



UNIVERSITY OF PRETORIA
**A PASTORAL PERSPECTIVE ON
LOBOLA PRACTICES**

By

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DECLARATION

I, the undersigned, hereby declare that the work contained in this dissertation, “A Pastoral Perspective on Lobola Practices”, is my own work. As far as I am aware, all the sources that I have used or quoted, have been indicated and acknowledged by the means of complete references.

I affirm that this dissertation has never been submitted in its entirety or in part to any University for a degree.

Date:

Signed:
Joel Uju Olisa

Signed:
Prof. Maake J. Masango (Supervisor)

DEDICATION

I dedicate this dissertation to Almighty God for helping me to scale through the hurdles of my Master's degree programme.

This dissertation is also dedicated to my beloved wife, godly children and my entire family members whose support made it possible for me to come this far.

Again, this dissertation is dedicated to all the lovers and stakeholders in the Lobola practice who are committed to ensure that this beautiful culture is not distorted, commercialised or colonized.

Finally, this dissertation is dedicated to all who were emotionally bruised but had recovered from lobola related issues and are helping those who were injured emotionally.

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ABSTRACT

Lobola practice is an age long tradition among the Xhosas. It is aimed at bringing two families together through marriage; developing mutual respect and showing that a woman's future husband is capable of financially supporting his wife. "Lobola is meant to be a token that unites two African families whose sons and daughters are coming together in marriage (Madikwe, 2012)".

The main purpose of this study was to investigate whether the lobola practice has been distorted or commercialised. It also investigated the correlation between such distortion and the rate of cohabitation in the Xhosa society today. It further considered ways of assisting victims of lobola distortions that are broken hearted to find inner healing and courage to face the future.

A qualitative research design was used in this study. Gerkin's method of pastoral care of shepherding and Pollard's model of evangelism called positive deconstruction were employed in the research methodology. A total of 35 participants were engaged in this study as respondents to the researcher's questionnaire. These respondents covered the categories of the Unmarried, Parents, Clergy and the Married and provided the researcher an all-encompassing view of the research topic. The received responses were analysed thematically.

Based on the responses of the participants, the study found that a considerable negotiated lobola settlement cost can help many men settle their lobola and thereby reduce the level of cohabitation in our society. Also, the study did not find enough evidence to suggest that lobola settlement practice has been generally distorted or commercialised. Though, there were indications which points to the fact

that African cultural belief of lobola practice is under severe attack due to the influence of Western cultural beliefs and ideologies. Lastly, it was found that only a considerate negotiated lobola settlement that is based on the income and prospects of the groom and not just only that of the bride that will pave way for many men to settle their lobola and get married. A pastoral care model was also formulated to take care of those who were emotionally bruised as a result of the issues of lobola settlement to find inner healing and regain self worth.

In line with the findings above, this study recommends that lobola stakeholders should reconsider their criteria for determining lobola settlement cost to incorporate the income level, prospects and behaviour of the groom as factors that will allow for discounts in such processes. This could be a motivation for most of the men to start behaving well in the society and make our communities more habitable. Also, the pastoral care and counselling fraternity should arise and play the vital role of providing succour for those who were emotionally bruised to enable them find inner healing.

CHAPTER ONE

ORIENTATION

1.1 INTRODUCTION

In the course of my counselling and pastoral activities in Mdantsane, Eastern Cape, South Africa, I came across certain narratives that prompted me to conduct research on the issues around lobola practices during marriage in the African Xhosa culture. Some of these narratives include the story of Zandi (not her real name). She was in tears when she narrated her story to me in the office. She has been living with her boyfriend for the past ten years and they have three children.

They had a dispute and that made her parents take her back home alongside her children. Later on, they reconciled but her family is refusing her to go back to her boyfriend until he has paid damages otherwise known as *intlawulo* (i.e. the traditional payment for a child born out of wedlock) for the three children before *lobola* (dowry or bride price) for their mother can be settled. The demand is R5000.00 for each child and R35, 000.00 for their mother as lobola. Considering the man's earnings, which is about R6500.00 a month, the amount required by Zandi's family to allow her to become the official wife of her boyfriend seems too high and could take many years for him to settle this amount (R50,000.00) as demanded by Zandi's family.

The woman's pain is that if the situation carries, the man may opt for another woman and she will lose her place in the man's life. Another narrative is that of Ntutukani (not her real name). She has been

experiencing the pain of despair due to the lingering of her intended marriage to Bongani (a Christian man). Both loved each other dearly but cannot go on with their marriage because Bongani has not been able in the last five years to raise the ten cows' price tag (of R5000 each) on Ntutukani. Ntutukani is worried now because according to her she is not getting any younger. In tears, she said, "it is painful waiting endlessly for her to get married to the man without any hope of this happening soon due to the high cost of the lobola".

As a Christian, she cannot enter into the marriage without the approval of her parents and family. According to the bible in the account of Eliezah (Abraham's servant) who came to marry a wife (Rebekah) for his master's son, the procedure that played out in the handing over of Rebekah to Eliezah was recorded as, "...so they sent away Rebekah their sister and her nurse, and Abraham's servant and his men. And they blessed Rebekah..." (Gen 24:59-60 New KJV). This procedure which require that a lady receive the blessing of her parents and be properly sent forth into marriage by her family; is believed to be a set standard for the Christians.

Again, I came across a young man Zoteni (not his real name) who had four children with a lady and they were not able to come together in marriage because he was not able to pay "damages" of R5000 each for the four children and a lobola price of R25, 000 for their mother in order for her to become his wife and his children to bear his surname. He has been in agony because his children are still bearing the surname of their mother (not his surname as their father) because he is not able to pay "damages" and the lobola. He cried and said, "Pastor, my life is in a mess. I feel as if I am an incomplete man. Please pray for me that God

should forgive my sins if peradventure I am poor because of my sin. Plead with God to deliver me from this problem and bless me”.

Lastly, a young Christian lady who graduated from the university with an Honours degree said that her father who did not pay for her university education (because she studied with a bursary) had placed a price tag of R 100,000 on her as lobola. She has been mandated to only bring home those suitors who can afford the price tag and not necessarily the man that she loves. According to her narrative, the price tag is a source of worry and stress and she wanted to know what she was supposed to do in this situation. These scenarios and situations raised great concerns for me and prompted me to do this research which takes a critical look at the current practices of lobola with the aim of finding out whether the tradition has not been distorted, commercialized or colonized.

Originally, lobola as practiced in the Xhosa nation, is aimed at bringing two families together through marriage; developing mutual respect and showing that a woman’s future husband is capable of financially supporting his wife. Madikwe states that, “lobola is meant to be a token that unites two African families whose sons and daughters are coming together in marriage (Madikwe, 2012).”

According to Bishop Musi Losaba, “if lobola was not paid, it showed that the family did not approve of the marriage” (Swart, 2014). Intending couples in African culture are expected to observe the marriage rituals which include lobola settlement in order for their marriage to be recognized within most African communities (Nyirongo, 1997, p. 114)

At this point, it is important to place on record that the researcher is not against lobola settlement practices in African communities but believes

that distorting the original cultural practice may give room for abuse of the process. Such abuses can manifest in excessive charges for lobola settlement. When this happens, it can frustrate the goals which such cultural practices were instituted to achieve.

In this study, a pastoral care model will be developed for the purpose of empowering Pastors working among the Xhosa people with the knowledge that will help them identify distortions in lobola practices (where they exist) and prepare them well to journey with the victims pastorally in order to provide them the soothing they need to overcome their lobola related challenges. Care-givers will be able to:

- 1) Care and counsel ladies who are under severe stress because the man that made them pregnant ran away and left them to care for their babies alone.
- 2) Handle the problem of having many ladies competing for the attention of one man in the church whom they feel can afford the lobola required by their families to allow them to get married.
- 3) Give pastoral care to ladies that are emotionally damaged because the men that promised them marriage dumped them when the men could not find the money to settle the ladies' lobola even after such ladies left the church to follow those men having promised them marriage.
- 4) Tackle the problem of instability of most ladies in church who are so desperate for marriage.
- 5) Care for ladies in church who are suicidal and are attempting to take their lives due to lobola issues.
- 6) Give pastoral care and counseling to youth leaders in church who are cohabiting (vat en sit) contrary to Christ's doctrine.

- 7) Assume Pastoral responsibility of ensuring, as much as possible, that Christians do not worship demonic spirits during lobola settlement.

Nyirongo submitted that rituals in lobola settlement among the Xhosa people are prescribed rites in the code of ceremonies observed by most African communities during marriages.

1.2 PROBLEM STATEMENT

Cultural practices remain the symbol of pride of any tribe especially on the African continent. That explains why each tribe guards their culture jealously. Nations go to the extent of waging wars against perceived adversaries just to protect and preserve their culture one of which is the lobola culture.

Originally, the lobola culture came into being to serve the purpose of building strong relationship among the families involved. The process of lobola was crafted to build a strong foundation for marriages especially among the Xhosas which will make it difficult for marriages to break up. This could be the reason behind the enduring nature of African marriages compared to the westernized ones.

However, recent indicators show that the rate of marriage break ups among Africans are on the rise. Surely something must have gone wrong somewhere. A lot of questions are bound to be asked pertaining to the contributory factors. Why are we seeing in our present time something that was rare in the time of our fore fathers?

There have been insinuations that the lobola practice has deviated from its original purpose of building strong relations into a money making venture and hence has been distorted. If this is true, then it means the foundation has been destroyed, hence the structure cannot stand

unharmful. The writer was deeply moved to embark on this research study to investigate these insinuations to ascertain if they are true and possible ways of remedying the situation (where it exists).

The story of Zandi raised some questions in my mind which this research seeks to find answers to and will help develop a pastoral methodology of caring for Xhosa folks, in particular the young ladies. The following question will help guide the research problem:

1. What happens when a cultural practice is distorted or colonized?
2. Is cohabitation (*vat en sit*) among young Xhosa folk a product of distortions in lobola practices?
3. How can people like Zandi (through Pastoral care giving and counseling) be helped to regain courage and self-worth to face the lobola challenge ahead of them?
4. How can parents, elders and the community be encouraged to preserve the original intentions of lobola and avoid distortions and the attendant complications?
5. Are there ways the church and the clergy can journey with the people to preserve this culture without compromising the doctrines of the bible?
6. Is it out of place for Christians in African communities to pay lobola when getting married?

Finally, it will be of great importance to develop a model that will help people like Zandi develop the relationship with the father of their children in situations of this sort. This story of Zandi compelled me to ask whether the present approach of lobola negotiations was in tandem with the original intentions of offering the groom the opportunity to appreciate the parents and family of his bride for bringing her up well or are we now

having a commercialized or near-commercialized version of the lobola settlement practice.

1.3 RESEARCH GAP

Lobola is one of the many cultural challenges we are facing in Africa. Although some studies have been done on the subject of lobola in the fields of Sociology, Anthropology, Theology and Psychology; regrettably many of these studies made use of complicated theories which were mainly dominated by western academic beliefs which in the writer's view ridiculed the cultural identity of the African people, who practice the payment of lobola during marriage.

Hence, in this research study on lobola, the researcher aims to deviate from the usual predominant reformed paradigms exhibited by many researchers on the African continent. This he intends to do by introducing an indigenous research methodological project as it deals with the subject of lobola in a continent rife for its ill living practices and worldviews.

In the field of sociology, Mathabane highlighted the challenge faced by young people of the same age wanting to get married and the parental belief that such marriage would end miserably because the man would later leave the woman for younger girls in the future. He also gave a narrative of a mother who returned a lobola for her daughter because the young man was of the same age as her daughter. According to Mathabane, the woman's action was informed by her own experience in which her husband abandoned her for younger women, (Mathabane, 1994, p. 18).

Dorrit *et al*, researching in the field of anthropology, looked at the racial differences in marriage rates in post-apartheid South Africa and

considered the role played by the traditional practice of ilobolo among African families and the ease of couples getting married (Posel et al, 2011, pp. 102-111). Furthermore, Ansel carried out a study in the field of psychology in which he attempted to re-negotiate the meaning of lobola using the opinion and views of students from some selected secondary schools in southern Africa. He is of the view that the functions and meaning attached to lobola are constantly changing and seeks to gauge the interpretation attached to lobola practice among the young people using senior students from two rural secondary schools in Southern Africa (Ansel, 2001, pp. 697-716).

Finally, from the field of theology, Prof Baloyi highlighted that delay in settlement of lobola could be disastrous especially when the woman dies in such a situation. According to him, the man would be required to pay the lobola for the dead woman before the corpse could be buried. Such situation presents the man with the double sorrow of a lost companion and that of paying for a woman that has already died (Baloyi, 2014, pp. 135-143).

Although, in addition to the above, various studies have been done on the subject of lobola not much has been written on ways of ensuring that this beautiful culture is preserved from avoidable distortions and its attendant complications. Moreso, previous authors have not given much consideration towards finding the appropriate model that would be effective in administering pastoral care and counselling to those that were emotionally bruised as a result of lobola issues like Zandi and this is the gap that this study sets out to fill.

While this study is not advocating for the abolition of lobola, it is important that we put in place appropriate measures to checkmate any

form of distortions arising out of greed or unhealthy competition among families.

1.4 SIGNIFICANCE OF RESEARCH

The main significance of this research will be visible in its effort to provide practicable methods that will help preserve this beautiful culture of lobola from been distorted, thereby saving the lobola practice from all forms of complications which usually arise whenever a process is distorted. Also, this study will seek ways of decolonizing the practice and minimizing, or totally eliminating, distortions in lobola process where they are found to exist. It will in addition to the above, make use of the principles of Practical theology in developing pastoral care models which will be useful in empowering the Clergy to play mediatory roles between families during lobola negotiations and settlement. This pastoral care model will be a useful tool for pastoral care-givers to journey with and find healing for those who are emotionally wounded, depressed and are in pain due to the disappointments from their families and communities as a result of lobola issues.

In the recommendations of the study, guiding godly principles that will enable Christians avoid the compromise of appeasing evil spirits when performing the marriage rituals is outlined. The results emanating from this study are packaged to bring hope to many especially ladies whose parents and families have put a high price tag on as lobola settlement cost.

Furthermore, this research brings to light the fundamental question of whether the practice of lobola settlement has been abused in our communities. When marriage intentions are delayed or aborted as a

result of high priced lobola settlements, the implication is that it can deny the intending couples the opportunity to formalize their marriage (which is good for the well-being of the people in those communities).

