of the Ubuntu qualities are still there in some members of Malamulele and Vuwani communities, the vast majority of people, particularly the youth, lack values of Ubuntu. That was observable by the number of schools which were burned, looted shops and food for feeding schemes, burnt houses, damaged roads, government vehicles and public properties. All these were seen as evidence of lack of Ubuntu. However, there were some signs that Ubuntu can thrive again if certain steps could be employed mainly from grassroots level of enculturation at the family level, schools, traditional gatherings, communities and churches. For example, traditional dances and economic activities such as *xitokofela/tshitokofela, davha* have some elements of Ubuntu and can be used to promote it.

Ubuntu remains pivotal for conflict resolution as it has elements that promote solidarity and reconciliation, including elements such as reconciliation and negotiations, which are done in the royalty with traditional leaders by individuals who wronged each other. The Vatsonga and Vhavenda who were at the centre of the Malamulele and Vuwani conflict continue to believe in the efficacy of Ubuntu in conflict resolution. It would appear that the painful experience of the conflict has stimulated reflection among the Vatsonga and Vhavenda in the area about what needs to be done to rescue, restore and revitalise Ubuntu as a potent and viable foundation for conflict resolution in future. In the following chapter, a tentative conflict resolution model based on insights from this exploratory study is outlined.

CHAPTER SEVEN
A TENTATIVE UBUNTU CONFLICT RESOLUTION MODEL (UCRM)

7.1 Introduction

This project had a number of goals, one of which was to design a model for conflict resolution using Ubuntu that could be used to deal with conflict, such as the one that broke out in Malamulele and Vuwani. It is imperative that the purpose of this study and the issue that it tries to address be brought to light. Investigating the part that Ubuntu plays in conflict resolution in Malamulele and Vuwani was the purpose of this project. Ubuntu had only a limited presence in the social fabric of the community at the time. This initiative set out to address that issue. Only after a comprehensive conversation with participants could the model be defined and designed. The outlined Ubuntu conflict resolution mechanism can be utilised in any location where conflicts of this kind, which mostly involve two different ethnic groups, have taken place. The objective of this model is to find African-centred concepts and broad techniques that might be implemented when dealing with disputes that arise between two or more groups in a specific space of governance.

The Ubuntu Conflict Reconciliation Model (UCRM) is a solution that has been developed in response to the urgent requirement for conflict resolution in Malamulele and Vuwani. The findings of the investigation are consistent with the predictions of this model. The concept emphasises the significance of instilling the values of Ubuntu in individuals from an early age all the way through adulthood in order to cultivate the sociable, loving, respectful, kind, sharing and cooperative personality traits that are essential for coexisting with other people. This model is constructed to reflect three stages of resolution: the first stage focuses on the identification and determination of African-centred principles, deriving specifically from Ubuntu, that will constitute the frame of reference for the entire process of conflict resolution; the second stage is to determine the immediate and short-term strategies of Ubuntu conflict resolution; and the third stage focuses on long-term strategies for a Ubuntu conflict resolution.

7.2 Resolution stages for UCRM

7.2.1 Stage One: African-Centred Principles of Conflict Resolution

The subjects of this inquiry, the Vatsonga and Vhavenda, hold Ubuntu to be an essential component of their worldview. It is imperative that this fact be brought to the attention of the reader. A people's worldview is the lens through which they interpret their environment, as well as their place in the cosmos and in the course of their own lives. Life is seen as fundamentally consisting of a spirit force or a spiritualistic energy in the African-centred deep philosophy of Ubuntu. The conclusion that human beings are, at their core, spirits is reached when one considers the concept of spiritualistic energy or "spiritness." People of the spirit is the literal translation of the word "Bantu," the concept from which the word "Ubuntu" is derived. People of Southern Africa, such as the Vatsonga and the Vhavenda, perceive and characterise themselves as spirit entities for this reason. The people who live in Southern Africa share a profound awareness of the unity that underlies their own existence. Nobles (1986) has referred to this notion as the principle of consubstantiation or the oneness model. The Bantu, such as the Vatsonga and the Vhavenda, are guided by a set of secondary principles that are derived from the fundamental principle that governs how they regard themselves and how they organise themselves in community settings. Secondary principles such as caring for one another, trusting one another, sharing with one another, giving to one another, sharing one's possessions with one another, respecting one another, sharing one's possessions with one another, being kind to one another, cherishing the spirit of togetherness and friendliness, respecting harmonious relationships and social justice, forgiving one another, and reconciling with one another all derive from the primary principle of the oneness of being. Therefore, the fundamental concept concerning the 'spiritness' of the human being or the notion of life as spiritualistic energy, in addition to the derivative principles just mentioned, constitutes the referential framework that guides the entirety of the process of resolving conflicts using Ubuntu.

7.2.2 State Two: Determination of Immediate and Short-Term Strategies of Ubuntu Conflict Resolution

Stage two involves practical strategies aligned to the principles of Ubuntu required to resolve conflict.

- The first strategy is to identify the most influential members of the community as well as those who are leading the conflict. People are the driving force behind the genesis of conflicts, which are not random occurrences. In fact, they are deliberated about and prepared for in advance by influential members of the society who have a well-defined

objective in mind. Members of the community respect leaders who share values to theirs. These sorts of leaders play a crucial role in the decision-making process about matters relevant to the community. These leaders would be the opinion makers or prominent people in the community, such as traditional leaders, councilors, religious leaders (pastors), youth leaders and women structures that are conversant with the Ubuntu values. During the meeting, each group will have deliberations and select members to join a task team. These representatives will then join the team.

The study has noted that Ubuntu emphasises the richness of people's cultural heritage, which goes a long way in providing application principles, especially in terms of how members of a society relate to one another. African societies are challenged to move away from their existing perceptions and misunderstandings of racial diversity and cultures based on their previous experiences during colonialism. If Ubuntu is successfully applied, it could provide a basis for interpreting the experiences of diversity.

- Convening a meeting of key members and leaders of both sides of the conflict in order to determine the issues that are at play and the ways in which these issues are connected to the principles and ideals upheld by Ubuntu. The purpose of the meeting would be to talk about the issues at hand and to look for restorative justice approaches that have an African focus, in keeping with the principles of Ubuntu. The disjointed links would be repaired by, for instance, going through a community-wide process of reconciliation and forgiving one another. In order to accomplish this, the communities that have already started fighting will need to take joint responsibility.
- In order to ensure that community members are able to resolve problems on their own, the government ought to assign specialists who are well-grounded in the principles of Ubuntu and conflict resolution.
- The decision ought to be communicated to the populace by means of traditional authorities, religious leaders, women's structures versed in Ubuntu, youth structures with an interest in African cultural tradition, and the media. The information ought to be available at all radio stations, as well as on the internet and in other forms of mass media.
- Only when the spiritual interconnection that had been severed as a result of the conflict and which is essential to the existence of the community has been repaired can it be said that the conflict has been resolved.

7.2.3 Stage Three: Long-Term Strategies of Ubuntu Conflict Resolution

7.2.3.1 African-centred curricula which enhance Ubuntu values

This study recommends African education as a vital initiative for conflict resolution. In this study, education will be applied in three approaches, namely, informal, formal and community education.

(a) Teaching Ubuntu Conflict Resolution Through Informal Education

- The government should write into the law the collective communal rights of parents and elderly persons, giving them the right to practice their African traditional methods of bringing up children in an Ubuntu worldview within the context of both the family and the community. This would allow them the privilege of doing so in the home. At the moment, the government has given the community individual rights that originate in the West or Europe. This strategy is not working for Africans because children raised without parental cultural direction have become increasingly wild.

(i) Incorporating Ubuntu's Approach to Dispute Resolution into the Formal Education System

- The educational curriculum should transform and resonate with African principles of Ubuntu, which should be made mandatory for all learners and students. This should be done so that the values can be passed on.