1.5 AIMS AND OBJECTIVES

The aims and objectives of this study are as follows:

1. To examine the effect of distortions, commercialization and colonization on the lobola culture within the African communities especially among the Xhosas.
2. To find out whether the increase in the rate of cohabitation among the Africans' is as a result of distortions in the lobola practice or if it was one of the fallouts of civilization.
3. To seek ways of helping people like Zandi (through Pastoral care giving and counseling) regain courage and self-worth that will enable them face the lobola challenge ahead of them.
4. To seek appropriate ways of encouraging parents, elders and community members to work together to ensure that the original intentions of lobola (presentation of gifts to the bride parents) is not compromised for greed and carnal competition.
5. To provide steps that will enable the church and the clergy journey with the people to ensure that this beautiful culture is protected from all forms of distortions without compromising the doctrines of the bible.
6. To seek the views of Christians in African communities on paying lobola when getting married.

This research checked to find out from the Xhosa people that were interviewed in this study whether lobola settlement was still relevant even in our present day notwithstanding its avoidable rigorous process.

1.6 METHODOLOGY

The methodology employed in this research study is Gerkin's method of pastoral care of shepherding and Pollard's method of evangelism called positive deconstruction. Gerkin in his work points our attention to the scripture, (John 10:14) where Jesus Christ who is the role model of the pastoral caregivers is depicted as the good shepherd who knows his sheep and is known by his sheep. Gerkin says that this painted a meaningful, normative portrait of the pastor of God's people. Reflection on the actions and words of Jesus as he related to people at levels of social life gives us the model sine qua non for pastoral relationships with those immediately within our care and those strangers we meet along the way in life, (Gerkin, 1997, p. 80).

The writer was guided by Gerkin's shepherding model of adopting a prophetic role by pointing victims who were in pain to a hopeful future; playing a priestly role of caring for them and in wisdom guiding them on how to apply the knowledge they have about the Lord correctly; taking a journey with the women that were depressed and in pain due to lobola related issues, and to help them find inner healing and self-worth again, (Masango & Dreyer, 2015).

Pollard's method of evangelism of positive deconstruction was also used to gain entry into the lives of those who were emotionally damaged due to lobola issues. Nick Pollard's positive deconstruction is the process which seeks to help people to deconstruct (take apart) what they believe so that they can carefully examine the belief and analyze it. The process is "positive" because this deconstruction is done in a positive way in order to replace it with something better. This method is in contrast with branch literacy criticism known as deconstructionism which has negative

connotations. It is a positive search for truth. (Pollard, 1997, p. 44). Consider Pollard's analogy of taking apart two cars of which one is old with good chassis but worn out parts; and the other was involved in an accident and written off, but still has new parts; in the process of dismantling both cars and evaluating parts – good parts were kept and poor ones discarded. After reassembling, the end result would be a very good car which is far better than any of the initial two.

This model was used to guide those who were depressed, damaged and in pain to discover and develop the good gifting in them, to discard the failures, disappointments of the past and put their faith in God through Christ's suffering, pain and death on the cross in order to recover themselves and regain their self-worth again.

Qualitative research methodology was also employed in this study. This enabled the researcher to understand the social construction of the women in Xhosa communities and how they experience the effect of not getting married due to the high cost of lobola. Wilson contends that qualitative research relies on facts and knowledge under natural conditions. He viewed qualitative methods as being useful for a study in order to address certain purposes (Wilson, 1993, p. 239). Wilson believes that “a qualitative research design is used to explore, describe and explain a social psychological process, themes and patterns, social world, culture or setting. It as well interprets life experiences in their natural context”, (Wilson, 1993, p. 217).

This study was designed to extract the views of the people in our local communities on the topical issues of lobola settlement using research tools like the questionnaire and interview guide. Strong attention was given to ethical issues bordering around the research. The principles of

autonomy, beneficence, non-maleficence and justice were given adequate consideration. The rights of all the participants and respondents in this study were upheld. Respondents to the questionnaire and interviews were encouraged to be independent in their responses while every necessary effort was dispensed to avoid all forms of coercion or influence on the respondents. All the participants were properly informed of the purpose of the research and the challenges that it is aiming to proffer solution to. The role the participants are expected to play and their right to turn the role down (if they deem it fit), without any punitive measure taken against them were stressed. Finally, the responsibility and willingness of the researcher to keep the information given by the respondents confidential was affirmed.

Interviews were conducted confidentially where so desired and the interviewer at a given time took each of the respondents to respond to a set of questions as outlined in the interview guide. The responses provided by each of the participants and notes taken during the interview were kept in a restricted access. The interviewer maintained a neutral opinion during the interviews and no attempt was made to influence the respondent on a particular answer.

The selection criteria for this study included

- Xhosa men and women of marriageable age (but not married);
- Married couples where at least the woman was of the Xhosa tribe;
- Stakeholders in lobola settlement which included parents, clan and community leaders with heads of families among the Xhosa nation.

1.7 LITERATURE REVIEW

Lobola is a Xhosa word for dowry settlement and forms part of the marriage rites as practised by the Xhosa people. The majority of the

Xhosa people live in the Eastern Cape and some parts of the Western Cape with an estimated population of around 8.1 million people which constitutes about 16% of the South African population and they are the second largest ethnic group in South Africa after the Zulu tribe (Stats SA).

Before lobola can be paid, the intending couples must have agreed to marry and both families consented to such an agreement. Thereafter, a process of lobola settlement negotiation commences and the family of the bride makes it their point of duty to give the groom's family a tough time in the negotiations (Kheli, 2012). Lobola negotiation is based on a process which unites the two families and that makes it an important tool for social cohesion. Many African women feel honoured and valued when a man pays money as lobola to have them as wives (Mathabane, 1994). Despite any shortcomings it may have, it is believed that adequate steps should be employed to ensure that this beautiful tradition is not commercialised in our communities (Purp, 2012). Further literature reviews include:

Patrick McNeill (1990)

Research Methods:

This work introduces most of the central issues of social research. The method discussed is followed by suggested activities which provide more practical experience of social research, aiming to stimulate a genuinely critical response to produced studies.

Adam Kuper (1982)

Wives for Cattle Bridewealth and marriage in South Africa:

The aim of Kuper's work is about bridewealth systems. At an ethnographic level, he wishes to bring greater order to the scattered and often puzzling reports of traditional Southern Bantu marriage practices

which are similar to marriage practices in most African Cultural beliefs in regards to how it relates to kinship Studies.

Schapera, Isaac (1996)

Married life in an African tribe:

He highlights the need of seeking viable grassroots representation and the moral traditions of abundant life in people of different tribes in African societies.

John Lewis (1978)

Anthropology made simple:

Provides an introduction to physical and social wellbeing of humans within set communities, the manners and customs of primitive society and the origins and nature of religion and the moral order. The facts highlighted in this work have much relevance to most debatable questions in our societies and the modern world.

Prof Maake Masango and Prof Yolanda Dreyer (2015)

Study Guide: MA Practical Theology (Trauma Counselling)

In this study guide, theology and psychology are integrated in a way that an object related theoretical approach is developed. This theory derives from psychoanalytic principles of listening, responding to unconscious material, interpreting, developing insight, and working in the area of the transference and counter transference towards understanding and growth.

Mark Mathambane (1994)

Lobola complicates love:

Even if people's love was real, its only lobola that legitimizes it in the eyes of society and of their parents within African communities.

Nick Pollard (1997)

Evangelism made slightly less difficult:

Remains fundamentally convinced that the message of the bible is more dynamic, life-changing and relevant than anything else one has ever heard or read.

Charles V. Gerkin (1997)

An Introduction to Pastoral Care:

Explores the world of Pastoral care and considered the caring task of the Pastor in relation to individuals and communities.

Anne E. Streaty Wimberly (2004)

Nurturing Faith and Hope:

A spirited spiritual “homes” of worship is where one sought, met and communed with God and those with whom he or she worshipped in ways quite difficult to put into words. It comes with a kind of care, of nourishment from which new meanings, purpose, and strength for Christian living comes, though not without a struggle, but will come indeed in the lives of sincere seekers.

Daniel J. Louw

A Pastoral Hermeneutics:

A liberation and transformation process that aims at the development of a spirituality in which we attempt to live a fully human life, a life after the pattern of Jesus Christ, a life permeated by such values as personal responsibility, respect for others, and transformation of society.

1.8 OUTLINE OF THE DISSERTATION

Chapter one of this study contained the introduction, problem statement, research gap, significance of research, aims and objectives, methodology, literature review and the outline of the dissertation. This chapter provides insight for the reader on the perspective from where

the writer approaches the topic and what was to be expected in the research.

Chapter two looks at the methodology and the research design employed in this research work. Here the researcher gives a detailed description of the research tools, research skills, selection criteria, sample size and the method of data analysis used in this research work and the justification for them.

Chapter three explains the concepts and the culture of lobola and its practice in marriage procedure in most African societies.

Chapter four expounds more on lobola and provides the reader with a detailed account of the processes and procedures employed in lobola settlement during marriage in the Xhosa nation and most African communities. It also highlights the efforts made towards data collection and the major stakeholders in lobola practices and customs that were consulted and interviewed for a proper understanding of this ritual. This chapter also draws a comparison between the practice of this culture in the olden days and its practice in our present time. The emergent information was useful in ascertaining whether this important cultural tradition had been distorted.

Chapter five of this work presents the results of the interviews conducted and the responses of the respondents as reflected in the questionnaires.

Chapter six presents the therapeutic healing.

Chapter seven deals with the research findings, recommendation and conclusion

CHAPTER TWO

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY AND DESIGN

2.1 INTRODUCTION

This chapter outlines the important elements which are necessary when undertaking a research work. It focuses specifically on the research design and methods employed in the study in order to answer critical questions which ought to investigate whether distortion in lobola practices during Xhosa marriage rituals could impair marriages. A positive approach was adopted in this work because it advocated the application of the methods of the natural sciences to the study of social reality and beyond. Bryman and Bell are of the view that, “consistency is ensured by the strategy of dependability”, (Bryman & Bell, 2011, p. 15). In order to establish a consistent and dependable lobola practice, a transformation method was sourced and developed to unravel the quest for a solution to lobola related issues among the Xhosa people especially in the Mdantsane area of East London in the Eastern Cape Province of South Africa.

2.2 RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

The methodology employed in this study was a qualitative research method. Here, preparatory investigations and interviews were conducted using questionnaires in face to face situations. Interviews of this sort brought to limelight ways in which distorted lobola practice often leads to the escalation of the bride price. It is believed that the escalation of the bride price can impact negatively on marriage plans among intending couples especially in this present dispensation where people have learned to work with tight budgets. Patrick M. citing Marshall et al stated

that, “in carrying out investigations to find out what the key issues are in a research, informal interviews with people is key”. (Mcneil, 1990, p. 22).

Qualitative research aims at bringing an understanding to a research problem using the view of the local population it involves. Rubin and Babbie explained that the qualitative research method includes participant observation, direct observation and intensive interviewing. Rubin and Babbie (1993:358)

In line with the above stated facts, the research method in this work was dealt with in three phases as stated below:

2.2.1 Exploring the causes of distortion in lobola practices in Xhosa land.

According to Davidson, “exploring is an act of searching thoroughly for the purpose of discovering something” (Davidson, 1901, p. 326). By searching out and unveiling how lobola gets distorted and its impact on young folks of marriageable age within Xhosa communities especially in the case study of Mdantsane in the Eastern Cape Province, progress was made towards finding meaningful solutions. Adequate attention was paid to the distortions in lobola practice and their effect on the young folks. This consideration was felt necessary in developing a pastoral care model that would be used in helping those who were adversely affected by this trend and were in pain, to find inner healing.

2.2.2 Describing the impact of complications in lobola practices within Xhosa communities.

Mead as well as Malinowski lived among people they were studying; observed their behaviour as participants in the society; and combined

this with some informal interviewing of members of the tribes that they studied closely. (Mcneil, 1990, p. 65).

On the same note, although the writer is not a Xhosa indigene, like Mead and Malinowski he lived and worked among the Xhosa speaking people in Mdantsane for a period of fifteen years as a missionary. As a missionary, he visited and interacted with the people on a day to day basis. Through these interactions, he had been able to observe, learn and understand the behaviour of the Xhosa people as well as their traditional and cultural beliefs. He had also participated in some of their cultural activities like the lobola settlement in marriage ritual which he believes is not against his Christian belief. That is where his attention was pointed to what appeared to be a distortion in the practice.

Based on these facts, this research work on Xhosa lobola practices is thorough in the sense that he combined what he observed and heard about lobola in marriage rituals during the number of years he spent in Xhosa communities, with some formal and informal interviews of the members of the Xhosa tribe whose culture he was studying.

2.3 PASTORAL CARE AND COUNSELING METHODS:

The writer employed Gerkin's method of pastoral care of shepherding and Pollard's method of evangelism of positive deconstruction as guidelines for counseling, supporting and caring for those who were traumatized and emotionally bruised due to lobola related issues in families and communities where lobola settlement culture was being practiced.

2.3.1 Pastoral care of shepherding:

Gerkin in his work points our attention to the scripture, (John 10:14) where Jesus Christ, who is the role model of the pastoral caregivers, is depicted as the good shepherd who knows his sheep and is known by his sheep. Gerkin says that, “this had painted a meaningful, normative portrait of the pastor of God’s people”. Reflection on the actions and words of Jesus as he related to people at various levels of social life gives us the model sine qua non for pastoral relationships with those immediately within our care and those strangers we meet along the way in life, Gerkin (1997:80). The writer was guided by Gerkin’s shepherding model of the prophetic role by pointing victims who were in pain to a hopeful future and playing the priestly role of caring for them.

Wisdom was applied in guiding the victims of lobola related afflictions in how to apply the knowledge they had about the Lord correctly. This was accomplished by taking a journey with those that were depressed and in pain due to lobola related issues with a view to helping them find inner healing and self-worth again. These were the pastoral perspectives which were convincingly lauded in this work. However, Gerkin is not able to journey deeply in reconstructing their lives. This is where Pollard helps with his pastoral care model of positive deconstruction.

2.3.2 Positive deconstruction:

Pollard’s method of evangelism of positive deconstruction was also used to gain entry into the lives of those who were emotionally damaged due to lobola related issues. Nick Pollard’s positive deconstruction is the process which seeks to help people to deconstruct (take apart) what they believe so that they can carefully examine the belief and analyze it. “The process is “positive” because this deconstruction is done in a

positive way in order to replace it with something better. This method is contrasted with branch literacy criticism known as deconstructionism which has negative connotations. It is a positive search for truth Pollard (1997: 44).

This Pollard's model of positive deconstruction was used to guide those who were depressed, damaged and in pain to discover and develop the good gifting in them, discard their failures and the disappointments of the past. This helped them to put their faith in God through Christ's suffering, pain and death on the cross in order to recover themselves and regain their self-worth again. This process leads the researcher to interview those who were affected by this process of lobola.

2.3.3 Social construction:

The use of qualitative research methodology in this study enabled the writer understand the social construction of the Xhosas. It as well provided good knowledge of the experience and the painful experience of not getting married due to arbitrary hikes in lobola settlement. According to Wilson, qualitative research relies on facts and knowledge under natural conditions. Hence, he sees qualitative methods as being useful for a study in order to address certain purposes, (Wilson, 1993, p. 239). Wilson also believes that a qualitative research design is used in order to explore, describe and explain a social psychological process, themes and patterns, social world, culture or setting. It also interprets life experiences in their natural context, (Wilson, 1993, p. 217).

2.4 RESEARCH DESIGN

Research design in its actual sense, is the planned methods and procedures that are generally used by researchers to collect and analyze data which are needed for specific studies, (Shukla, 2008, p. 29). This study is a qualitative, endogenous, explorative, descriptive, and contextual research. Through pastoral care and counselling, people and families in African communities who are in dire need of a solution to the problem of having ladies of marriageable age, but are not getting married due to lobola related issues would be greatly assisted.

2.4.1 Qualitative

Wilson states that qualitative research relies on firsthand knowledge under natural conditions and on unstructured data collection methods in which the investigator is the primary instrument or tool for data collection. "It is also useful for research work in order to unveil, explore, describe and explain social psychology processes, themes and patterns, or a social world, culture or setting and to interpret life experiences in their natural context" (Wilson, 1993, pp. 217,239).

It is imperative to note that Qualitative research gives us an understanding into some aspect of social life. It does not generate numbers like quantitative research, but generates words as data for analysis through open ended questions. Qualitative research aims at bringing an understanding to a research problem using the view of the local population it involves. Rubin and Babbie also added that the qualitative research method includes participant observation, direct observation and intensive interviewing, (Rubin & Babbie, 1993, p. 358).

The components of research in this study were carefully selected bearing in mind the research questions, aims and objective being to explain how the writer intended using the methods highlighted to go about this study. This also included the research tools to be used and appropriate research skills, the selection criteria, appropriate sample size for the study and the method of data analysis.

The effect of distortions on lobola negotiations during marriage was examined critically in order to ascertain whether distortions were responsible for some unrealized marriage dreams.

2.4.2 Unveiling the essence of lobola

Interviews were conducted within the ambits of the selection criteria. Aged men and women selected from various Xhosa communities within the Buffalo City Metropolitan Municipality were also engaged in critical discussions to unveil the original essence of lobola and why lobola should be paid during marriage rituals in Xhosa tradition for a marriage to be recognized and respected. However, we needed to find out what the culture looked like in the olden days and compare it with the current form in order to determine whether there had actually been a distortion. Most authors distinguished between some types of research designs which were exploratory and descriptive, (Smith & Albaum, 2010, p. 23) (Shukla, 2008, p. 30). In this work the researcher observed, investigated, verified, and dialogued with the research participants in Mdantsane, who had the lobola practice as their culture. Through interviews and observations, the research revealed if there had been any loss of value or content in this practice and the contributing factors. Where necessary the effects of the following factors were considered:

- Length of time,
- Civilization,
- Gender equality drive,
- Illicit sex while dating prior to the time of marriage,
- Cohabitation “vat-en-sit” form of marriage among others.

Cohabitation (man living with a woman as a wife without him paying lobola to the parents of the woman) is not an African culture. In this study the core culture of lobola among the research participants was verified.

The present study is in line with the above- stated ideas. After exploring the life experiences of victims of lobola complications, in Mdantsane, Eastern Cape Province in South Africa, meaning was given to their experiences and the guidelines to support those who were victims were developed and described for pastoral care givers to render help to those who were traumatized due to lobola related issues.

2.4.3 Endogenous Design

An endogenous design follows to address the research questions contained in this work. De Poy and Gilpin are of the opinion that “Endogenous research design is conceptualized, as a research conducted by researchers who are very much conversant with the culture, using their epistemology and their own structure of relevance” (De Poy & Gilpin, 1998, p. 128). Endogenous design is considered suitable for a research of this sort dealing with the Xhosa indigenous cultural practice of lobola. Due to the conserved nature of lobola practice in African culture, parents and elderly people in communities who seem to be benefiting from the inconsiderate hikes in lobola settlement cost

were invited to participate in this study. Young men and women of marriageable age who appeared to be negatively affected by the high price of lobola were encouraged to play a major role as participants and contributors to knowledge in this research.

2.4.4 Exploratory design

To gain new insights into the domain phenomenon of a relatively unknown field of study, exploratory research design is suitable in developing new hypotheses in respect of an existing phenomenon (Basson & Uys, 1991, p. 38). Based on the above view, this work was used to search out and unveil the causes of distortion in lobola practices and the impact it had on young folks in most Xhosa communities as it was prevalent among the participants. Meaning was given to how young folks were affected by distorted lobola practices in order to develop a pastoral care model for helping victims.

2.4.5 Descriptive design

Descriptive design was used to describe what was discovered while conducting the research interviews. The experience of those whose marriage intentions were adversely impacted by the current lobola pattern of practice was examined to find out if such systems were as a result of some certain distortions or inherent complications. Basson & Uys stated that collecting the accurate data on the phenomenon that is being studied is the most important consideration of descriptive studies (Basson & Uys, 1991, p. 38). De Poy & Gilpin are of the view that individual research that yields descriptive knowledge of population parameters most often do have relationships among those parameters. (De Poy & Gilpin, 1998, p. 305). In this study, the plight of those affected by lobola related issues was given a very clear description with models

to guide the Clergy and caregivers who are in the position to help those who were emotionally bruised.

2.4.6 Contextualization

Findings of qualitative research should be contextualized in order to achieve the placement of data into a local area where data was collected. De Poy & Gilpin argued that context specific is one of the central features of naturalistic inquiry that refers to the specific environment or field where the information derived is based on the study which is conducted, (De Poy & Gilpin, 1998, p. 304). This study was bound by the context of exploring the impact of the high cost of lobola in marriage in Xhosa communities caused by distortion in the practice and describing the guidelines for supporting folks who were suffering and were in pain due to lobola related issues.

2.5 FIELD WORK

The origins of modern ethnography are to be found in the late nineteenth century, when men like Boas and Rivers studied the ways of life of a variety of tribes that were included in the British Empire. These men were aware of the importance of recognizing that these so –called ‘primitive people’ had complex and elaborate cultures which could be destroyed by the supposedly civilizing influences of the European powers. Boas and Rivers cited by (Mcneil, 1990, p. 66). The writer did firsthand field work where he joined the Xhosa communities, learned their life style, ate their food and also noted and recorded his observations about lobola practices in various Xhosa communities.

In this study the writer explored the experiences of the Xhosa men and women in relation to lobola practice during marriage, the difficulties,

stress and pains they underwent in order to perform this rite of lobola settlement. He got very close to the people involved in the practice, seeing it in a variety of situations, they:

- Noted their problems; and
- Observed how they handled them.
- Participated in their conversations; and
- Watched their way of life as it flowed along.

This enabled him to come up with a pastoral perspective that identified distortion in lobola settlement procedures and processes and one of the root causes of the complications experienced in most aborted marriage plans. In the fieldwork of this study, investigation was focused on finding out what distorted lobola practices and how complicated the lobola practice impacted on marriage within the Xhosa people. To ensure the success of this study, the researcher followed the fieldwork stages as indicated below.

2.5.1 Gaining access into fieldwork

Fieldwork starts by first of all clearing the initial obstacles of being accepted into the selected setting or situation so that one can observe and talk to people about research questions, (Wilson, 1993, p. 218). In this study the researcher negotiated with key persons in the community including the young Xhosa men and women who were of marriageable age but were yet to get married to get permission to conduct this research. The heads of families were also consulted to get permission from parents. Access from outside and inside was negotiated to enable the researcher to recruit participants who were the respondents to his questionnaire during the study.

2.5.2 Ethical issues

As a researcher, one has to pay strong attention to ethical issues bordering strongly around the research. Beauchamp T.L stated clearly that, “the principles of Autonomy, Beneficence, Non-maleficence, Justice, full disclosure of study purpose, informed consents, voluntary participation, and ensured confidentiality of all information obtained are all essential in a research study” (Beauchamp, 2001).

- **Autonomy:** According to Davidson, autonomy implies the power or right of self-government. Philosophically he is of the belief that human will carries its guiding principle within itself. (Davidson, 1901, p. 63). Bearing this in mind, the researcher ensured that the rights of all participants in this research were upheld. In ensuring that ethical values were upheld, none of the participants were coerced into being part of the study. All participants accepted willingly to be part of this research work and no undue advantage was taken against any of the participants, because the paramount concern in this type of research was to protect those who had participated from unwelcome publicity and attention.
- **Beneficence:** Steven P. states that beneficence is action that is done for the benefit of others which can help prevent or remove harms or to simply improve the situation of others, (Steven, 2015). The result of this study would be beneficial to the victims of lobola related issues. Models which were developed in this study would be of immense help to those who were emotionally disturbed as a result of negative fall-outs during their marriage processes. This was accomplished through the various ways that were found in this study to provide pastoral care and counselling for the victims of complicated lobola processes. The Clergy who were working among the Xhosa people were empowered with useful information

that would position them better in playing a mediatory role between families during lobola settlement to prevent stalemate in the marriage processes.

- **Non- maleficence:** According to Steven, non – maleficence means to “do no harm.” Physicians and other professionals should refrain from providing ineffective treatments or acting with malice toward patients or clients. (Steven, 2015). It is believed that this research on pastoral perspective on lobola practices posed no threat to anyone’s life as it did not make use of any therapy. The study involves interviews only and adequate measures were put in place to ensure confidentiality.
- **Justice:** Davidson defined justice as the quality of being just or impartial. The principle of equity was upheld in this study. There was no segregation or discrimination in the selection of participants.

In carrying out the interviews, care was taken in the presentation of questions to the respondents. Questions were structured and presented in a manner that would not provoke discomfort, fright, or anxiety in the respondent. Every care was taken to keep the respondent relaxed during the interview. For all the participants, informed consent was obtained and the principle of confidentiality upheld.

- **Disclosure of study purpose:** Behnke suggested that instant disclosure be limited to achieve the purpose of appropriate professional consultations (Behnke, 2004, p. 78). The writer shared the purpose of the study with men and women of marriageable age but who were yet to get married. Parents, community leaders, and married couples were called to participate

in this study. The types of interviews, observations and other types of data collection procedures which were used in this study were clearly disclosed to all the participants who were interviewed. The scope and nature of their involvement in the research project were also made known to them.

- **Informed consent:** For consent to treatment or required commitment to be meaningful, a person must be able to understand the information he is given, which must be sufficient enough to enable him evaluate the available choices. He/She must also be given the free hand to make that choice, (UKCEN, 2011, p. 7). All the participants in this study freely consented to participation. None of the participants was coerced or unfairly pressurized to be part of this work. All of them were well informed about what was expected of them and at the same time were reassured that declining the invitation would not put them at a disadvantage. The consent to participate in this study was duly obtained from the participants. The unmarried folks who were of marriageable age and other stakeholders in lobola settlement rites who were respondents in this study were notified that their participation was strictly voluntary and that they reserved the right to turn down their role to participate without any punitive measure taken against them.
- **Confidentiality of all information obtained:** This implies being trusted to keep secrets, (Hawkins, 1996, p. 94). Interviews were conducted confidentially where so desired and the interviewer at each given time took each of the respondents to respond to the set of questions outlined in the interview guide. The responses that were provided by the respondents as well as the notes taken during the interview were kept in restricted access. Also, the

names of the respondents were not included on the notes in order to protect the identity of the respondents. The interviewer maintained a neutral opinion during the interview and no attempt was made to influence any of the respondents to give a particular answer. The selection criteria for this study included men and women of marriageable age but were not married, married couples and stakeholders in lobola settlement rites such as parents, clan leaders and heads of families.

2.5.3 Population sampling for this research:

What Pearson found in common with previous studies of ethnic minorities in Britain, was that it proved difficult finding a suitable sampling frame for electoral registers. A sample was finally constructed by using the files of a local vicar and a list of West Indian parents which was obtained from a local junior school, (Pearson, 1981, p. 47). The population of this study consisted of Xhosa men and women of marriageable age but not married; married couples and stakeholders in lobola settlement like the parents, clan leaders and heads of families. The researcher clearly specified the criteria to determine which participant qualified to participate in this research.

The criteria for inclusion in the population: According to (Polit & Hungler, 1995), when identifying population, it is critically important to be specific about the criteria for inclusion in the population. These criteria are referred to as eligibility criteria. For this study, the eligibility criteria were as follows:

- Participants had to be Xhosa men and women who were up to the age of getting married but were not yet married;

- Xhosa men and women that were living together without performing the marriage rite of lobola.
- Couples (where at least the bride was from the Xhosa tribe) who went through the lobola settlement process during their marriage rites.
- Xhosa Parents, elders and community leaders with excellent understanding of the Xhosa tradition of lobola settlement and who were residing in the Buffalo City Metro Municipality.

2.5.4 Sampling techniques: In this study, a purposive sampling technique and non-probability technique were used. Morse submitted that to obtain a purposeful sample, the researcher should select participants according to the needs of the study in a place known to be of the type that is wanted, (Morse, 1995, p. 149). This is the reason that the researcher drew his research population from the Xhosa tribe while limiting his scope to the Buffalo City Metro Municipality area. On the technique, Burns & Grove stated that, “the non-probability technique involves non-random sampling” (Burns & Grove, 1999, p. 147). The number of research subjects who participated in this study was determined through saturation of data as reflected by repeated themes.

2.5.5 Data Collection:

In this study, the methods of in-depth phenomenological focus on face to face interview, collection of field notes and collected information from field observations were used in carrying out this research. Occasionally, some questionnaires were administered telephonically. These methods are briefly described as follows:

In- depth phenomenological focus interviews. Polit et al refers to this method as an individual or more persons having face to face interactions between an interviewer and those being interviewed in order to understand their life experiences or situations as expressed through their own words, (Polit & Hungler, 1995, p. 201). In order to facilitate communication during interviews, the researcher presented his respondents who were participating in this study with some probing questions that were relevant for this work. Face to face interactions with the research participants enabled the researcher to understand their experiences which were expressed in their own words and to seek how they could be helped.

Field notes: Gilpin et al. stated that field notes are nationalistic recordings written by the investigator which are composed of two basic components, known as:

- (i) Observation, Recording, and Occurrences of events.
- (ii) The recordings of the personal feelings, impressions and expectations of an investigator toward events, (De Poy & Gilpin, 1998, p. 201).