(ii) Instilling the Values of Ubuntu and Promoting Peace via Community Education

- Community education refers to the education and learning that takes place among people, typically outside of the realm of official education, with the intention of fostering increased learning, empowering individuals, and making a positive contribution to society. Communal solidarity and cooperative habits are fostered through community education. Participants are treated as equal partners in the process of determining what needs to be addressed, planning, and executing programmes to address those needs, and continuously changing these programmes.
- To inculcate Ubuntu in the community, government should provide training to community stakeholders about Ubuntu conflict resolution procedures.

- To educate people about the role of Ubuntu in all aspects of community and governmental life, government officials and other influential members of the community should run large-scale awareness campaigns occasionally.

(iii) The Part that Traditional Authorities Play in the Ubuntu Educational Approach of Resolving Conflicts

- To disseminate knowledge regarding the Ubuntu way of life with emphasis on South Africa, the government ought to make use of the offices held by traditional leaders, thereby taking advantage of traditional gatherings that involve monarchy as well as other traditional mass gatherings that do not involve royalty. It is the responsibility of traditional leaders to spread awareness of the Ubuntu value system. They have the advantage of being able to access individuals at any given time, thus anyone with a similar vision should refrain from marginalising them. They are the misappropriate beneficial individuals for launching the initiative regarding spreading Ubuntu more so than any stakeholder would be.

(iv) The Role of Religious Leaders in Ubuntu Conflict Resolution

- Since the participants in this study identified pastors as active role players who can bring peace to communities, it is necessary to encourage the involvement of pastors in the process. This is because pastors were suggested by the participants in this study. They might spread the message of Ubuntu at memorial services, weddings, or even in their places of worship. They may exhort their followers to be compassionate, to respect relationships, to avoid all forms of violence, and to always keep the peace with everyone. Religious authorities are among the stakeholders who wield a significant amount of influence over the public. When it comes to the promotion of Ubuntu, they are some of the people whose contributions should never be minimised.

(v) The Part that the Government Plays in the Resolution of Conflicts within the Ubuntu Community

The government should pass legislation that gives teachers and parents the authority to teach children discipline in a manner that is centred on the culture of Africa and to raise their children in that manner. Ubuntu can be fully promoted possible by the government. Ubuntu

cannot exist in a society if its governing institutions do not uphold the values that ought to be upheld in order to encourage its practice.

(vi) The Role that Various Forms of Media Play in the Ubuntu Model for Conflict Resolution

- In the contemporary era, the most crucial factor in the transmission of culture are the many forms of media. It is possible to do the same amount of good by spreading positive behaviour through the media as this is done to spread negative behaviour through the media. Ubuntu culture can be spread further and wider with the help of the mass media.

7.2.3.2 Culture Adaptation

It is important to remind communities of the significance of preserving an Ubuntu culture. This culture ought to be spread around by means of traditional get-togethers as well as traditional songs and dances. At these events, traditional leaders should provide messages that emphasise the values of Ubuntu, integration and unity.

7.2.3.3 African Communalism

It is important for communities to be informed about the communal economic system. They will be able to eliminate the competitiveness that comes along with capitalism. They will learn how to share resources through the practice of communalism. It will instruct communities on how to band together to combat corruption, which is the primary obstacle to effective service delivery.

7.2.3.4 Cooperative Economics

It is important to remind communities that cooperative economics are traditional African methods of aiding one another. Because of the significant roles that these activities play in combating poverty, fostering integration and unity, and putting an end to conflicts, communities should be incentivised to maintain the many cooperative economic activities in which they are already engaged. This implies revitalising *xiseveseve* (Tsonga) or *tshisevhesevhe* (Venda); *dzunde/davha* (Venda) or *tsima* (Tsonga); and *tshitokofela* (Venda) or *xitokofela* (Tsonga) because of the socioeconomic benefits they provide and the direct effect they have in bringing an end to disputes.

7.2.3.5 Bantu History

It is important that the younger generation be taught the history that includes the spiritual beginnings of the Bantu people of South Africa so that they are aware that they come from the same heavenly source as their ancestors. When people have a firm grasp of the idea of what it means to be Bantu, they will also have a firm grasp of what it means to practice Ubuntu. This will make it much more difficult for conflicts to arise in a setting where everyone regards one another as brothers and sisters. The xenophobic attacks which are threatening the diversity and the constitutions of our country would come to an end immediately when they realise that as Africans, we share the same ancestry.

7.2.3.6 Extended family system

- Ubuntu is the basis of the extended family system. In this arrangement, the family is symbolised by everyone in the household remaining in the same location, including the parents, children, grandparents and other relatives. The Bantu were known for their practice of the extended family. Because each member of the family was given the same level of care, it was not easy to determine who the biological father or mother of a particular child was in the household. The framework of the extended family helps youngsters develop the ability to think broadly within society. Through participation in this system, a child has the ability to respect a wide diversity of people and to regard them equally as family members. The system of the extended family ends up becoming the key to gaining respect for the entirety of society outside the family. A child like this is extremely unlikely to cause harm to another member of the community. They are going to start showing respect for their elders, those in charge, and the law.

7.2.3.7 Political Transformation

Based on the findings of the literature study, African states have a propensity to rely on Western or European countries in the design of laws and policies. This tendency is reflected in the data from the review. There is need for political revolution in the form of the design of laws and policies that represent the values of Ubuntu. It is essential, in order to put a stop to conflict, that Ubuntu values be incorporated into the process of formulating policies and regulations at all levels of government, locally, provincially and nationally. The UCRM ought to be put into practice so that there can be a transformation in the political system of South Africa.

7.3 Conclusion

The Ubuntu Conflict Resolution Model was supposed to be designed, and that was the goal of this chapter (UCRM). The findings of the study as well as the literature that was pertinent to the study served as the basis for the model. The model was developed in such a way that if disputes of a similar nature were to occur in the future, the people who read this research would have a new perspective on those conflicts and would be able to provide more educated counsel. This concept is applicable in other settings provided the conditions are sufficiently similar. It recommends the response and role of stakeholders in various stages of the conflict. If the recommendations were to be considered, disagreements could be resolved in a different manner, which would result in a lesser negative impact not only on the economy but also on society, politics, psychology, the body and the environment. The recommended model was divided into two stages, namely, stage one: African-centred principles of conflict resolution; and stage two: determination of immediate and short-term strategies of Ubuntu conflict resolution. In stage one, the researcher made more emphasis on Ubuntu as Vatsonga and Vhavenda worldview. They both share the same worldview as indicated in the problem statement of this study. It is this worldview that can unite these two groups and forge social cohesion among them. Through this worldview, it is traced that both Vatsonga and Vhavenda, just like other South African groups, are from the same spiritual origin of the Bantu speaking people. Stage two involves practical strategies aligned to the principles of Ubuntu required to resolve conflict. These strategies include identifying the most influential members of the community as well as those who are leading the conflict. People are the driving force behind the genesis of conflicts because conflicts are not random occurrences. These would be traditional leaders, councillors, religious leaders (pastors), youth leaders and women structures that are conversant with the ubuntu values. Lastly, stage three: long-term strategies of Ubuntu conflict resolution. This is the stage where African-centred education is recommended. Yet, education is well recommended at both family, and formal education, levels. It should be informed by the values of Ubuntu for it to be transformative. In this stage, both the community is prioritised to educate as African philosophy is centred in collectivism such as making use of extended family patterns and political transformation.

CHAPTER EIGHT
SUMMARY OF THE FINDINGS, CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

8.1 Introduction

It is necessary to review the aim and objectives, before providing a brief synopsis of, the study.

8.2 Purpose of the study

8.2.1 Aim

This study aimed to explore the role of Ubuntu in conflict resolution in the Malamulele and Vuwani conflict in Vhembe District of Limpopo Province, South Africa.

8.2.2 Study objectives

- To examine the views and understanding of Ubuntu of the people of Malamulele and Vuwani.
- To investigate their knowledge of causes and course of the conflict in Malamulele and Vuwani conflict.
- To describe their understanding of the significance of Ubuntu conflict resolution.
- To construct a tentative Ubuntu conflict resolution model (UCRM).

8.3 A brief synopsis of the most Important Results

In this sub-section, I will attempt to explain the relationship between the goals and the empirical findings of the study by using examples. It is necessary to acknowledge, both in a realistic manner and in order to address the research problem that was investigated, that the data that was gathered was important. However, it is also necessary to acknowledge, in order to address the aim and objectives of the study, that the data that was gathered was limited to addressing those aims and objectives. What follows is a discussion of the ways in which the aims of the study were accomplished, beginning with the following:

8.3.1 Causes of Conflict

The researcher felt that it was vital to explore the reasons of the conflict in Malamulele and Vuwani while he was investigating the function of Ubuntu in the resolution of conflicts as

part of his study. According to the findings of the study, there are a number of reasons why the Malamulele and Vuwani conflicts happened. Issues pertaining to ethnicity, what was thought to be an appropriate distribution of resources, the legacy of apartheid, poor communication between authorities, poverty, a need for attention, and inadequate leadership abilities were identified as contributing causes.

8.3.1.1 Ethnicity and Individualism

In this case study, both Vatsonga and Vhavenda were recognised as being people that struggled with their ethnic identities. The Vhavenda came to see themselves as a group that was being oppressed by another because the Vatsonga utilised the Vhavenda's identity from the very beginning of the disputes. This drove the Vatsonga to view themselves as oppressors. This indicates that all these organisations are dealing with the same issue, which is a problem related to their group identities. According to the study, these communities had previously coexisted with one another in harmony, free from hostility, and were committed to the practice of Ubuntu before the advent of the white regime. The white regime introduced colonialism and apartheid, both of which contributed to the inculcation of a sense of ethnic identity in the people who lived in this region. Politicians, who should have been working to promote unity as their responsibility, instead found themselves fanning the embers of violence by making use of ethnic identification, which contributed to the perpetuation of this spirit. They did this for their own ulterior motives, which had a lot to do with money and business.

8.3.1.2 The Impression that Resources are being Distributed Inappropriately

It was found in this case study that the perceived economic imbalance in terms of the allocation of monies to the two separate tribes was the root cause of the conflict that occurred in the region under investigation. According to Cheru (2002), "if lasting peace is the goal, conflict resolution in Africa must move beyond military response and focus on addressing the core causes of conflict." This is an optimization of a statement that was originally made by Cheru. On the most fundamental level, the lack of justice is frequently the primary reason there is no peace in the world. The denial of fundamental rights, extreme economic inequality, and other manifestations of justice are all forms of 'structural' violence, which plants the seeds of physical violence and, in many cases, deadly conflict. Other manifestations of justice include racial discrimination, sexual harassment and stalking. In

Malamulele, it was in fact the case that resources were divided in an unjust manner, which resulted in their neighborhoods being undeveloped. The perspective of the Malamulele people was that this issue was connected to tribalism.

8.3.1.3 The Legacy of Colonialism, Apartheid, and Homeland System

The current research has shown that South Africa's colonial past, in particular apartheid, is one of the primary factors contributing to the social tensions that exist in the modern world. The problem that was produced by colonialism and apartheid is thought to be at the centre of these disputes. The homelands, commonly referred to as Bantustans, were established by the apartheid administration. They were constructed specifically for Black South Africans, who were required to live in those areas rather than in the metropolis of South Africa. The primary objective of the homelands was to establish geographically distinct communities of Black people, each of which would be governed by a separate state and under the control of the government. Another reason was that the apartheid administration created separate development, which meant that there were different development programmes for whites and blacks. This was a major factor in the inequality that resulted from this system. The homelands of black people have historically been regarded as being on a lower social and political level than white ones. When travelling to a different city or homeland inside South Africa, a person of African descent was regarded as a foreigner. Emotionally and psychologically, they did not let go of their attachment to their traditional homelands of Venda and Gazankulu. This was made abundantly obvious by the continued use of patriotic slogans such as *"Shumela Venda"* and sentiments such as "we can rather fall under Greater Giyani Municipality than at Thulamela municipality," both of which looked to reflect Vhavenda-speaking people.

Therefore, despite the fact that South Africa is a free country, it is not free in many ways, and one of those ways is this: Lelo (2020) noted that the strategy of separate development, which tried to allocate every black African to a homeland according to their ethnic identity, is a fundamental cause of social disputes. This policy attempted to assign every black African to a homeland according to their ethnic identity. In conclusion, to the points made above on the legacy of apartheid and its role in the genesis of conflicts, earlier research has demonstrated that the colonial government implemented stricter rules with the intention of dividing Blacks and Whites. The provisions of the Native Land Act of 1913 were enlarged by the provisions of the Group Areas Act (no 41) of 1950. According to the statute, the Act granted the

government the ability to remove Africans from regions that were not allocated for their ethnic group through the use of coercion (Kormoh, 2020; Lelo, 2020). Equally important, the Bantu Authorities Act of 1951 established African homelands, and this Act had abolished the National Representative Council Act of 1936, which had been formed by General Hertzog with the intention of dealing with issues and problems that Africans encountered in the Union of South Africa. Both of these Acts were passed in 1951. These Acts sowed discord among Africans, and as a consequence, they began to vie with one another for the limited resources available. This, in turn, fuelled tribalism, a phenomenon that harkens back to the heydays of the cruel and barbaric apartheid system (Khosa & Mulovhedzi, 2020).

8.3.1.4 Selfish Agenda of Individuals and Poverty

According to the findings of this study, the Malamulele and Vuwani conflict was caused by individuals' desire to pursue self-serving personal agendas, which may lead some people to hide behind the violent protests in order to promote their own goals. These people put on the appearance of supporting protests so that they might provoke violence for their own personal advantage. It is believed that these individuals organise violent activities during protests in order to pursue the gains that they can make from the current circumstances. Bilali and Vollhardt (2019) further attested that poverty and unemployment may play a significant role in violent protests. With regard to South Africa, it is characterised by inequality that results in poor people organising themselves to fight against the violence that they see being perpetrated by the state because there is unequal access to opportunities, where certain groups are marginalised and dis-empowered. Additionally, Bilali and Vollhardt (2019) attested that South Africa is characterised by inequality that results in poor people organising themselves to fight.

According to the findings of this study, politicians were also guilty of concealing their own self-serving goals for the own advantage. They had a significant impact on naive individuals, as a result of which, in the end, it was they who benefited the most from lucrative government contracts and powerful positions within the local municipality.

8.3.1.5 Ineffective Communication between the Various Authorities

According to this case study research, the violent demonstrations were also blamed on the government for taking too long to respond to the complaints of the people. It was discovered that the failure of the administration was a contributing factor in the disputes that occurred

between the two ethnic groups. Both the Xitsonga and Tshivenda-speaking people pointed the finger at the administration for the lack of communication that they had received. The negotiations were initiated by the Vatsonga in 2006 and continued until they culminated in a violent protest in 2016, during which time the Vhavenda in Vuwani criticised the government for failing to communicate with them when they redraw the line (Rasila, 2017). Kormoh (2020) reiterated the findings of the current study when he pointed out that when citizens realise that the government not paying attention to the concerns raised, they became angry about the unresponsiveness of the government to their grievances, and showed their disapproval or dissatisfaction through violent protests. This finding was supported by the fact that Kormoh (2020) pointed out that when citizens see the government not paying attention to the concerns raised, they become angry about the unresponsiveness of the government to their grievance.

8.3.1.6 Need for Attention by Community Members

As a result of the fact that the conflicts are typically caused by community members who are seeking the attention of the government, it will result in violence being taken as the only means to attract the response of the government. The participants indicated that violence is the only way that the government can be forced to respond. The present established that the conflicts are usually caused by community members who are seeking the attention of the government. The majority of the participants agreed with the statements made in the following quotations: "occasionally government officials sleep at work; if they do not perceive conflicts of this sort sometimes, they will keep us waiting for eternity." Therefore, I believe that the need for attention from members of the community was a crucial factor in the confrontation between the Vatsonga and the Vhavenda. Members of the community require someone to lend an ear.

As a result, the violent demonstrations were employed as a tool or mechanism that forces the silent government to listen to the concerns of the people. When the government continued to disregard the people, the community members in Malamulele turned to a different method, which was to completely shut down all of the services in the entire town. The most recent plan called on them to resort to violent action in order to force the government to address their concerns. Protesting has been ingrained in the culture of South Africans at every level of society with the hope of attracting the attention of the government.