Wilson identified observational notes, methodological notes, and personal notes as types of field notes (Wilson, 1993, p. 306). These field notes are explained briefly as follows:

Observation notes

The notes collected from observations made during fieldwork are a description of events experienced through watching and listening. These

contain the who – who are the people in the situation, what – what is the situation all about, how – how the situation impacts the communities.

Methodological notes

These types of notes are the instructions to oneself, the critiques of one's tactics and reminders about methodological approaches that might be fruitful in a research work.

Personal notes

These are the notes about an individual researcher's own reactions and reflections. In this project work the researcher recorded all the experiences of men and women who were affected by lobola related issues in Mdantsane, East London in Eastern Cape Province.

2.5.6 Data analysis

Brink refers to data analysis as in reality describing the data in meaningful terms (Brink, 1990, p. 155). Data analysis in its true sense requires researchers to be comfortable with developing categories of information and making of lists based on facts. A researcher should be open to the possibility of seeing contradictory or alternative explanations. The recorded interviews were transcribed verbatim and analyzed according to Creswell's eight-step descriptive methods (Brink, 1990, p. 155). The eight-step method is described as follows:

To have a sense of the whole gist: All transcriptions should be read very carefully and possibly jot down some ideas as they come to mind while reading.

Picking an interview: Is the selecting of the shortest, most interesting interview and go through it asking what it's all about? Think critically about the underlying meaning and write down any thoughts in the margin of the page as you progress.

Making a list of topics: After this task has been completed from the respondents, lists of all the topics were made. These topics were formed into columns that were arranged as major topics.

Forming of codes: This implies taking the list of topics back to the collected data; abbreviating the topics and codes before writing the codes next to the appropriate segment of the text.

Categorizing descriptive words: It implies finding the most descriptive wording and converting them into categories; and then reducing the total list of categories by grouping related topics together.

Arranging abbreviations alphabetically: This involves making a final decision on the abbreviation for each category and sorting these codes alphabetically.

To analyze: Data material belonging to each category was assembled together and preliminary analysis performed.

Recording existing data: All existing data were recorded where necessary.

2.6 STRATEGIES FOR ENSURING TRUSTWORTHINESS:

Guba's model for trustworthiness namely truth-value, applicability, consistency and neutrality was employed in this research work to ensure the validity and reliability of this study. (Lincoln & Guba, 1985, p. 89)

2.6.1 Truth-value:

According to Strydom et al, truth-value seeks to measure the level of confidence the researcher has been able to establish in the truth of the findings from the informants in the context in which the study was undertaken, (Strydom et al, 2004, p. 349). In this work the writer used face to face contact interviews with the Xhosa men and women who were adversely affected by distorted lobola practices and the stakeholders who were responsible in handling lobola matters within families and communities in Mdantsane, in Eastern Cape Province. This method assisted the researcher to get the first hand information relating to the experiences of those who were adversely affected by lobola related issues.

The confidence the researcher has concerning the truth-value of this study is based on the fact that all the informants were insiders of the lobola practices and were staying in Mdantsane location in East London within Eastern Cape Province, South Africa where Xhosa ethnic groups, who strongly believed in lobola settlement during marriage, were mostly found.

2.6.2 Credibility:

Hawkins defined credibility as being able to be believed or convincing, that is making a person feel certain that something is true, (Hawkins, 1996, p. 107). Credibility is "an alternative to internal validity which has the main aim of displaying that the study was identified accurately and

properly described. De Vos et al were of the view that applying the strategy of credibility will ensure the truth-value of a research work, (De Vos et al, 2004, pp. 331,351). They also observed that the strength of a qualitative study is determined by its validity which explores a problem or describes a setting with a pattern of interaction in social groups. This validity strategy was determined by the following criteria:

- ***Prolonged and varied field of research:*** The researcher had experience relating to the lobola practice as an African man who paid bride price (lobola) for his bride some years back. In this research he spent quality time with the respondents until data saturation was reached as reflected by repeated themes until no further information emerged.
- ***Triangulation:*** Erlandson is of the opinion that in triangulation, researchers should consult various types of sources for data collection in a study, (Erlandson, 1993, p. 115). In this work the sources consulted included various pieces of literatures which provided insights into the topic under study; Phenomenological focused interviews of Xhosa indigenes who practiced lobola settlement in marriage and field notes from which key information needed for this research work were gathered. Articles, information journals, internet searches were the sources of information that guided the researcher in carrying out this work. The credibility of this work and its findings are based on the fact that the sources of information are from participants who happen to be insiders of lobola practice and articles from proven writers on the subject under study.
- ***Interview technique:*** Face to face interviews which were used in gathering information for this study have long been the dominant interview technique in the field of qualitative research. Kvale

defined the qualitative research interview as an interview, whose purpose is to gather descriptions of the life-world of the interviewee with respect to interpretation of the meaning of the described phenomena, (Kvale, 1983, p. 174). Interviewing the Xhosa people who were the custodians of this beautiful African culture of lobola settlement in South Africa makes this study authentic. The technique of meeting participants on a one on one basis and some within their family and community units added more strength to the credibility of this research work. The researcher also interviewed some of the participants telephonically.

- **Member checking:** In qualitative research, Creswel understands member check (also known as informant feedback) to be a technique used by researchers to help improve the accuracy, credibility, validity and applicability of a study. (Creswel, 1994). The researcher held follow-up interviews with the Xhosa people who were participants in this study after studying the identified themes. Having these sessions with those who gave information about lobola related issues in this study assisted in confirming the validity of the study, its findings and the interpretation.

2.6.3 Applicability:

Applicability refers to the level to which the findings in a fieldwork are suitable to be applied unto other contexts and settings or other groups. These findings as well refer to the ability of generalizing the findings to larger populations, (Lincoln & Guba, 1985, p. 12). In this study, the researcher correctly and distinctly presented the experiences of the Xhosa men and women who were negatively affected by lobola related issues for comparison between the findings of this research and another

situation. In qualitative research, applicability is believed to be favorably ensured by the strategy of transferability.

2.6.4 Transferability:

According to Lincoln, transferability in a qualitative research is showing that the findings have applicability in other contexts. (Lincoln, 1998, p. 18). Davis also noted that transferability is the responsibility of the person seeking to apply the result of the study to a new context. In this way the responsibility of the original investigator ends in providing sufficient descriptive data to make such similarity judgments possible, (Davis, 1992, p. 606). Due to these facts, the researcher was compelled to use the methodology of transcription of interviews, data collection and analysis, with literature review. This ensured the usefulness of the study findings for other settings; meaning that the findings were applicable in other settings. For the researcher to achieve transferability, the criteria below were followed:

- **Dense description:** Davidson described dense as the proportion of bulk and compacted data collected in a study, (Davidson, 1929, p. 247). The researcher purposefully utilized the sample of Xhosa men and women in Mdantsane, East London in the Eastern Cape Province to gather data on their experiences regarding lobola practice during marriage. In this study, the researcher comprehensively described the methods that were used when dealing with different informants.
- **Consistency:** De Vos et al is of the opinion that the consistency concept in ensuring trustworthiness of a research seeks to establish whether the same findings discovered in a research work would emerge to be same in another similar study with the same informants, (De Vos et al, 2004, p. 331). They also believed that

consistency is ensured by the strategy of dependability. While dependability is an alternative to reliability which compelled the researcher to feel being accountable for the changing conditions in the phenomenon chosen for the study. This strategy enhanced the possibility of similar results if it happened that the study is repeated.

- **Neutrality:** Diebel stated that the term neutrality implies that an inquiry is free of bias or is separated from the researcher's perspectives, background, position, or conditioning circumstances, (Diebel, 2008). In this work, the researcher resolved to remain connected to his experiences and emotions by allowing the Xhosa participants that were interviewed to share their experiences without being influenced by him. The researcher constantly observed that the findings reflected the experience or views of the research participants on lobola practices in Xhosa culture.
- **Conformability:** Lincoln & Guba viewed conformability as the degree to which the findings are the product of the focus of the inquiry and not of the biases of the researcher, (Lincoln & Guba, 1985). This in reality is about the concept of objectivity that stresses the need to enquire whether another study would confirm the findings of the research work done.

2.7 CONCLUSION:

Chapter 2 of this dissertation dealt mainly on the exploration of Xhosa men and women experiences in relation to lobola practices in Mdantsane, East London, Eastern Cape Province. Qualitative design and research methods were utilized to describe and explain the social world and culture of the Xhosa people in Mdantsane. Strategies for ensuring trustworthiness were meticulously observed throughout the

research. Gerkin's shepherding model and positive deconstruction of Pollard with a Pastoral perspective for counselling, supporting and caring for those who were traumatized and emotionally damaged were outlined in this chapter before dealing with the concept and culture of lobola in the next chapter.

CHAPTER THREE

THE CONCEPTS AND CULTURE OF LOBOLA

3.1 INTRODUCTION

The relevant concepts of involving families and the whole community in lobola practice during the marriage of African sons and daughters will be discussed in this chapter. This is necessitated by the communal nature of traditional African people in Southern African locations and in most African Nations. These concepts will be treated circumspectly and subsequently integrated in relation to each other. Due to the fact that Culture and its different elements deserved being treated carefully, lobola and its practitioners will be meticulously handled in this study. How the African culture of lobola got colonized by colonial masters is high-lighted. Lobola practices, as an example of a cultural element which if distorted can complicate a marriage process, were discussed. In addition to the nature of lobola, its form, purpose, significance and transformation are discussed. The Consequences of distorting the practice and the resultant complications are also outlined in this chapter.

The western world view about lobola and the practice of lobola in Xhosa culture and in other African cultures are discussed together in order to tease out and clearly articulate the near suitable way of assisting the people to eliminate what used to distort the practice. Reasons cited by those advocating for the abolition of lobola practice and the views of those who are in support of the practice are outlined. The writer's views concerning lobola and how it affects the African people, mainly the Xhosas are boldly articulated in this chapter.

African culture as it is among the Xhosa's has a standard form of marriage which requires the consent of the bride's and the groom's families and that of the intending couple also for the marriage to proceed. In most cases marriage in this part of the world often involves the whole community due to the communal nature of cultural belief in African society. The agreement of the intending couple with their families is symbolized by notable stages of negotiations culminating in a final presentation of drinks and lobola (bride price) paid by the groom's family to the bride's family. Lobola payment to the bride's family by the groom and his family legitimizes the marriage, in African culture. Lobola settlement gives the husband legal rights to all the children that his wife will give birth to.

Mathambane reiterated that "lobola complicates love" (Mathabane, 1994, p. 14). Based on this fact, even if people's love was real, it is only lobola that legitimizes it in the eyes of the society and their parents in the African communities as it is among the Xhosa people.

3.2 AFRICAN CONCEPTS AND CULTURES REGARDING MARRIAGE AND THE FAMILY

Although African cultures and values are currently being subjected to strong pressures, coming mainly from the West, and it seem to be changing fast particularly in urban environments, marriage amongst the Xhosa communities is far more than love between a man and a woman. In the early days, when a man proposed marriage to the woman he loves, if she does not like him sufficiently she will turn down the proposal outright. On the other hand, if she likes the man's proposal, she was bound not to give consent to the proposal on her own accord until she had discussed the matter with her mother and asked for her permission.

Among the Xhosas', occasions of this kind are among the few when a married woman does have final say in her family affairs. If the mother withholds her consent from her daughter towards the marriage proposal from the man, then that would be final in a strong Xhosa family setting in those days. The girl would obey her mother, despite her own feelings for the man who proposed marriage to her, because tribal custom and family rules have to be adhered to strictly within the Xhosa and other African communities.

If on the other hand, the girl's mother likes the man that proposed marriage to her daughter and his family, it would be in order for her to agree to her daughter establishing willingness for the man and his family to start up the lobola negotiations. Mbiti who happened to be one of the most knowledgeable scholars on African culture has this to say on marriage in African societies:

“For African people, marriage is the focus of existence. It is the point where all the members of families of a given community meet, the departed, the living and those yet to be born” (Mbiti, 1990, p. 130).

For these simple reasons, every typical Xhosa Lady, no matter how civilized she may seem, once marriage is proposed to her be it online or personal contact, the culture places on her the responsibility to make it known to her mother and family and wait for their consent. In the olden days, it is the groom's parents that used to find a wife (from a decent home within the community) for their son, but in this modern time getting parental consent from both families helps in involving African families in marriage plans. This is one of the measures in place to avoid one getting into a romantic relationship with somebody of the same clan as it is believed that they are close relatives.

The Xhosas' grew up with the idea that marriage was not an all-personal and private affair. They have grown up to understand that family roles and involvement in contracting a marriage within the African setting is unavoidable because it assists in strengthening the marriage relationship. It is the writer's believe that non-Africans should respect this culture because attempts to destroy or distort it have brought about so many problems in marriages among African people in South Africa of late. If there is any part of the cultural practice of lobola that needs to be transformed, the agents of such transformation should work in collaboration with the owners of lobola practices in order to achieve favorable goals.

3.3 CULTURE

The practice of Lobola as a core culture of the African people is believed to have been traditionally handed down to them from their forefathers. "Culture is the customs and traditions which are communicated among a group of people who share a common way of life" (Hawkins, 1996, p. 112). In most African culture, it is rude to ask someone his age or how much he earns, but this is not an issue in most western cultures. Culturally it is acceptable in some countries to eat dogs like the Chinese and others. However, it is a taboo to eat dogs in some other cultures. The cultural perspective on eating of beef in Asian and Indians is different from that of the American culture. A cow in India is seen as a sacred animal rather than an epicurean treat according to Hinduism, which is still the largest religion in the Indian communities. Among the Xhosa in South Africa, a cow is kept to show wealth and given out as bride price to get a wife. Griswold is of the opinion that the elements of social life are considered to be representative of human culture, stories, beliefs, media, ideas, artworks, food, religious practices, fashions,

language, rituals, specialized knowledge and common sense (Griswold, 2004, p. 16).

Just as it is the case with the majority of social life elements, culture cannot be seen to be necessarily rigid and absolutely uniform in any given society. Culture can be relatively stable but at the same time contested, which often lead to cultural change in most societies as it seems to be the with lobola settlement in some Xhosa communities. A clear understanding of the concept of culture, presents culture to be more than the object or behaviour of a society, but according to Griswold, culture also includes norms, values, beliefs or expressive symbols.

Norms: are the way people behave in a given society

Values: are how they think the universe operates

Expressive symbols: are often the representation of social norms, values and beliefs. (Griswold, 2004, p. 3).