8.3.1.7 Antagonism/Ethnocentrism

Hostility or ethnocentrism is one of the harmful phrases that either the people of Vuwani or Malamulele are guilty of using, despite the fact that there is a lack of systemic proof for their use. They are words that black people use against another black person out of hatred for that person. When it comes to discussing another person, the absence of Ubuntu can be demonstrated by hostility. In the life of Ubuntu, each and every person is of the same significance as the others. Both the Vhavenda and the Vatsonga have, at one time or another, been on the receiving end of remarks or behaviours from a member of another group that was hostile or ethnocentric. In Malamulele and Vuwani, there was a lot of derogatory stereotyping, which was one of the elements that contributed to the confrontation there. The proclamation that "we cannot be dominated by the Tsonga" and *"muvhexa a nga kahle"* are examples of such statements. These assertions are not supported by evidence, despite the fact that they have implicate other people.

8.3.1.8 The Repercussions of Societal Strife and Conflict

Some of the consequences of societal conflict include the destruction of property and infrastructure, the fragmentation of society, inadequate service delivery and slow economic growth.

8.3.1.9 Social Disintegration

When an argument develops into a violent demonstration, it leads to unfavourable effects, one of which is the disintegration of the social connections of the people who are impacted. The battles were responsible for the destruction of human capital, which was made clear by the effects they had on education and health results. The frequently far-reaching and long-lasting societal effects that conflicts have can assist to explain the lingering influence that wars have on progress. Societal disintegration is one such outcome. It is believed, from a psychological point of view, that children who are exposed to violence during their upbringing, whether the exposure is through witnessing violence or being victims, are more likely to adopt these strategies as an acceptable means of problem solving and, as a result, engage in violent tactics as adults to solve problems. This exposure can come in the form of either being a victim of violence or witnessing violence (Nicholson, 2019). According to Karl Marks' conflict theory, conflict situations create the opportunity for two parties involved in a conflict to reconcile their disagreements. Conflicts cause people to become estranged from one another and damage previously healthy relationships. When he says this, Karl Marks is in agreement with a British anthropologist named Max Gluckman (1975), who is of the opinion

that in order for social cohesiveness or solidarity to take place, it is necessary to engage in conflict on purpose. Every social structure is a field of tension, full of ambivalence and conflicting forms of collaboration and strife. He suggested that rituals are really the expression of complex social tensions rather than the affirmation of social unity; they exaggerate social tensions that exist in the organisation of social relations and then affirm unity despite these structural conflicts. He did this to emphasise how difficult it is to achieve social unity. He focused particularly on what he referred to as "rituals of rebellion," which are rites in which the normal rules of authority are temporarily overturned (for example, Zulu women brazenly parading around in men's clothes at a festival, doing things that are typically forbidden to them in a culture that is traditionally patriarchal). Gluckman proposed that these types of rites are acts of ritualised rebellion that channel the structural conflicts that are brought on by the social oppression of women by men. They have the cathartic effect of releasing social tensions, so minimising discontent and diffusing the real threat contained in such unhappiness. As a result, they have the cathartic effect of releasing social tensions.

Ubuntu's status as a dependent or independent variable is called into doubt as a result of this. Ubuntu functions as a dependent variable in this scenario. It is dependent on the principles that have been instilled in us that will guarantee us a life free of the violence that leads to the breakdown of society. This indicates that the organisers of the Malamulele protests would have pursued a different path of non-violent protest if they had Ubuntu values, yet they still would have achieved the same results as they did by wasting their time and energy. Ubuntu can be understood as a philosophy or worldview that promotes social cohesion, views everyone as a brother, and does not advocate for the infliction of harm on anyone.

8.3.1.10 Poor service delivery and economic challenges

The conflicts in Vuwani and Malamulele resulted in the disturbance and poor service delivery since most of the key infrastructure such as roads were barricaded and linking routes destroyed. It therefore becomes more difficult for economic activities. Health services were also affected the most.

Health is one of the basic needs which protesters are not supposed to temper with. Perhaps that is the reason why clinics and hospitals were not burnt. However, hospitals and clinics are not operating in a vacuum, they are affected by the barricaded roads more badly. In the case of Vuwani and Malamulele, cases of deaths linked to the impact of the protests were

reported. That was due to the slow movement of ambulances or referrals and supply of medicines.

8.3.2 Knowledge about Ubuntu

8.3.2.1 Understanding the Cultural Pillar of Ubuntu

In this case study, the researcher investigated Ubuntu's role as a cultural pillar. According to the findings of this study, the cultural component of Ubuntu has the ability to influence, for the better, the way in which people go about their daily lives. It has an effect on how we understand human beings, which is that they are spiritual creatures with no colour. When a guy has this comprehension, he will appreciate another as if they were a holy soul. It is interesting to note that this narrative, in addition to drawing attention to the historically developed common wisdom of all Bantu groups in South Africa as this relates to the concept of humaneness and Ubuntu, introduces the complex dimension of gender and "greeting" in coming to grips with conduct and behaviour which is appropriate in the context of defining Bantu axiology and cosmology. This is interesting to note because it directs attention to the historically developed common wisdom of all Bantu groups in South Africa.

Based on the guiding assumption of the Ubuntu paradigm and theory, a critical discussion of the findings on participants' understanding of the nature of Ubuntu and humaneness suggests that, on the whole, the older participants had a relatively clear grasp of the foundation of the Muntu/Bantu (person/persons) and the correlative cultural dictate spirituality. The younger participants, on the other hand, had a less clear understanding of these concepts. They made a clear distinction between the spiritness of Muntu (person) and the spiritual, which underpins the relational part of Ubuntu as in the wisdom: "I am because we are, since we are thus, I am!" The "I-Me-We" nexus of self-hood or extended-self is explained by Azibo (2018) as well as Karenga's (2003) sociality of self-hood. Spirituality as a relational phenomenon anchors the self "I-Me" in the community. It is important to clarify, however, that the notion of Ubuntu as it was developed in South Africa does not deny the existence of individuality (Ramose, 1999).

It is crucial to notice that the IKS expert creates confusion and misunderstanding by contrasting the discussion of Ubuntu with the discussion of Batho-Pele ideals, which stem from and have their roots in South Africa's real democratic constitution of 1996. Even while he does not explicitly state that the ideas of Batho-Pele are derived from Ubuntu, the simple

juxtaposition of the two terms suggests that there are similarities between them, despite the fact that such parallels do not exist historically or culturally. The meaning and usefulness of the Batho-Pele principles, which are at the core of the equity policy implemented by the South African government, are derived from the individualistic rational anthropology of Caucasians and Europeans. Ubuntu, which is founded on the communalistic assumptions of African Anthropos, cannot be epistemologically convergent with Caucasian rational anthropology without distorting them. This is because Ubuntu is built on the communalistic assumptions of African Anthropos. The individualistic, materialistic and de-spiritualised worldview shares nothing in common with the social and spiritual ethos that emerges from Ubuntu's surrounding environments.

Participant observation was one of the most useful methods that I employed over the course of my anthropological research (Dewalt, 2011). I went to an inauguration of a chief traditional leader in the Malamulele area, and it was quite interesting. The inauguration took place during the weekdays. The Vatsonga people showed respect for their chief traditional leader by performing dances, dressing in traditional attire, and singing and reciting poetry about him. One of the significant things that I noticed is that in all of the speeches that his relatives and officials from the government gave, they insisted that he must love all his people, respect them, share with them, welcome them to his palace, not show favouritism, not accept bribes, and listen to all them. And I overheard an elderly woman saying, *"tatani wa wena a va ri na rhirhandzu na vumunhu, na wena u endla tano, u rhandza vanhu,"* which translates to "your father had love and Ubuntu, you too should do the same, you must love people."

To a certain extent, it is expected of traditional leaders to forgive their adversaries who opposed and persecute them both before they assumed traditional leadership roles and while they held those roles. It should come as no surprise that traditional authorities strive to further the Ubuntu principles of harmony, social cohesion, solidarity and peace among the populace. According to Khunou (2009), the institution of traditional leadership can be viewed as the earliest form of society organisation. It encapsulates the upholding of culture, traditions, practices and ideals for future generations. Khunou went on to note that in the precolonial era, traditional leaders and traditional authorities were significant institutions that gave effect to traditional life, and played an essential role in the day-to-day administration of their areas

and the lives of traditional people. Khunou made this observation in furtherance of his earlier point.

Participants considered a culture of child rearing practice as the core of main of the socialisation and enculturation process. The children's home served as a kind of informal school where they learned or were schooled in everything. When a youngster from Africa acts inappropriately, the first thing that people want to know is where the child comes from. Whose child is this, anyway? Unlike in more recent times, when people would have wondered, who is that child? This indicates that traditional indigenous families practiced collectivism, but modern families practice individuality in their daily lives. Instead of the nuclear family arrangement that is common in European decent, Africans have long valued their extended families. The weakening family institutions have an impact on schools that are ungovernable as well as mob violence, which is comparable to what was happening in Malamulele and Vuwani.

8.3.2.2 Ubuntu as a Social or Humanity Pillar

Ubuntu was described as a social fabric and a demonstration of humanity that sought to bring African families and community members together. The response was similar from all the participants who were all from either Vhavenda or Vatsonga side. Humanism was the key to effective communication and the formation of relationships. No one was forced to speak someone's language. That attitude encourages business and builds relationships.

8.3.2.3 Ubuntu as a religious pillar

The study defined Ubuntu as a religious pillar among Africans and it was revealed that Ubuntu inspires us to expose ourselves to others, and to encounter the difference of their humanness to inform and enrich our own. It was made clear by participants that all major religions such as Judaism, Christianity, Islamic, Hinduism, Budaism and African Traditional Religion are grounded upon the values of Ubuntu. Davhana Daniel attested that,

> *Ubuntu's main principle is love and is central to all world religions. People committing the works of violence are disobeying the laws of God who expects everyone to love one another because he is love.*

A critical understanding to the issue of Pastor Davhana's statement is that all violent activities stem from disobedience to the law of Ubuntu. Should Ubuntu be adopted by all

governments in the world, there would be peaceful integration, which is a result Ubuntu principles in individuals.

8.3.2.4 Ubuntu as an Economic

The study found that the Ubuntu philosophy is well recognised as an economic pillar. The study managed to prove that economic activities of Ubuntu that are practiced in the Venda culture were also known in or practiced in Tsonga culture. For example, the practice of *davha* which means a gathering of community members to work in the field and the payment is in-kind.

"Tshitunye is another economic means which was practiced by Vhavenda. *Tshitunye* means taking a portion of what you have harvested or hunted and give to the neighbours. For example, if someone went to catch *mopani* worms, when he comes back, he would ensure that he or she takes some and give them away to his or her neighbours"

Some activities which can be noted from literature are *ukusisa* in which a family in a rural village would "lend" a cow and a bull to a newly married couple recently arriving in a village and wait until an offspring was produced before taking back the original cow and bull (Woermann & Engelbrecht, 2006). The offspring would stay with the newcomers, leaving them both with their own "seed capital" and their dignity. This mutually beneficial transaction is based on kindness, but also with the idea of reciprocity, sharing wealth in the interests of building the community. It is key to note that the *xitokofela* in Xitsonga language or *tshitokofela* in Tshivenda language were meant to sustain the economic wellbeing of the people involved in them.

8.3.2.5 Understanding an Ubuntu Based Economy

A worldview in which the production, distribution and consumption of products and services were subjugated to the necessities of communal welfare and health can be inferred from the activities and behaviours that we have seen here. In these kinds of behaviours and actions, neither private interest nor individual benefit played a role in any way. In fact, these acts and practices were an expression of the wisdom that states, "I am because we are, and because we are, therefore I am." The production of goods and services went beyond the level of the need for material and biological survival to include the production of and the maintenance of the community's communal and spiritual integrity. This was accomplished by transcending the

level of necessity for material and biological survival. It was not the welfare and health of the community that drove and spurred economic activity; rather, it was the survival of the individual who was the fittest. The economic system is intertwined with biological, social and psychological fitness, but it is the economic system that is at the centre of this web. The task itself required a certain level of physical fitness and required interaction with other people. It was time to introduce other people of the society who were unknown, and the work entailed a mechanism that reduced tension because there would be someone else who had encountered the problem that you might be facing, and the problem could be remedied via sharing.

8.3.2.6 Ubuntu as a Political Pillar

Ubuntu is the most principal factor in determining leadership in communal settings. As a political pillar, Ubuntu places emphasis on collectivism and interpersonal connections rather than on material possessions. This includes taking personal responsibility for opportunities, duties and difficulties. In the current research, Ubuntu was found to be effective in fostering law and reconciliation in the process of dealing with conflicts such as crimes committed in rural areas.

Despite the fact that the Ubuntu method promotes a sense of unity, its guiding principles have not yet been put into practice since South Africa's political system needs to move away from its reliance on the West or Europe in order to formulate its policies and regulations (Nicholson, 2020). Therefore, policies should reflect the ideals of Ubuntu in order to control the behavioral patterns of our people within the social fabric of our society. This should be the case at all levels of government, including municipal, provincial and national level.

8.3.2.7 Ubuntu as a backbone of education

Ubuntu and education are inseparable in the context of African worldview and philosophy (Young, 1990). The researcher went to great lengths as to interview educators in Vuwani and Malamulele. The educators reflected on the significance of Ubuntu in teaching, curriculum and in practice. Moreover, the school environment should be kept in the values of Ubuntu. According to Msila (2008), school outcomes are influenced by Ubuntu personality values that are embraced within the school. Where pupils have more Ubuntu qualities, there is greater desire to learn. Ubuntu manifests itself whereby a teacher or a leader listens to the learners' stories. When Ubuntu manifests itself in our schools or education, the teacher encourages learners for critical thinking and self-reflectivity; the teacher and the education department

usually engage with relevant concepts for change of the education system. The violent behaviour of the youth, speaks of the weaknesses of education they receive either from home or schools. In this regard, the government should intervene and start considering Ubuntu in education and strengthen the Constitution of the country. Broodryk (2006:15) states that the education or school reflects the values and beliefs that the society considers worthy, so the school transmits those values and ethics as the school staff and learners are part of the society. Values are an integral part of the society, and society understands itself and judges its worth through value systems by taking education of individuals into consideration.

8.3.3 The Significance of Ubuntu in Conflict Resolution

The present study established that Ubuntu foster peace, harmony and solidarity in conflict resolution in a societal setup. Participants revealed that promoting solidarity could help resolve conflict in Malamulele and Vuwani.

8.3.3.1. Ubuntu Fosters Solidarity, Respect and Dignity

The researcher expressed their opinion that the Ubuntu philosophy is essential in the process of conflict resolution due to the fact that its ideals bring together individuals with varying opinions in order to advance ones. This fundamental concept and quality are essential to the resolution of conflicts and the promotion of free movement or migration. Ubuntu can also help to resolve conflicts by encouraging interdependence, which is one of the many ways it can do so. For instance, by facilitating the growth of businesses in Malamulele and Vuwani, such as the sale of agricultural products, artistic, economic and social development will be promoted. The land in Venda is quite fertile, therefore the region produces a lot of agricultural goods like fruits and vegetables. Malamulele, on the other hand, has a level surface and solid ground, making it an ideal location for industrialisation, commercial and residential infrastructure. There is a significant amount of interdependence; one becomes a person through interaction with other people.

From an African point of view, the fundamental idea that underpins African culture is that all human beings are interconnected and share a common and community responsibility for each other's well-being. This view is held by Africans. In addition, both respect and dignity are considered to be essential values in the majority of cultures and nations.

8.3.3.2. Ubuntu Promotes Peace and Stability

It is an African quest for sustainable peace which needs to be built on reconciliation and coexistence based on human rights, and social, economic and political justice, all of which lie at the heart of Ubuntu. In the present study, it was revealed that the overriding goal of Ubuntu was to promote peace and stability which, is to strengthen societies' capacity to promote positive peace for social solidarity.