Gusfield in trying to contextualize culture stated that the definition of culture is understood to include some elements which tend to differentiate one group or society from others. With the concept of acquired or learned behaviour, culture encompasses objects and symbols, norms, values, and beliefs that pervade human social life, (Gusfieds, 2006, p. 43). In regards to what has been shared so far, culture does not disregard individual variation among members of any given African community where lobola settlement is still in practice. Due to the fact that members of such communities can differ in ways of thinking, behaviour, and feeling, they also hold in common understandings of symbols and representations through which they relate among themselves, thereby making cultural practices such as

lobola settlement rites to have a set of shared meanings within the society.

3.4 THE ORIGIN OF CULTURE

The word culture is derived from the Latin root “colere” which means cultivate as well as to adore. Primarily culture is believed to be the cultivation of the human mind through the love of ideals, Shivapremananda ‘affirms that even though the purpose of culture is cultivation of the mind and to acquire a deeper insight into the soul of a tradition, which has the goal of an integral vision of life, self-knowledge and strength of character; Its aim and objective are to sublimate our emotions, free our lives from fears and superstitions, makes us become better human beings and create an active individual with social conscience (Shivapremananda, 2008, p. 12).

Xhosa people who strongly believe in the culture of lobola as part of the marriage ritual should endeavour to conduct themselves in a manner that is aimed at achieving its original purpose of building relations between the respective families. This will help to eliminate some of the elements which often distort the practice. Removing the impediments to the practice of this beautiful culture of lobola will enable the two individuals involved in a marriage agreement to achieve the original purpose of building relationship between the respective families. This is because marriage is seen as more than a union between two individuals in the African setting. Bearing in mind that lobola is as old as the tribes in Africa, it is important that those who hold the Western worldview should allow the African people practicing this culture to do so freely with dignity. By so doing, the people who did participate in this practice can enjoy life free of emotional bruises, fears and despondency. This will

inculcate into the people an inner feeling of being better human beings in the community they live in.

3.4.1 Culture Anthropology Views

Anthropologists are of the assumption that all human beings do develop gradually or naturally (that is evolved). They are of the belief that all humans have cultures which must in some way be as a result of human evolution. They are also of the view that biological evolution produced an inclusive notion of culture. Morgan the principal founder of scientific anthropology and some other anthropologists argued that through the course of evolution, human beings evolved a universal human capacity to classify experiences, and encode them before communicating them symbolically. They are of the view that a symbolic system can be learnt, taught, and then begin to develop independently of biological evolution that produces an inclusive notion of culture. An idea that anthropologist could apply equally to non-literate societies. It means one human being can learn belief, value, or way of doing something from another, even if they are not biologically related. This capacity for symbolic thinking and social learning is a product of human evolution which confounds older arguments about nature versus nurture, (Morgan, 1870, p. 218, last updated in 2015).

Lobola practices among the Xhosa people are believed to have been traditionally passed down from their ancestors to them. Therefore, every true Xhosa man or woman has learnt and believed that lobola is part of a marriage ritual and should be valued and seen as a way of authenticating marriage among the Xhosa speaking people of different clans and communities. Mtuze states in his work that this culture is believed to be as old as the Xhosa tribes and is regarded as an essential contract in any marriage because children born of women whom lobola

was paid for had all the right to be looked after at their mother's home and still bear the surname of their father who paid the required lobola for their mother, (Mtuze, 2004, p. 33).

3.4.2 Culture Historians and Archaeologists views

In as much as cultural anthropologists are interested in the description and comparison of all human cultures, they also search out and describe diverse cultures anywhere they may be found. The archaeologist's attempts to reconstruct the cultural forms of the past based on written documents describing aspects of life in former times written by historians. It is the historians who examine the beliefs which people hold about their past history and test them against existing historical documents to be able to reconstruct and develop their own culture.

As it is in South Africa, where the custom of lobola is widely practiced, the marriage union was previously concluded in terms of customary law, where consensus was sought between the families of the prospective bride and groom's family, but since 2008, the Recognition of Customary Marriage, (Act 120 of 1998) consensus is now required only between the individuals, and not their families anymore. Geertz argued that human physiology and neurology get developed in conjunction with the first cultural activities and concluded that human instincts were culturally formed, (Geertz, 1973, p. 170).

Historically, the traditional culture of the Bantu, Nguni, Sotho-Tswana, Venda, Ndebele and Tsonga's are based upon an established linguistic classification. Their groupings are geographically localized having the dialect clusters within a community as is seen among the Xhosa. With regards to lobola practices they are bounded and have to be understood

as a whole, on their own terms. The result will make one believe in cultural relativism, which suggests that there are no better or worse cultures; there are just different cultures which can be seen as the main means of human adaptation to the natural world.

3.4.3 Cultural Psychology

Altman and Chemers, as environmental psychologists submitted that people's relationships, orientation and behavior towards their surroundings and environment are often influenced by culture. And that 'cognitions, feelings and behaviour are commonly shared by a group of people in a consensual way (Altman & Chemers, 1980, p. 22).

In order for a culture to exist, people within a given community must agree verbally or nonverbally with the community member's ways of view, conceptualize the world, and to behave. Some persons may not agree with all aspects but because they share a common care of consensus they have to agree with unharmed culture and tradition within the society they belong. This encourages all African men and women that originated from communities where lobola settlement during marriage is still in practice to do the right thing of settling the lobola of the woman they love before having sexual relations and making babies together.

Pastorally, God's holy word is against fornication (that is a man and a woman who are not legally married but having illicit sex), and cohabitation (vat en sit in Afrikaans - that is unmarried man and woman living together as if they were married), making babies out of marriage is forbidden in the scriptures, (1Corinthian7:2). For this reason, Paul the Apostle's epistle to the Gentile Nations instructed them to avoid

fornication, let every man have his own wife, and let every woman have her own husband.

As a pastoral care giver, I am of the opinion that the African practice of ensuring that a man gets married to a woman before they can be recognized and celebrated as husband and wife within the African community is a decent and godly way of life which should be upheld. Therefore, the idea of a man and a woman living together (vat en sit) without lobola settlement is a taboo in an African context. This makes the women in such relationships to feel worthless and useless in the sight of the people within the African environment they live in.

Bruner emphasized that an important part of human psychology is meaning, processes and transactions involved in the construction of meanings, (Bruner, 1990, p. 330). These meanings can only be realized by individuals participating in the symbolic systems afforded by the embraced culture, not by one acting in isolation within his or her community. Although Shweder a cultural psychologist, among others, has criticized the notion of value-free knowledge; He views cultural psychology as the study of the way cultural traditions and social practices regulate, expresses and transform the human psychic, resulting less in psychic unity for human kind than in ethnic divergences in mind, self and emotion, (Shweder, 1991, p. 73).

Sincerely, nobody in his or her right mind would think of finding meaning in life by wanting to do things in isolation. So, for an average Xhosa man or woman to find meaning with regards to marriage within the Xhosa community, it would be wise for them to participate in lobola practices in the marriage ritual in line with the symbolic system afforded by the culture. If we go by Altman's view that one may not agree in total with all

the elements contained in the culture, he or she may have to dialogue with the relevant community members with whom they share a common consensus, for them to be aware of their willingness to agree with only the parts of the culture that does not contradict their beliefs.

3.4.4 Culture Sociology

Cultural sociologists look for how people make meaning in their lives out of the different cultural elements that surrounds them because sociology is the science that treats humans as social beings. In the origin, organization and development of human society and human culture tend to seek the way of building good and meaningful relationship within societies, (Davidson, 1929, p. 916). This made Giddens a renowned sociologist to argue that for culture to continue existing, it had to be preserved, either through socialization or enculturation. It means that through socialization and enculturation the shared beliefs, values, norm, morals and styles of behaviour can be passed on to others, who are usually children and new members of a given society, (Giddens, 1993, p. 12).

In most cases the recipients of culture internalize all this and make it part of themselves. This process helps preserve communication and transfer of culture from generation to generation. In the process, social virtues are also taught alongside other beliefs and practices. Unfortunately, prejudices and stereotypes towards other groups are also taught and learnt. An average Xhosa woman can only find meaning and self-worth in her marriage life if the man who loves her paid lobola before having her as his wife. This is because most Xhosa people are recipients of lobola as their culture. They have internalized this cultural practice as part of themselves and their traditional identity. Therefore,

anybody trying to introduce a different culture to them will definitely meet a very strong resistance. So I concur with Giddens argument that clean culture such as lobola for the Xhosa's should be preserved through socialization and enculturation of shared beliefs, values, norm, morals and styles of behaviour of the Xhosa.

3.4.5 Ethnocentrism and Cultural Relativism

Ethnocentrism is the tendency to look at the world basically from the perspective of one's own culture. There is this claim by many people that ethnocentrism occurs in every society, ironically, ethnocentrism may be something that is common in all cultures. Sumner, a social evolutionist and professor of political and social science, defined ethnocentrism as "the sentiment of cohesion, internal comradeship, and devotion to the in-group against the out-group" (Sumner, 1919, p. 14).

Ethnocentrism often entails the beliefs that one's own race or ethnic group is the most important and that some or all aspects of its culture are superior to those of other groups. Within this ideology, individuals will judge other groups in relation to their own particular ethnic group or culture, especially with concern to language, behaviour, customs, and religion. It also involves the incapacity to acknowledge that culture differentiation does not imply inferiority of those groups who are ethnically distinct from one's own. The lobola culture among the Xhosa speaking people does not make the Xhosa to be more primitive or inferior to those of a different culture or with western beliefs. It would be wrong for ethno centrist to think or believe that their own culture is better and superior to that of the Xhosa's who have the lobola practice as their culture.

3.4.6 Culture Theories

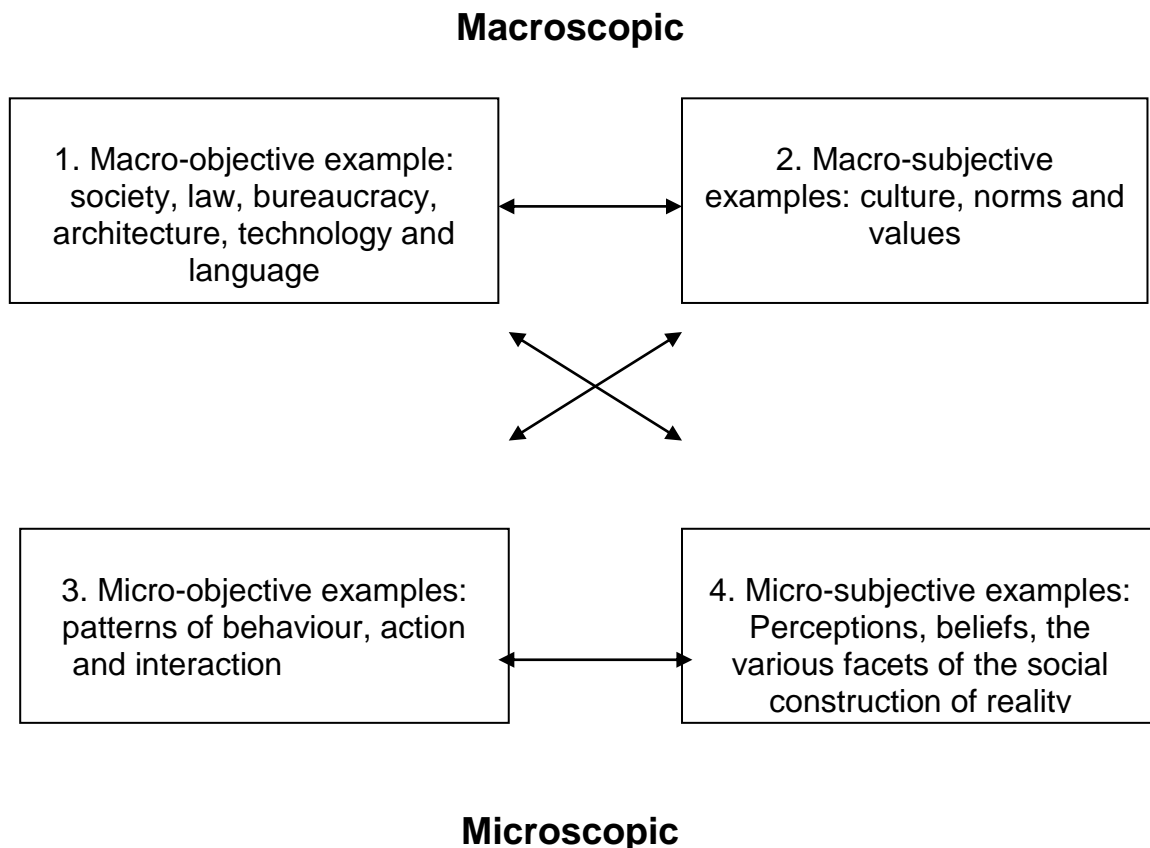
Numerous theoretical approaches are employed by sociologists to conceptualize and understand the dynamics of culture. Historically, arguments about the relationship between culture and nature, culture and society including material social processes which tend to split between high and low culture usually interplay between cultural traditions with cultural difference in diversity.

Social and cultural theories normally strive to explain how people relate with each other and the surrounding environment. According to many theories which have gained broad acceptance among sociologists and anthropologists, culture exhibits the way that humans interpret their biology and their environment. This made William's emphasis on culture as a 'whole way of life' of an individual that originated from a particular culture as it is with a Xhosa man or woman in relation to lobola which is part of their culture, (Williams, 1967, p. 115).

Thompson's emphasis on culture as the way in which groups 'handle' the raw material of social and material existence that tend to open up new ways of thinking about culture. In line with these points of view, culture as it is with lobola practices among the Xhosa people becomes such an integral part of existence within their environment, and most cultural change that happens in regards to African traditions can be attributed to human adaptation to historical events. The integrationist model advocated by Ritzer did propose four highly interdependent elements in this sociological model. According to Ritzer the role of culture in sociological research ranges from objective (society) to subjective (culture and cultural interpretation) and the other is ranging

from the macro-level (norm) to the micro-level (individual level beliefs) (Ritzer & Goodman, 2004, p. 16).

Ritzer's integrative (micro-macro) theory of social analysis through this slide would further help in explaining culture.



Ritzer's integrationist model depicts how cultural norms can influence individual behaviour. It also grants that individual level values, beliefs, and behaviours can, influence the macro-level culture. This is in line with the discovery of Halle that though there can be cultural differences based on class, they are not unique to class, (Halle, 1993, p. 17). Those folks who claim to belong to the upper class tend to influence those of the lower class to do away with their culture in order for western culture to belong to the higher class. Societies in Africa should be allowed to

decide on how they want to co-exists together with others outside their own culture and still retain their norms and beliefs. No one group should use their culture and language to subjugate the Xhosa and other African culture such as the tradition of lobola, in the name of bringing civilization to them. The culture of lobola in Africa and Xhosa tradition is a beautiful culture if it is not distorted and the practice is void of complications.