8.3.3.3. Current State of Ubuntu and Future Prospects

An overly critical domain of investigation which provides some insight into the source of conflict, nature of the conflict, prospects for resolution in Vuwani and Malamulele is the current state of Ubuntu in the population. Two distinct positions emerged in this matter from information provided by participants. Fifteen participants hold the view that Ubuntu has either been diluted or washed away. Their evidence was the burning of schools and the destruction of public and private infrastructure and properties as summarised by Vincent Xihundla. Only five participants, a minority, take the position that Ubuntu has not been washed away. Lindelani Tshisikule insists that Ubuntu continues to animate the lives of some individuals and elderly people. She observes that Ubuntu remains a potent force in dealing with conflicts and bringing order in the community. Davhana Daniel observes that Ubuntu continues to exist, but it is the problem of its transmission which constitutes a major challenge. He blames the South African government/Constitution for giving rights to children which they are not capable of exercising responsibly. He observes that the rights which have been afforded to children seem to be preventing parents from exercising the traditional modes of disciplining them through means such as "whipping" or beating them with sticks. Children, in his view, take advantage of this situation and engage in actions and activities such as torching buildings, which are not only criminal but also immoral from an Ubuntu perspective.

Jackson Chauke, a *Tsonga* traditional leader, insists that initiation schools and the celebration of life through culturally meaningful dances like *Muchongolo*, *Makhwaya* and *Xibelane* among the *Vatsonga* would revive Ubuntu. The re-institution of *Tshikona*, *Malende* and *Tshifasi* would have the same effect on the Vhavenda. Although some participants such as Nkhumeleni Phaduli one of the participants, observed that as long as capitalism and materialist ethos continue to exist there is no hope for the restoration of Ubuntu. However, he observes that this exploitative and oppressive system has not completely destroyed Ubuntu.

It is interesting to observe that most participants are confident that Ubuntu can be revitalised and restored if proper African-centred initiatives such as curricular designs which infuse Ubuntu values, initiation schools, and songs and dances, which celebrate African cultural realities, are strengthened. Indeed, the positive affirmation of African cultural realities would relocate African people to a pathway of active agency which grounds an Ubuntu sense of "Being and Becoming" (Ramose, 1999) and galvanise the entire African continent towards the African Renaissance (Makgoba, 1992).

8.3.3.4. Ubuntu Generates Forgiveness and Reconciliation

Both participants from the communities of Malamulele and Vuwani repeatedly spoke of Ubuntu's most important qualities which are forgiveness and reconciliation. They related Ubuntu as a grip-seated philosophy where people would rely on in managing people's affairs. All the management of conflicts within community members were facilitated by traditional leaders and his/her cabinet, which was formed by kinsmen in the community. The bottom line on those meetings of people who wronged each other in the community were forgiveness and reconciliation grounded on Ubuntu. Vuma Vukile was recorded as saying something to do with the process of forgiveness and reconciliation facilitated by the traditional leader. He indicated the cultural activities which were practiced as a way of showing remorse over the wrongs which an individual has committed. The process involved taking a lamb, cow or goat to the traditional leader, which is then given to the complainant, and the matter between them would be over indeed.

A critical analysis of the kind of conciliation and forgiveness is made possible by the society which binds itself with the principles of Ubuntu. Where Ubuntu is systematically adhered to, it is easy to see every member of the society to adhere to its principles. This means that from the top structure of traditional leadership down to members of the society, people will honour the ideals of Ubuntu. In South Africa, a devastating racial war between blacks and whites could have taken place during the transition to democracy if it were not for the application of a non-violent approach of *Ubuntu* indigenous culture in during the negotiation process championed by the former President Nelson Mandela. Apart from the commendable actions of Ubuntu which South Africans did to prevent the possibility of war which the politician Tinas Mabasa spoke about as he responded to the question of the significance of Ubuntu, he mentioned the failure of the government to sustain Ubuntu. What happened in Malamulele and Vuwani represents the communities which have forgotten its worldview of Ubuntu.

8.4 Concluding Remarks

8.4.1 The Need for Integrating Ubuntu Theory into other Conflict Resolution Theories

This study was successful in producing findings that point to the necessity of combining Ubuntu theory with other theories that deal with conflict resolution, particularly those that focus on Africa. These kinds of ideas put a lot of stress on the mechanisms that are accountable for putting an end to conflicts and bringing harmony to communities. Even though Ubuntu was selected as the primary theory to direct the entire investigation, the researcher came to the conclusion that combining Ubuntu with other theories might produce more fruitful results in the investigation. Structure-functionalism, conflict theory and conflict transformation theory are examples of these theories. These theories are not capable of unseating Ubuntu as the best theory for resolving conflicts; nonetheless, they could be utilised as supplementary theories in this area. The Ubuntu theory, which is said to have originated in Africa, places a strong focus on the necessity of communities to coexist peacefully with one another. There is a need for the theory to describe the specific roles that community structures play in order for society to function properly. One example of this would be the role that structural functionalism provides to parents and community leaders, which includes traditional leaders, pastors and politicians. The flaw of Ubuntu is that when community institutions fail to sustain it, the subjects of the community, which are the regular members of the community, engage in conflict that breaches the ideals of Ubuntu. This is the community's greatest vulnerability. This indicates that members of the community find it difficult to observe Ubuntu in light of the fact that politicians, pastors, traditional leaders and parents have violated it. When senior members of a society and community leaders in a given society do not adhere to Ubuntu values, there is a need for the Ubuntu theory to describe what the general public ought to do. When all social structures obey the laws and values of the community, the Ubuntu theory is said to operate effectively in this sense. This aspect, including conflict transformation theory, is something that needs to be seriously considered. Instead, by relying on external factors, this theory is sensitive to responding to internal cultural methods of dealing with the disputes. This contrasts with other theories, which tend to focus on outside influences. In this sense, the public will be able to come together in order to challenge senior members of the community who disobey the law or act in a way that is contrary to the community's cultural norms. As a result of this, structural functionalism is

introduced as a conflict resolution theory to be merged with the Ubuntu philosophy. Because it takes ordinary members of a society, who are continuously affected by the oppressive laws, to temporarily engage in protest for the good of the society, this is the theory that promotes deviance as a contributory factor in conflict transformation. This is because it takes ordinary members of a society to transform conflict. As a result of this, the people who make up the society are now capable of seeing themselves in terms of the class separation that the Conflict Theory prescribes. In this sense, Ubuntu tends to avoid conflicts involving violence and disobedience to legal authority. Because no one will be in a position to oppress anyone else, as the Ubuntu theory encourages, the community as a whole will end up experiencing peace and harmony as a result of the combination of these beliefs. When members in a society work together towards common goals, social cohesion is more likely to emerge as a by-product.

8.4.2 Government's Commitment to the Promotion of Ubuntu to end Conflicts

It is pivotal for the government to take action towards applying Ubuntu in its policies and law of the country rather than mere talk about it. For the essence of Ubuntu is love, forgiveness, reconciliation, neighbourhood, positive relationship, interdependence, solidarity and social cohesion. If the government can indeed commit to that, conflict will be a history in our country. The government of South Africa was once in the right track in terms of promoting Ubuntu. That was during the reign of former president Nelson Mandela. The focus of the government was on rebuilding the broken relationship caused by apartheid between black and white people. The various music artists prioritised songs of freedom, togetherness and reconciliation. In the modern state of the country, where the gap of relationships is even wider, more especially between black and black, the government is not doing enough to close the gap. The study identified the decline of Ubuntu due to forces of economic system called capitalism, which leads to competition over materialism. It is clear from the observation of ethnic or inter-communal conflicts that Ubuntu has declined. Nevertheless, the study also gave evidence of the existence of Ubuntu to a certain degree. The role of Ubuntu remains prominent in the maintenance of peaceful relations and the interdependence of all people who live in South African. The whole society will have to be reinvented with the values of Ubuntu. In so doing, people's behaviours will change at home, in schools and in communities. People will know their roles in the community and start to value human life.