3.4.7 The function of culture

Culture is seen to play a specific function in human social life. According to Griswold, the sociological analysis of culture begins at the premise that culture provides orientation, wards off chaos and directs behaviour toward certain lines of action and away from others, (Griswold, 2004, p. 4) . Griswold reiterates this point by explaining that groups and societies need collective representations of themselves to inspire sentiments of unity and mutual support, and culture fulfills this need. Culture is believed to have a certain utilitarian function which is the maintenance of order as the result of shared understandings and meanings.

On the other hand, culture can also function to create and sustain social inequalities. According to Collins, cultural notions of race, class, gender and sexualities may be used to explain and justify societal level patterns of oppression and privilege. By allowing social beings to believe existing inequalities simply reflect the way things have always been. As a result, efforts for social justice and equality must often overcome cultural patterns that lead dominants and subordinates to blindly accept existing social orders as natural or inevitable, (Collins, 2005, p. 18).

Collins and some other sociologists thus explore whether or not the shared understandings and meanings maintained via cultural practice resist or reproduce that ongoing subordination of minority groups. The

good people of Xhosa's origin like others of Western culture needs collective representation of themselves to inspire sentiments of unity and mutual support, and the culture of lobola settlement during marriage does help to fulfill this need. Unwelcomed social or cultural order should not be forced down the throat of the Xhosa people or other African minority groups who practice lobola in their cultural practices.

3.5 CULTURAL CHANGE

Cultural change and local adaptation can be based upon historical reconstruction or archaeological evidence. In existing societies, cultural change is a reflection of the world wide impact of processes of modernization and subsequent colonization of other nations by western European nations. Similar phenomena can be found in the Hellenistic cultures penetrating into Asia, Buddhism spreading from India to China and South East Asia, or the Romanization of western Asia, northern Africa and Europe.

The events of this nature are marked by the massive confrontation of different cultures leading to rapid cultural changes and re-adaptations of the societies involved, (Beals et al, 1997, p. 620). Based on the above mentioned facts, current cultural changes in most African and Xhosa societies may be as a result of modernization influenced by western culture. Different world views of modern day Xhosas tend to make communities undergo rapid cultural change in response to a variety of overwhelming pressures generated by larger western cultures. As a result of this, local or traditional Xhosa cultures such as lobola practices can be impacted upon by western cultures. In this sense, the colonization mind set and modernization can be used to describe the inevitable interplay between the national societies and the alternative life

styles exhibited by the people of Xhosa origin in regards to the lobola practice.

By acculturation, those of a western worldview that came to Africa as Colonial masters came with some very good concepts but the wrong side of their actions was the aspect of them wanting to colonize the cultures of the African people who became their political colonies, by replacing their cultures with European cultures, norms, beliefs and values even on how to raise their children. Because the Europeans believed that natives could not easily adopt western cultural practices, then the available option to colonize African culture would be to destroy these cultures and traditions; training African children with Western beliefs which taught them that marriage was a contract between the two partners in love, a man and woman or a man and another man or woman to woman if you wish. They were taught to contract their marriages at designated places such as home affairs or courts without parental and family consent or involvement.

This type of marriage is totally unafrikan. According to Loewen, in those days when natives proved able to practice religion and parenthood in non-European ways, such people in nations colonized by Europeans were put to death, sent to conditioning camps, or moved into uncultivated western lands where they were required to form their own communities based on European values and practices, (Loewen, 1995, p. 24).

Griswold points out that it seems as though culture comes from individuals, but there are larger, collective, and long-lasting aspects of culture that cannot be the creation of single individuals as they predate and post-date individual humans and contributors to culture. To address

this conflict, Griswold presented a sociological perspective which posits that cultural works are collective, not individual creations. Cultural objects can be best understood by seeing them not as unique to their creators but as the fruits of collective production, (Griswold, 2004, p. 53). According to Griswold's suggestions, culture changes through the contextually dependent and socially situated actions of individuals. Macro-level culture influences the individual who, in turn, can influence that same culture. This illustrates how culture can change over time, yet remains somewhat constant. It is really important to acknowledge the fact that Griswold is talking about cultural change and not the actual origins of culture. He is of the belief that culture, just like society, has been in existence since the beginning of humanity.

Society and culture co-exist because humans have social relations and meanings tied to those relations (e.g. brothers, neighbors, lovers, and friends). Culture as a super-phenomenon has no real beginning. Culture has existed for as long as humans have, and will likely exist as long as we do. Based on Griswold's view, which I strongly subscribe to, the traditional culture of lobola practice as a super-phenomenon has existed as long as the African and Xhosa communities existed. Though there may be instances where some family heads or community leaders may have exhibited actions that could cause change and distortion in the practice of lobola, but all that has not been able to destroy the practice in most Africa and Xhosa communities.

There may have been some slight changes in the way the practice is done, but because cultural works are collective, not of individual creations, it would be difficult for western civilization and modernization to eradicate the lobola practice because it is one of Africa's strong

cultural elements; it is most likely to survive for decades to come, (Khumalo, 1995, p. 53).

3.5.1 ACCULTURATION

Acculturation refers to the process of an individual who has abandoned traditional cultural practices to embrace modern cultural practices. The same can also be said of a person with the ability to participate in both traditional and modern culture. Others who have adapted more readily to changes taking place in their own culture or some other individuals who have migrated from one society to another and have joyfully adapted to the new society can also be described as acculturated. It is individuals that influence other people's world-views, beliefs, perceptions, values and behaviour. Giddens adopted a reciprocal relationship model that described acculturation as a cultural flow from a dominant to subdominant socio-cultural system where they mutually influence one another, (Giddens, 1993, p. 28). Therefore, acculturation can be seen as the contact between two cultures, that is the assimilation of traditional cultures into modern cultures viewed as essentially Western in character.

Due to the strong Western influence on the South African people subsequent to colonization, most Xhosas have been combining their way of life with the Western way of life, this tends to influence many aspects of their lives, from the way they dress, eat, behave and even conduct themselves during marriage which in most cases can distort marriage process in the Xhosa context. Today, South Africa is a nation of many distinctive cultures, which roughly can be divided into two main groups. The first of these includes European cultures practiced by those whose bearers are mainly people of the white race and others of other

racess and their descendants in the country who happened to have been influenced by the culture of Western colonial masters.

Most Xhosa people and other blacks in South Africa who are under the control of culture conquerors have decided to take over new ways of living, retaining only a very few elements of their traditional cultures. This made an author like Maclean to use very harsh words against the culture of lobola settlement practice among the African blacks. He alluded that lobola in black culture is a type of slave trade, and is simply the purchase of as many women by one man as he desires or can afford to pay for, (Maclean, 1906, p. 70).

The second aspects are Xhosa cultures and that of other non-whites within different communities in South Africa, which differ markedly not only from European culture, but also from other cultures. I tend to disagree with Maclean's view because the issue of polygamy (that is a man having more than one wife at a time) depends on the choice of an individual as it was with Lamech the first polygamist in the scriptures. (Genesis 5:25-31). Lobola in black culture should be seen as the cultural identity of the black Africans, not as a type of slave trade that promotes polygamy, because there are many wealthy black African men who believe in lobola practices but are not polygamists. I concur with Mupotsa's view about the culture of lobola, he explains that lobola is a means to a goal, is a process of negotiation that results in the coming together of two families as a means of legitimizing the union between two people in Africa Xhosa communities, (Mupotsa, 2008).

From the look of things, it may seem as if acculturation only takes place between different societies or cultural systems, but that is not always the case. In another sense, acculturation can also take place between

individuals of the same cultural group as well. This can occur when there is a contact between urbanized and rural members of a culture, reason being that urban culture is different from rural culture. In reality rural individuals may have to undergo cultural change when in a relationship with a person from an urban area. In actual sense, acculturation is what influences diffusion in cultural change.

3.5.2. Diffusion

Diffusion speaks of the process of cultural borrowing. The borrowing of one culture by others serves to illustrate processes of diffusion in which a particular innovation is modified so that the consistency of a total culture can be maintained. Morgan stated that the survival of any cultural pattern, be it large or small, depends strongly upon its diffusion or spread from one individual to another or from one culture to the other, (Morgan, 1965, p. 86). The main goal of traditional studies of diffusion is the reconstruction of history. Morgan's work gave us a clear idea of an inevitable progression of all cultures through a series of stages of development.

However, later scholars granted the possibilities of technological evolution which appears to encounter difficulties in tracing the evolution of such aspects of culture as language, religion, art, and philosophy. White as a leading neo-evolutionist expounds his view on energy and society. Through his work, he was able to stir up revival by the time historical reconstructions and grand evolutionary schemes seemed to have fallen into general disrepute during the 1940s, (White, 1949, p. 106). In such cases both electronic and print media do play a very important role in transmitting the culture of different societies to others. Woods came up with this concept that cultural growth can happen

through borrowing of ideas which have been invented elsewhere, but in most cases, is not everything borrowed or offered that is often accepted, instead is its traits, values, or beliefs that are accepted or rejected on the basis of their utility, compatibility, and meaning in the receiving culture, (Wood, 1975, p. 37).

Although modernization, urbanization and the borrowing of other cultures through media bombardment do influence the behavior of some Xhosa people within their local communities, the tradition of lobola settlement during marriage is still being upheld very strongly. It is obvious that some diffusion is happening amongst them but most Xhosa families are still consistent in maintaining a total cultural pattern of lobola practices. The example of the Xhosas strong belief in the culture of lobola settlement during marriage indicates how processes of modernization or innovation can lead to the development of plural societies in nations around the globe.

3.5.3. Innovation

Change in culture can involve the process of innovation which may result from error, problem-solving behaviour, or from a combination of both. A successful innovator generally has access to new information or ideas, ways of combining such information's or ideas in new ways, motivation for trying new things, and an ability to convince others of the desirability of the innovation.

Spindler views such cultural change as being initiated through contact between two socio-cultural systems, which can be either in the form of acculturation or diffusion. Innovative behaviour, novel, or deviant can be a beginning of social or cultural change, (Spindler,1977, p. 54). From every indication, innovation can be seen as the basis of cultural change

due to the fact that acculturation or diffusion could be conceptualized more on a social level, innovation therefore usually starts with an individual. Scholars like Woods alluded that every cultural pattern which is in existence was an innovative idea of an individual, (Woods, 1975, p. 37). Innovative people are usually adventurous and daring people who are always willing to put their lives on the line for the cause they believe in. Agents of change in communities are innovative people who most of the times are defiant of the existing norms of their culture.

In an existing cultural system there are some preconditions necessary for new innovative concepts and traits which should be diffused and accepted. According to Triandis, these pre-conditions involve the following:

- Some sort of meaning should be assigned to a concept or item individuals are interested in;
- Individuals should have a feeling that the values gained from new items or concepts in an innovation are greater than the values lost.
- The gained innovation should be compatible with already existing values and experiences.
- Concept behind the innovation should be communicable.
- Strong conviction and clear understanding of the new idea;
- Motivation and drive for trying something new.

In addition to the forms of cultural changes mentioned above, the author is of the assertion that urbanization can also cause cultural change. In most African countries as prevalent in South Africa, people often leave their rural homes in search of work or for greener pasture in towns and cities. As rural people migrate to urban areas, they end up mingling with others from different ethnic groups and cultures. Through exposure to

technology; mass media; innovative ideas; these people of different backgrounds end up influencing each other as they interact together.

This often lead to their different cultures getting diffused with each other, as a result of this, a new cultural system that is different from the culture back home usually emerges. Due to the emergence of this new culture, old beliefs, values and customary practices are distorted, slightly modified or completely changed or discarded, either with replacement or without any. From every indication, urbanization is believed to be responsible for the drastic changes in the cultural systems in Africa and most especially in South Africa as it impacts on lobola practices among the Xhosas.

It is true that cultural change can be a universal and a permanent occurrence, but Manganyi alluded that there are core cultural elements that tend to persist over time in spite of attacks meted against them by those who are opposed to such cultural practices, (Manganyi, 1991). Lobola in an African context happens to be one of the core elements Manganyi talked about in his work. The culture of lobola in the Xhosa community consists of ways of strengthening the agreements between the couples involved in marriage and their families. Although lobola cultural practices seems to be undergoing gradual modifications, but it does not appear it will lead to it dying a slow death, because the owners of this culture still hold on to it firmly despite the challenges confronting the practice. Reason for this study is to investigate whether complications in the practice are due to the distortion of the process, (Woods, 1975).

3.6 CONCLUSION:

Culture is the characteristic behaviours of some particular group of people as it is visible among the Xhosa, but it also exists in the form of the concepts, plans, and common understandings that are acknowledged by the members of the believed culture. One of the characteristic behaviours of the traditional Xhosa's is for the family of the intending groom to negotiate the lobola for the bride to be with her family. Culture, then exists obviously as a characteristic way of doing things and subtly as concepts and understandings that must be inferred rather than directly observed.

Clear understanding that any human being of a different culture can as well be influenced by a Xhosa person, and that a Xhosa can learn to think and act like the members of any other human group and culture, then the westerners and other critics of lobola practices should learn to accept that Africans and Xhosa see the culture of lobola settlement during marriage as their core culture and their identity which should be respected. In the next chapter lobola practices and the procedures towards lobola settlement will be dealt with.

CHAPTER FOUR

LOBOLA PRACTICES AND PROCEDURES

4.1 INTRODUCTION:

Lobola (bride price or Bride wealth) as it is called in IsiXhosa language is one of the prestigious practices that identifies who the Xhosa's are as indigenous Black Africans among the nations of the world. Bride price is called *lobolo* or *lobola* in Zulu, Xhosa, Swazi, Northern and Southern Ndebele, *Mahadi* in Sesotho, *Roora* in Shona, *Magadi* in Sotho, *Owo-ori Iyawo* in Western Nigeria, *Igho-uhumhun* in Esan of South-South Nigeria, and *Ego-isi Nwayi* in Eastern Nigeria.

Lobola is widely practiced in most African countries; this is an ancient culture amongst the Xhosas and is believed to be a tool that creates a non-existing relationship between the two families that were not known to each other previously. Lobola in African culture is the bride price a man must pay to his fiancée's family in order for him to acquire the right to marry her. Mathambane reiterated that even if a man and a woman are deeply in love, it is only lobola that legitimizes their love for each other in the eyes of the society and of their parents in most African communities as it is common among the Xhosa people, (Mathabane, 1994, p. 14).

In most societies, marriages are considered sacred, and especially so in the tradition-steeped continent of Africa, as it is practiced in Xhosa communities where marriage usually involves not just the coming together of the couple in question, but also the joining together of the families of the bride to be; her groom and their communities through lobola practices, (Boshego, 2006, p. 113). Mbiti also asserts that

marriage among Africans is the main focus of their existence; therefore, it is the point where all the members of families of a given community meet the departed, the living and those yet to be born, (Mbiti, 1990, p. 130).