All the democratic presidents of South Africa, Nelson Mandela, Jacob Zuma, Thabo Mbeki, and Cyril Ramaphosa have shown respect and hope in Ubuntu that it can make South Africa a

better place both socially, economically and politically (Mbeki, 2002 & 2007). The government should begin now to put into practice the values of Ubuntu.

8.4.3 The General Contribution of the Research in the Field

The study brings a new contribution of the development of Ubuntu Theory by suggesting the merging of other theories of conflict resolution such as Functionalism/ Structural Functionalism, Conflict Theory and Conflict Transformation Theory. The other major contribution was the realisation that we are the Bantu from the same original descent who are bound by the spirit of Ubuntu. Therefore, we need to re-imagine ourselves as one people. The other contribution is about South Africa's needs to adopt reconciliation which is African-centred. One other contribution is the history of conflicts between Vhavenda and Vatsonga, which this study provided. The study revealed that the government has a role to play in paying heed in making sure that Ubuntu is given the attention which it deserves in the Constitution.

8.5 Recommendations

- The researcher recommends that descriptive and explanatory studies of the Malamulele and Vuwani conflicts must be conducted as this study was exploratory in design. As clearly and repeatedly stated in the first and subsequent chapters, the social science tradition of explanatory studies seek to conduct accurate preliminary data collection (Pellerin, 2012; Babbie, 2010) for the purpose of teasing out broad conceptual contours and definitional systems embedded in the problem formulated and defined. Exploratory investigations are conducted in an area or on problematic events and situations whose virginity has not been broken by any social science researcher. The researcher is not aware of anyone who has conducted an African-centred investigation on the Malamulele-Vuwani and like conflicts deploying a clearly articulated theory / theoretical frameworks organised under the Ubuntu paradigm. Now that the broad contours of the conflict have been conducted, moving forward, what is required is descriptive and explanatory research.
- There is an urgent need based on thorough and systematic scientific research on the part of Southern African scholars, rooted in interdisciplinarity to construct theoretical constructs to study and explicate specific and limited problematic issues such as political conflicts, intra-governmental conflicts, man-woman conflicts etc. based on the specifications and prescriptions of the Ubuntu paradigm, metatheory or model. What has been established so

far is a broad Southern African culturally based model expressed in the proverb umuntu ngumuntu ngabantu (a person is a person through other persons). Philosopher Ramose (1999), psychologist Mkhize (2004) and religionist Tutu (2004) have interrogated the dynamics of the aphorism based on the cognitive thrusts of their disciplines. What is urgently needed going forward is to clearly spell out what the Ubuntu metatheory specifies and prescribes in terms of what the character and content of theories should explain as well as the analytical methodologies required for proper scientific investigations (Asante, 1987). Based on these prescriptions, Southern African scholars can begin to construct theories. Given the imperatives of our freedom and literacy for an African people who have been de-Africanised and de-humanised by white supremacist impressive domination, we need a functional paradigm and accompanying theories. We need paradigms and theories that free us and give us our victorious consciousness back (Mazama, 2001, 2003).

- The other recommendation is posed in the form of critical interrelated questions directed specifically at scholars of Southern African descent where people based on this exploratory study are appealing for the return of Ubuntu. Can we engage in Ubuntu scholarship? Can we be free and literate in an African-centred sense? The final question is: what does freedom and literacy imply in a country where white supremacists are circling their wagons again, reminiscent of the 19th century when Afrikaners started to articulate the fundamentals of a racist nationalism. Some brief explanations are provided for insight into these questions. Ubuntu scholarship is a type of scholarship rooted and energised by the actual and inspired interests of the African communities in which scholars were born. Freedom involves engaging the world intellectually or academically using logics and metaphors contiguous with one's African traditions or civilisation, and literacy is the application of this freedom in tackling the African community challenges in the here and now (Curry, 2011; Harris, 1992). Since White supremacists are circling their wagons again, South African scholars must become "warrior scholars" (Baruti, 2010) who wage "intellectual warfare'' (Carruthers, 1999) against White supremacist scholars and their African mentees who are bent on undermining African freedom and literacy. We need to ensure that our epistemologies and methodologies do not converge with the established White supremacists' canon founded on a rationalist racist anthropology (Curry, 2011). Most of the ideas that come out of the White supremacist scholarships are about consolidating White supremacy (Welsing, 1991).

- The study recommends the deployment of Ubuntu Conflict Resolution Model (UCRM) in South Africa to resolve conflicts similar to the Malamulele and Vuwani conflict. The model could, however, be adapted to meet the specific exigencies of emerging conflicts. It must be remembered that not all conflicts display the same features. However, more insight could be synthesised from this UCRM in order to resolve conflicts nationally and internationally. Furthermore, the model highlighted some fundamental factors that are Afrocentric, and may not be ignored when addressing conflicts of this nature. As conflicts are contagious (Butware, 2012), it would be wise for South Africa to consider taking this model as either a learning tool or a tool of reference when dealing with ethnic conflicts. Furthermore, the model outlined is derived from an exploratory study. When more exacting descriptive and explanatory studies are conducted, it is expected that modifications to the model presented in this study will be made.

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APPENDICES

Individual interview questions

There is a cause for anything that happens; so, I want to understand from you what the main causes of the conflicts that occurred in Malamulele and Vuwani area.

Vhavenda and Vatsonga groups have lived peacefully together for a long time. In your view, how did these conflicts start?

What were the factors that influenced the occurrence of these conflicts?

In your own opinion, what is the nature of the conflicts in Malamulele and Vuwani?

I believe that you know or have heard about *Ubuntu*. Tell me what you know about *Ubuntu* and how it works.

What are the attributes of *Ubuntu*?

How do we know that a person has *Ubuntu*?

How does the new generation view the practical aspects of *Ubuntu*?

Do you think *Ubuntu* as an African practice is still observed in our communities? Please support your answer.

How can *Ubuntu* be restored in our communities?

Who or which stakeholders are responsible for restoring *Ubuntu* as an African culture back to our communities?

Which organisations are responsible for inculcating *Ubuntu* among the new generation?

Can *Ubuntu* help in reducing conflicts in areas affected by conflicts?

What happens in communities that follow *Ubuntu* qualities in terms of how they live and observe the law?

How can the attributes of *Ubuntu* be applied to eliminate ethnic conflicts?

Do you think that stakeholders, organisations or communities are doing enough to promote *Ubuntu* qualities in our communities?

What do you think should be done so that *Ubuntu* can be restored back to the new generation?

Consent form

Title of the project:

The Role of Ubuntu in Conflict Resolution: The Case of Malamulele and Vuwani Conflicts in Vhembe District, Limpopo province, South Africa.

Project leader: Mr Risimati Tlharihani Michael, Student no: 201834575, cell: 0760882144, University of Limpopo.

A brief description of the project:

The study is part of my Doctor of Philosophy in Anthropology degree. The participants will take part in semi-structured interviews which will take no longer than one hour on the knowledge of Ubuntu in Conflict Resolution. Participants will not receive any form of compensation for participating in the study.

Consent:

I hereby consent to participate in the above research project. I understand that my participation is voluntary and that I may change my mind or withdraw my participation in the study any time without penalty.

Signatures: Participant: ……Date: …….

Witness: ……..Date: …….

Researcher: ……Date: …….

Swivutiso swa mbulavurisano wa munhu-hi-munhu

1. Xana swivangelonkulu swa madzolonga eka Malamulele na le Vuwani ku nga va ku ri yini?

i) Vavhenda na Vatsonga va hanyile swin'we na ku hanyisana malembe yo tala hi ku rhula. Kutani xana madzolonga lawa ya vange hi yini?

ii) I ncini lexi nga endla leswaku madzolonga lawa ma va kona, naswona i vamani va nga endla leswaku ma sungula?

iii) Hi mavonelo ya n'wina, i rixaka rihi ri nga vanga madzolonga ya le ka Malamulele na Vuwani?