Although, most Christians who advocates for the total abolition of lobola practices may come up with the argument that Mbiti's assertions encourages idolatry which is against Christian beliefs, I don't see their point to be enough excuse to abolish the lobola practice. Reason being that the bible is not against dowry (lobola) settlement, this made Prince Shecham the son of Hamor the king of the Hivite's to tell Jacob and his family of his willingness to pay the required dowry to enable him marry Dinah their daughter, (Genesis 34:12). So Christians who are led to marry a Xhosa lady who came from a family that believed in lobola practices should engage in a discussion and dialogue with the bride's family concerning the aspects of lobola practice that seem to be against the Christian suitor's belief, without doubt they will listen to him.

The Lobola process has different patterns to follow and it depends on the rural area or the village the couples originated from. Virtually all Black African communities have an organized arrangement as to how they go about lobola negotiations. The practice continues to be followed extensively in contemporary African societies. Lobola practices involve a formal process of negotiation between the families of the bride and groom amid great ceremony, to arrive at a consensus on the price which is traditionally paid in a number of cows that the groom must pay to the bride's family. However, many modern couples opt for cash instead of cows for the sake of convenience. Ideally, part of the lobola money is supposed to be used to help the bride set up her new home but on the

contrary, it rarely happens especially where the bride's family turns out to be greedy.

Marriage amongst African people according to Nyirongo is a means of upgrading a person's life and social status within his or her family and clan, (Nyirongo, 1997, p. 111). To achieve this life time goal, Xhosa couples are expected to legitimize their marriage relationship by ensuring that lobola is settled first before going about arranging a white wedding if they are of the Christian faith, because certain processes have to be followed.

4.2 THE ORIGIN OF CATTLE FOR LOBOLA

According to Casalis (the son of the famous Eugene from Leribe in Lesotho) who wrote about the change from the use of hoes and grain as bride wealth to the use of cattle for lobola stirred up people in Southern Bantu to pay better attention to their cattle spiritually and physically after a devastating rinderpest epidemic which wiped out huge herds of African cattle at the end of the eighteenth century, (Casalis, 1897).

His narratives tend to culminate with the incident that happened in Zulu land where metal (hoes) was introduced into lobola payment. Then calamity occurred at the time when a dreadful cholera or fever epidemic broke out and swept away whole kraals of people in Zulu land. Diviners, whom the king invited to search out the cause of the problem, gave a report that the spirits were angry because they were mining iron from the ground and refining it into metal objects which were used on their land.

The king ordered the burial of all the metal objects in the place where metal itself had been mined, and blacksmiths had to abandon their business. It was due to these beliefs in those parts of Africa that led to

the substitution of metal objects for bridewealth cattle, (Samuelson, 1930, p. 50).

It is true that the substitution of metal objects for bridewealth cattle according to the above narrative may be based on superstitious beliefs, but modern day activist's agitating for the abolition of the lobola practice should not lose sight of the fact that lobola practice in an Africa setting is the only platform where the bride and groom's family meet to build a relationship because many members of the couples family may not accept participating in the home affairs, court, church civil marriage which they see as the culture of the white man being imposed on them. So to build a society void of strife and contention in African communities concerning marriage matters, I think it would be wise for the government and civil society to respect the right of the Xhosa people who practice lobola, but rather seek how to partner with them in seeking ways of transforming the practice where necessary and not discarding it.

Also, Kuper in his work on 'wives for cattle' gave us additional background on how the exchange of cattle for a wife originated. He elaborated how the Bantu speaking tribes in Xhosa communities classified the duties of male hunters as pastoral and female gathering as horticultural, (Kuper, 1982, p. 13). Hunting with shepherding by men and gathering through farming by women in Xhosa land and in most African communities has an important place in their daily living (Hunter, 1936, p. 234). Hunter's view replicates the level of natural and cultural division of labour between male pastoralism and female horticulture which were of great ritual significance.

The concept of exchanging women for cattle should be unquestionably viewed as the social exchange and direct exchanges of pastoral

products by the man and agricultural produce by the woman in a relationship that could lead to marriage between a man and a woman, (Stayt, 1931, p. 345). Within the communities of the Bantu speaking people, which the Xhosas happen to be part of, their men will always try to offer their wife's parents meat and in return they will expect to be offered beer and porridge by their wives' mother. Beer is also the appropriate payment for agricultural labour, but this is one of the duties a man owes his wife's parents.

Hunting, which is regarded as male activity, was a ritually heightened counterpart to pastoralism. In Xhosa tribes, hunting or cattle rearing was not the regular source of food for the people, but cattle were particularly reserved for key moments in the social and natural cycles, marking initiation ceremonies, lobola in marriage rituals, preparation for war, and the installation of rulers. Gathering, which is a female activity, was devalued as a source of food, (Kuper, 1982, p. 12).

Based on these facts, the payment of cattle for wives must be related both to the more general set of exchanges between the male domain of pastoral production and the female domain of agriculture, and the series of exchanges of goods and services which couples render jointly to run their homes in a typical African setting. This made Herskovits in the central part of his thesis to simply sum up the basic division of labour within households in African context in a two by two table: (Herskovits, 1926, p. 28).

	MALE	FEMALE
Culture	Pastoralism	Agriculture
Nature	Hunting	Gathering

Herskovits an American Anthropologist in his work gave us a good portrait of how the duties of husbands and wives are clearly defined in an African home stead. The men are saddled with the serious responsibility of grooming their sons into the male pastoral responsibility of tending to cattle and hunting, while the women's duty is to nurture their daughters into becoming good in agricultural and domestic work such as being skillful in the fields, around the kitchen, brewing beer, grinding or pounding in order for them to fetch more cattle for lobola when they are to be married. Could it be that the problem of single parenting which some argued is caused by the lobola practice in Xhosa communities, is responsible for the social ills which are prevalent among young folks in their societies these days? I don't believe that the lobola practice is the main reason why most fathers in Xhosa land are not available in their children's lives, especially in grooming their sons into becoming pastorally caring husbands and fathers. This study is geared towards ensuring that cultural flaws are fixed to ensure the entrenchment of cultural values, which in turn will help the Xhosa people to maintain their African identity in a contemporary world.

Exchanging pastoral and agricultural products between wife-givers and wife-takers provide only a part of the background necessary to understand the marriage exchanges in the African culture. There are also crucial hierarchical exchanges which usually inter play between ancestors and descendants, rulers and subjects, and household heads and their dependents, exchanges which are again bound up with marriage and bride wealth, (Kuper, 1982, p. 14).

According to Kuper, the nexus of exchanges can be summed up simply as:

WIFE'S PARENTS

DAUGHTER'S HUSBAND

Grain

Meat

Beer

Labour

Women and children

Cattle

Based on these exchanges between the husbands and wives (with their parents in the Bantu region), one will not be out of order if he or she draws up the conclusion that lobola concept originated from a transactional relationship which is reciprocal. Hunter reported that, "goats are seen among the Mpondo's as the poor man's cattle, supplying food and clothing, also being a means of acquiring wives through lobola settlement, and of establishing good relations with the ancestral spirits in order to have a recognized marriage in Xhosa tradition" (Hunter, 1936, p. 71).

"Throughout Africa a marriage could not really happen without some form of exchange of gifts, like animals, food and material goods, with the parents and family of the bride" (Vilakazi, 1962, p. 63). This is in the form of a dowry which the people of the Western culture usually practice when the bride or bride's family offer goods towards the establishment of her household, whereas a bride-price is a marriage payment made in the form of lobola with cattle or kutema ugariri in Zimbabwe language, which means staying with bride's father to work for him in tending to his cattle until he is satisfied with his daughter's prospective husbands labour as it was practiced in most African communities in those days.

These practices are in line with a similar system which existed in the Biblical days when Jacob worked for seven years to have Rachel whom he loved as his wife, but Laban, his father in-law, cheated and gave him Leah instead, because it was not proper in their tradition to have the younger sister being married out before the older sister. But because of the very deep love which Jacob had for Rachel, he had to work for another seven years tending to Laban's cattle and sheep for him to have Rachel as his wife. In reality, it was not the many years that Jacob put in as lobola for his wives that were the main focus, but it was the relationship developed and sustained between Jacob and Laban that sealed the families together forever, (Genesis 16:30).

It should be remarked that the bride-price does not mean a business deal. The reason is that there is no purchasing or trade involved rather a simple exchange of gifts. In the olden days, lobola helped to make marriage more binding because the husband and his wife could not separate or divorce without first discussing it with both sets of family members.

Even if the payment of lobola in the form of cattle is considered the custom of the past in some quarters in the African communities, where lobola practices are relevant, there are still instances where lobola is paid with cattle in these modern times. Smith did confirm that most often the talk on lobola is about money, rather than cattle. Cattle are symbolic and represent certain amounts of money, (Smith, 2002). In Amakhosa region, lobola negotiations usually involve setting a price for a single cow and then multiplying the agreed price by the number of cows the new bride is deemed to be worth. Ansell did argue that the reason for that was because the Xhosa lobola negotiators were trying to reconstruct their cultural identity as an example of re-traditionalism due to historical

reasons, (Ansell, 2011, p. 703). In trying to retain a separate cultural identity, even when money is given in place of cattle, the negotiators of both families still referred to the lobola money as cattle once the bride price was established and the negotiations were finalised.

4.3 THE FUNCTIONS OF LOBOLA

Lobola is part of the identity and tradition of African people. The bride wealth paid to the bride's family is a token of gratitude on the part of the groom and his family to enable them build unity between both families. Steyn and Rip highlighted the relationship and bond which lobola creates between the families of the bride and the groom. They understood lobola as transactions of "reciprocal rights and duties with prescribed relationships between the two groups of relatives which continues past the death of the individual marriage partners" (Steyn & Rip, 1968, p. 505).

It is a demonstration of how much the lady is loved and valued by both sides, which makes the function of this practice to denote respectability, worthiness and appreciation. As a valued person on whom lobola was paid for at marriage, a woman develops an inner feeling that she was not stolen, but rather given away under mutual agreement between the two families. This seems to validate Nyirongo's assertion that lobola serves as proof that the marriage is legally recognised and accepted by both the immediate families and also the community at large, (Nyirongo, 1997, p. 114).

This seems to culminate in the inner fulfillment expressed by Mama Noba when she was joyfully sharing the story of how her beloved husband, as she called him, surprised her and her entire family at that time, by being able to pay the required lobola of fifteen cows in 1979,

each cow was valued R5000. Even though he was just a Clerk at Cecilia Makiwane hospital in Mdantsane, East London, earning a little amount of money as salary, he was able to meet up with the lobola demand for me within a very short period of time. I respect my husband dearly for that; this compelled me to become a very good and supportive wife to him and his entire family. Pastor Dave her husband jokingly asked her, do you really think in your mind that you are that very good wife to me the way you are saying it? Mama Beki loudly said, *“Yes! You know it yourself, you know it is true”* I and her husband laughed very loudly. Sharing their lobola story during my research interview with them seems to have revived and rejuvenated their love for each other, as they were taken down the memory lane of how the relationship which they entered into since 1979 was still very strong and blessed with four children who are well accomplished in life. The atmosphere of happiness and joy created during my discussion with this lovely couple tend to validate the essence of lobola in African culture.

As it is in Xhosa culture, it is only when lobola is paid in full that the husband can claim the woman as his wife and the children as his offspring. If lobola is not fully paid in Xhosa land, the woman’s family has the traditional right to claim the children as their own should the couple separate. This made a lady called Fundi to joyfully express to me how wonderful she felt when her husband, whom she loves very dearly, finalised the payment of her lobola to her family, after five years of them staying together without proper marriage, because he could not afford to settle her lobola at the beginning. Lobola is seen by most rural South African women as a sign of respect in that it symbolizes their worth and reinforces their dignity. Many traditional marriages utilize a cash based

lobola, where part of the lobola funds are used to pay for the expenses of church wedding ceremonies by those who are Christians.

The gifts exchanged between families and Xhosa communities during marriage tend to elevate the value attached to the couple most especially the bride both as a person and as a wife. At the bride's home, the marriage gifts can be seen as an economic compensation, reminding the family that their daughter will leave or she has left and yet she is not dead. It is verification, in concrete terms, that families have agreed to the marriage of their son and daughter. Therefore, lobola can be seen as a sign of approval of marriage by the families and the community. In African tradition, if lobola was not paid, it showed that the family did not approve of the marriage. Among the Xhosa people, lobola is an expression of respect and honour to the parents of the bride by the groom, but also an undertaking of responsibility to the spouse.

Among the Xhosa's, lobola is considered to be influential in keeping divorces down to a minimum. This stems from a consideration of returning the lobola to an aggrieved husband by his wife's family or for the husband having to pay a very heavy maintenance to his father-in-law if his aggrieved or abused wife runs back to her home, (West, 1984, p. 50). This makes husbands in Xhosa nation to be very careful not to beat or abuse their wives because if she runs back to her father's house, her father is entitled to keep her and only release her after the husband has paid a penalty in cattle.

Paying of lobola shows the commitment on the part of the bridegroom and a strong demonstration of the man's love for the woman. Lobola settlement and the presentation of gifts highlight a man's willingness to

appreciate his brides' parents for raising her up well. This is what I call true love in action, not just love in words but also in deeds.

4.4 LOBOLA PROCESS:

Lobola is a century-old tradition, which is still commonly practiced throughout Africa, (Smith, 2002). This age-old custom is as alive today as it was hundreds of years ago. Lobola practice is still used extensively in contemporary African society, because both the family of the bride and groom would be scandalized if they did not adhere to this custom. The process of lobola is a complex and very formal way of negotiation between the two families to come to a mutual agreement on the price the groom has to pay in order to marry the bride. Those who are Skeptical of the lobola Practice may liken it to a purchase and a sale transaction, but this custom is the very opposite of a commercial transaction.

What makes lobola so important for marriage in an African context is that it is based on a process that brings the two families together in discussion. Mutual respect and dignity are woven into the process, and the love between the man and woman is expanded to include the immediate and extended families, as Boshego alluded that families and community members are expected to participate in African marriage process to legitimize it, (Boshego, 2006, p. 118). Although, like all other traditional customs, it is open to abuse and distortion which tends to complicate the lobola process in this modern world. This study endeavours to seek how to address those issues, because a complicated lobola process most times generates confusion for modern day couples which they often times find difficult to comprehend.