2. Ndza tshemba leswaku mahanyelo ya *vumunhu* mi nga va mi ya tiva leswaku swi vula yini na leswaku nkoka wa vumunhu i yini?

i) Xana mi vona wonge *vumunhu* i yini, naswona byi vonaka njhani eka vanhu?

ii) Xana rixaka ra ximanjhe-manjhe/ximodeni ra ma tiva maendlelo na mahanyelo ya *vumunhu/ximunhu*?

iii) Xana *vumunhu,* tanihi ya xi-Afrika, ya landzeleriwa emugangeni wa ka n'wina ke? Loko nhlamulo yi ri "ina", seketelani hi swikombiso? Loko nhlamulo yi ri "e-e", mi ehleketa leswaku *vumunhu* byi nga pfuxetiwa njhani?

iv) Xana hi swihi/yihi swiyenge kumbe mintlawa ya vanhu leyi nga na vutihlamuleri bya ku dyondzisa kumbe ku byala *moya wa vumunhu* eka vanhu?

3. Kanelani kutani mi seketela mavonele ya n'wina loko ku ri hi ku *vumunhu* byi nga pfuneta eka ku tisa swintshuxo eka miganga leyi nga voneki hi tihlo rin'we?

i) Xana rixaka leri landzelelaka maendlelo ya vumunhu ri endla yini etlhelweni ra mahanyelo na ku landzelela nawu?

ii) Xana i tihuvo tihi leti vanhu va nga kanerisanaka na tona eka pfhumba ra ku nghenisa rixaka ra ximanguva-lawa ku landzelela maendlelo ya *vumunhu* leswaku va ta hundzukisa miganga?

ii) Xana i tihuvo tihi leti vanhu va nga kanerisanaka na tona eka pfhumba ra ku nghenisa rixaka ra ximanguva-lawa eka ku landzelela maendlelo ya *vumunhu,* leswaku va ta hundzukisa miganga?

iii) Xana maendlelo ya *vumunhu* ya nga hundziseriwa njhani eka vanhu?

iv) Xana mi vona onge *vumunhu* byi nga tirhisiwa njhani ku hunguta madzolonga na ku tisa ku rhula eka miganga leyi holovaka?

Dzimbudzisa-vhathu dzo livhaho muthu-nga-muthu (Tshivenda).

Tshinwe na tshinwe tshine tsha itea tshi na tshivhangi, zwino ri khou tama upfa zwine vha divha nga ha zwivhangi zwihulwane zwa dzipfudzungule dzo no iteaho na dzine dza khou itea vhuponi ha Malamulele na Vuwani.

Vhavenda na Vatsonga vho tshila na u tshilisana tshifhinga tshilapfu, idzi pfudzungule dzo da hani nahone dzi bva fhi?

Idzo pfudzungule ndi zwifhio zwo dzi tutuwedzaho kana ndi vhafhio vho shelaho mulenzhe u vhuya dza hulela ngauralo?

Ndi lushakade lwa dzipfudzungule uya nga kuvhonele kwavho?

Ndi a tenda uri vhone vha a divha nga tshithu tshi no pfi ''vhuthu'' na uri vhu shumisa hani. Kha vha ri tandavhudzele nga uri vhuthu vhu shuma mini nahone hani?

Hone ni dzhia *vhuthu* hu mini, nahone vhu vhonala nga ndila de kha muthu?

Murafho uyu muswa wa tshizwino-zwino u a divha naa nga kutshilele na maitele a *vhuthu*?

Vha humbula uri *vhuthu* sa mvelele ya MaAfurika i kha di tshiliwa ngayo mivhunduni yashu? Arali phindulo hu ee, ndi nga ndila de? Arali phindulo hu hai, vha humbula uri vhuthu vhu nga vhuedzedzwa hani tshitshavhani?

Ndi zwifhio zwiimiswa kana zwigwada-gwada zwi re na vhudifhinduleli ha u vhuyedzedza *vhuthu* sa mvelele ya MaAfrika vhathuni?

Ndi zwifhio zwiimiswa kana zwigwada-gwada zwa vhathu zwine zwa nga shumiswa kha u pfumbudzela vhathu vha musalauno kha matshilele a *vhuthu* hu u itela u fhelisa dzipfudzungule?

Kha vha talutshedze nga u pfufhifhadza vha tshi khou tikedza mihumbulo yavho uri *vhuthu* vhu nga vha hone vhu nga si thuse naa kha u fhelisa dzipfudzungule nga ndila ya khwine kha mivhundu yo thaselwaho nga dzikhakhathi?

Hu itea mini kha tshitshavha tshi re na *vhuthu* siani la kutshilele na u tevhedza mulayo?

Zwiga zwa *vhuthu* zwi nga shumiswa kana u tevhedzwa hani u itela ufhelisa dzipfudzungule?

Vha vhona zwiimiswa kana zwigwada-gwada zwa vhathu zwi tshi khou shuma lwo edanaho naa u itela uri *vhuthu* vhu tevhedzwe kana vhu vhe hone kha tshitshavha?

Hu fanela u itwani uri *vhuthu* vhu vhuyedzedzwe kha vhathu vha musalauno?

Focus group discussion questionnaire

Would you please introduce yourselves to the group (e.g., your background; the community you come from; job and your status in your community?)

What are the underlying causes of conflicts in Malamulele and Vuwani communities?

I believe most of you know about *Ubuntu* and how it is applied. Please tell me more about that.

Discuss as a group and share your general views about understanding of *Ubuntu.*

Do you think *Ubuntu* as an African culture is practiced in your communities? Please qualify your answer.

Do you think Ubuntu can be resuscitated/revived?

Discuss briefly and justify your views whether *Ubuntu* can contribute towards offering amicable solutions in conflict ridden communities.

Editor's note

VHEMBE DISTRICT MUNICIPALITY
PRIVATE BAG X5006, THOHOYANDOU, 0950
TEL: 015 960 2000, FAX: 015 962 1017
Website: www.vhembe.gov.za

Ref: 4/2/1
Enq: Mphaphuli TK
Date: 15 April 2021

Attention: Risimati Tiharihana Micheal

APPLICATION TO CONDUCT ACADEMIC RESEARCH: YOURSELF

1. Your application dated 14 April 2021 refers.
2. It is with pleasure to inform you that your application to conduct research on "The Role of Ubuntu in Conflict Resolution: The Case of Malamulele and Vuwani Conflicts in Vhembe District, Limpopo Province, South Africa" is hereby granted to you.
3. Please contact Office of the Mayor at 015 960 2000 in order to arrange the starting date.
4. Should there be anything you need clarity on, feel free to call our office at 015 960 3558/015 960 3541.

Kind Regards

MUNICIPAL MANAGER
NDOU T.S

15/04/2021
DATE

Ethic's clearance certificate

University of Limpopo
Department of Research Administration and Development
Private Bag X1106, Sovenga, 0727, South Africa
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TURFLOOP RESEARCH ETHICS COMMITTEE

ETHICS CLEARANCE CERTIFICATE

MEETING: 11 May 2021

PROJECT NUMBER: TREC/74/2021: PG

PROJECT:

Title:	The Role of *Ubuntu* in Conflict Resolution: The Case of Malamulele and Vuwani Conflicts in Vhembe District, Limpopo Province, South Africa.
Researcher:	TM Risimati
Supervisor:	Dr AV Dlhiliwayo
Co-Supervisor/s:	Prof AS Rankoana
School:	Social Sciences
Degree:	PhD in Anthropology

PROF P MASOKO
CHAIRPERSON: TURFLOOP RESEARCH ETHICS COMMITTEE
The Turfloop Research Ethics Committee (TREC) is registered with the National Health Research Ethics Council, Registration Number: **REC-0310111-031**

Note:
i) **This Ethics Clearance Certificate will be valid for one (1) year, as from the abovementioned date. Application for annual renewal (or annual review) need to be received by TREC one month before lapse of this period.**
ii) **Should any departure be contemplated from the research procedure as approved, the researcher(s) must re-submit the protocol to the committee, together with the Application for Amendment form.**
iii) **PLEASE QUOTE THE PROTOCOL NUMBER IN ALL ENQUIRIES.**

Finding solutions for Africa