4.4.1 Proposal Rites

In the course of my discussion on the subject of lobola with Tata Vuli, 55yrs old Xhosa married man living in Duncan village in East London; he did explain Xhosa marriage procedure very clearly to the writer. According to his narrative, when a young man has found the girl he loves, whom he wishes to take as his wife, Xhosa tradition demanded that the man must have undergone the manhood initiation process through circumcision, before he can formally inform his family about his intention of wanting to get married to the girl he is in relationship with. In Xhosa tradition, one often found a girlfriend or boyfriend by attending dances, one popular type of dance, called *umtshotsho* or *intlombe* is often attended by young folks and usually lasts all through the night. When a young man feels it is time for him to formalise his relationship with the lady he is in deep love with, he has to formally propose marriage to the lady before telling his parents about his intention to marry the lady he is in love with.

This is in line with how Eliezer, Abraham's senior servant was divinely directed in the bible to proposed marriage to Rebekah on behalf of Isaac his master's son, (Genesis 24:1-67). A similar proposal rite is articulated by Joel Olisa in his book on Godly marriage made possible by overcoming anti marriage forces. In the book, Joel recommended that in order to maintain orderliness in marital matters in churches and the communities, the man or woman who feels led to marry a person should endeavour to involve the Pastors or Spiritual leaders and parents in processing their marriage, (Olisa, 2008, p. 61).

Adherence to Joel's Proposal helps to avoid the confusion or controversies that are likely to arise in situations where many women or

men are clamoring for a partner. When issues like this arise in the church, it does generate negative ripples that have the capacity to lead worshippers astray. Apostle Paul's recommendation which says, let all things be done decently and in order (1Corinthians14:40) should be followed strictly to ensure there is orderliness in churches and communities in relation to how marriages are conducted.

After very thorough enquiries and investigations by the family members have been carried out and it is verified that there is no clan relationship between their son and the lady he wants to marry, the family will then appoint a delegate or trusted kinsmen to go with the mandate of the family to kick-start the marriage negotiations with the ladies' family.

4.4.2 Informed Consents

As with the Bantu-speaking tribe in Xhosa land, kinship is still very important in ordering their day to day affairs today as it was in those days. Lineages based on descent through the male line combined in turn to form clans, each of which has a name, a common ancestor and a rule which forbade marriage between people of the same clan, (West, 1984, p. 12). Some of these clans with ancestral lineages in Xhosa nation are the Rhadebe, Dlamini, Majola, Mpandla, Cira, Nshilibe, Quati, etc.

People of the same clan see themselves as brothers and sisters because they claim to be having the same ancestral father, therefore, it is forbidden for them to get married to each other because of their belief that they are bound by the incest taboo, (Fage, 2001). Based on these facts, it becomes imperative that the man get the consent of his parents and kinsmen first. His Kinsmen have the responsibility of verifying and handling clan related matters before the man can proceed in his marriage plan with the girl he is intending to marry.

In most cases marriage process is very formal and has certain protocols that have to be adhered to strictly. Tata Kophu is a typical Xhosa man, who is strong in Xhosa traditions. His contributions did affirm what I have already heard from some younger Xhosa folks that I had a chat with about lobola practices previously, that a man is expected to tell his family that he has found a lady he wants to marry (including the details of the family the lady is from) after reaching an agreement with the lady since ‘two cannot walk together except they are in agreement’ (Amos 3:3).

Thereafter the kinsmen carry out an investigation on the ladies’ family to ascertain that both of them are not of same clan. A clearance from the kinsmen paves the way for the marriage plan to proceed to the next level. This practice happens to be in line with Bryant’s write up when he stated that the fundamental unit in the Bantu political systems was the clan, i.e. the magnified family, in which all alike were descended from the same original ancestors, and were ruled by that ancestor’s direct living representative, and all lived and moved together in one great block, but did not inter-marry, mates being sought outside, (Bryant, 1929, p. 15).

For the man’s family to show that there was no close clan relationship between their son and the woman he wanted to marry after their investigation, they have to give their consent for their son to marry the girl of his choice, they would then appoint delegates to approach the girl’s kinsmen, who would consider their request and give their consent too. If it turned out that the girl’s family accepted the request of the prospective groom’s family, negotiations over bride wealth (lobola) would then commence. At this juncture, a third party is called in to negotiate the number of cattle to be transferred or the amount of money to be paid

as lobola, because it is considered most improper for the groom or his father-in-law to haggle over the amount that should be paid for lobola. The reason is to avoid any contention and disagreements that could strain the relationship which is needed for the groom to succeed in his marriage with the man's daughter.

In most cases, the Xhosas are sociable people and they usually build their homes together in groups; a community of this kind is commonly referred to as a Kraal. Even if the two families of the intending couple concerned might have lived next to each other for many years, every negotiation between the parents of the couple most often is conducted in writing and not telephonically or casually. This absurd rule is due to the fact that although the families might have known each other for years, but they did not know each other when it comes to the seriousness of marriage and lobola.

This happens to be in line with what Olisa reiterated in his book titled, "Godly marriage made possible..." that intending couples should follow the simple and basic regulatory procedures of being directed by their Pastors and marriage committee of their churches in following the necessary scriptural guidelines of going to the homes of each other's parents to get their consents before starting their courtship, (Olisa, 2008, p. 67).

4.4.3 Courtship before Marriage

Courtship is the waiting period between the time a man and a woman have agreed to marry each other, to the time of the performance of their joining marriage rituals, either traditionally by the elders in the couple's family or at church. Based on the assertion of King Solomon, which is

“Prepare your work without and make it fit for thyself in the field and afterwards build your house” (Proverb 24:27).

Courtship before marriage is the preparation ground for a good marriage and time for the man to save money for lobola. It also helps the couple to save and join resources together in order to meet up with the required needs for their marriage and family life. Regular discussions as well as studying to understand each other’s cultural views are critical during this period. For Christians, scriptural courtship should be meticulously tailored to accommodate the future dreams and ambitions of the couple intending to marry.

Although, Xhosa tradition allows a certain degree of contact during courtship between the intending couple; in some occasions, unmarried lovers were allowed to sleep together provided they observed certain restraints. A form of external intercourse called ukumetsha was permitted in Xhosa tradition, but full intercourse was a taboo, because Xhosa culture strictly requires that Xhosa girls remain virgins until they are married.

For most Western culture-indoctrinated Xhosas, romance often begins at school, church or through mutual acquaintances. Dating activities include attending the cinema as well as going to school dances, sporting events, concerts, and so forth. In spite of the mentioned spaces allowed by Xhosa parents to their young children, girls are encouraged to keep their virginity. However, it is becoming increasingly difficult these days to find young girls who kept their virginity till after marriage. Tata Sile an elderly Xhosa man told the researcher that if a Xhosa girl passed the virginity test when her sexual organ was examined by one of the trusted elderly women in the village those days, the girl’s respect would grow

and also her lobola would increase more than that of a girl who lost her virginity before marriage. In a similar manner, it was customary in Israel (as documented in the Holy Bible) to take possession of the blood spotted bed-clothes to her parent when the groom breaks the virginity of the new bride the night after their marriage ceremony, (Deut 22:13-19).

In some African cultures, there used to be great feast when new son in-laws brought the blood spotted bed clothes to the bride's home, as it was in Egypt, Syria and Illah in Oshimili North LGA, Delta state, Nigeria, (Dakes, 1980, p. 221). In Israel, Keeping the blood spotted bed-clothes by the bride parents when it was received is of great importance, because it can be used to save their daughters life if her husband happens to come up with a false accusation against her such as the account in (Deuteronomy 22:20-21), where a man decided to bring up an evil report against his wife whom he then hated.

Based on these facts, the world can see very clearly that cohabiting (vat en sit in Afrikaans) and making babies out of marriage which is in common practice these days does not reflect the true culture of Xhosa African people, (West, 1984, p. 42). Culture requires Couples to remain undefiled until marriage. Christians as well are required by the God's marriage ordinance to remain all-round pure. Such a life of chastity attests to the assertions of King Solomon one of the greatest lover of his time praising the virginity of the woman he loved, Songs of Solomon (Song of Solomon 4:1-16). He compared his bride to a private garden which no other man had ever tampered with and called her my sister, my spouse. Even though virginity in men and women in most quarters is considered old-fashioned by most people in our society today, remaining a virgin has always been God's plan for unmarried people.

Pre-marital sex is cheap, but regrettable on the long run. The joy of giving yourself completely to the one who is totally committed to you in marriage is glorious. Although King Solomon ended up marrying seven hundred wives in addition to his three hundred concubines (though contrary to God's original plan for humanity) but the way he admired his virgin-bride's beauty in the most extravagant manner is something worthy of note, (1King11:3).

Couples who do not defile the bed during courtship will definitely enjoy an immeasurable splendor when they are in their honeymoon. With conscience free of guilt and hurt for not defiling themselves before marriage, they will have the privilege of enjoying both moon and honey in their honeymoon. Defiling one's bed before marriage will make the couple to be faced with the consequence of having just the moon without the honey during their honeymoon. It often leads to marriages struggling right from the first day of its inception due to the absence of God's spiritual favour. This is because defiling the bed before marriage constitutes a wrong foundation for marriage according to the scriptures in (Hebrews 13:4) where Apostle Paul instructed the Hebrew believers, that the marriage bed should not be undefiled.

Abstaining from sexual defilement till marriage ensures the continual flow of honey to sweeten the marriage all through the marital journey. This is because only complete obedience to godly principles, pure cultural practices (which attract parental blessings after lobola settlement) and Pastoral blessings (when Christian couples solemnize their relationship through wedding at the altar in God's church) will produce this sweetening blessings needed to keep the marriage sweetened till death do them part. It is this kind of compliance that

commands and attracts God's blessings in a marriage, (Olisa, 2008, p. 28).

4.5 Lobola Negotiations

Negotiation of lobola is the bargaining and discussions by imilowo (both family members) of the bridegroom and bride to reach an agreement as to the number of cows the groom and his family must bring to the bride's family before he can be given the girl he desires to have as his wife. This information was gotten from the discussion the writer had with Tata Sile of the Mpandla clan in the Xhosa nation. He is a happily married man, who stays with his family in Mdantsane location, East London. Tata and Mama Sile sounded very knowledgeable in Xhosa culture and tradition as the researcher engaged in discussion with them. It was also very interesting to have a younger married Xhosa man of 41yrs old, Bhuti Lela of Gaba clan, contributing interestingly and intelligently on Xhosa lobola practices.

4.5.1 Ukuthwala (carrying off) Custom

Tata Sile started our discussion by sharing a narrative on how it used to be the responsibility of the groom's parents to look for a good lady from a reputable home in the village for their son to take as his wife in those days. The man's parents would go to the presumed good girl's home on behalf of their son to ask from her parents to give their daughter as a wife to their son without the girl knowing that she was about to be married. It is only after both parents reached an agreement concerning their son and daughter getting married to each other that arrangements would be made as to how to bring them together in marriage.

As the girl gets to know that an arrangement had been made to marry her out, even if she did not wish to marry the man, in those days it was allowed in Xhosa tradition for the man and his friends to “kidnap” (*Twala*) the girl to force her into becoming his wife, it was thereafter that lobola could be negotiated.

Sometimes ukuthwala (kidnapping in Xhosa) happens with the consent of the girl’s parents and at other times without their consent. Mtuze in his work noted the obligation on the part of those who *twala* a girl to inform her parents of the deed immediately after. Though the girl had to stay in the young man’s home, but he supposed not to touch in any way and should not be asked to perform any kind of duty until her parent had given their consent to the practice, (Mtuzze, 2004, pp. 33-34).

In an ideal situation negotiation for a would-be bride is done and lobola also settled based on the agreement reached by both imilowo before the girl can be escorted by her family to the man’s family to become his wife. This route seems to be more dignifying. But for a girl to whom the practice of ukuthwala custom was carried out on, her lobola would be negotiated after she had already been forced to be in the man’s home. However, this practice has been abolished by the South African law. Hence, it is no longer a common practice for any man to twala a girl for marriage against her wish even if her parents are in agreement with the man and his family.

4.5.2 Representatives (*Abakhozi*)

Tata Sile reiterated an exactly similar negotiation procedure that Tata Kophu and Tata Sonko shared with the writer. They articulated that after the suitor had reached marriage agreement with the girl he was in love with, he was expected to tell his parents whose responsibility it would be

to notify the larger family members about their son's intention of getting married to a girl in a certain family. The man's family would then appoint a delegation of about four or five trusted men to go and represent the interests of the groom and his family at the woman's family concerning lobola negotiations which were usually in stages.

These delegates may have to visit the bride's family up to three or four times, depending on when the *Nomazakuzaku's* (negotiators from the groom's family) are able to reach an agreement with the *Abakhwenyanas* (prospective in-laws) as to the number of cows the groom and his family should transfer to the ladies' family as lobola.

The Lobola negotiation process has different patterns to follow and may differ with respect to the African country, region, villages, clans and people depending on how they organize themselves for the arrangements and negotiations of lobola. Each clan follows their cultural pattern strictly though there may be some similarities with slight differences here and there when it comes to lobola negotiations.

For the people of the Nshilibe clan according to Tata Sonko who is from that clan, the first stage of lobola negotiation requires that the negotiators from the groom's family (without the groom) visit the bride's family for the first time to make their son's intention of marrying their daughter known to them. This is how it is in this modern days, although the lady would have told her parents who in turn had to tell the members of their family about the groom's family coming to negotiate for her lobola, part of the game is that the lady's parents and the *Abakhozi's* (family representatives) who are seated in her home waiting for arrival of their would-be in-laws have to behave as if they were not aware of the prospective in-laws visit. When the negotiators from the man's family

gets to the gate at the girl's home, they have to shout by saying "*Zotela Ntombi*" (we want your daughter for a wife).

Some of the representatives from the ladies' side will walk out to usher them into the house and offer them seats. Part of the fun again is that the girl's family members stay quiet for some minutes, feigning ignorance of what they came for. The conversation is of this sought:

Spokesman for the Bride's family: "What were you really shouting about at the gate?"

Spokesman for the Groom's Family: "We are asking for your beautiful daughter's hand in marriage."

Spokesman for the Bride's family: "We have small girls here we don't think you are really sure of what you are here for."

Spokesman for the Groom's family: "The name of the girl we want to marry is"

At this point the girl's family parade about five daughters of the family including the one they mentioned by name to see if they really know who they want to marry. One of the groom's representatives who know the girl well will have to point at the would-be bride openly to all that are present there. Then the negotiation as to the amount of lobola they want would commence.

Mama Sonko got rejuvenated as her face brightens up beautifully when she was listening to her husband narrating the process of lobola practices to the writer. She seemed to have been reminded of the wonderful experience of being pointed out in the midst of about eight maidens who were paraded in front of the *Nomazakuzaku's* (Negotiators

from groom's side) and her family representatives the time Tata Sonko's family came to negotiate for her lobola. The very joyful mood expressed by Mama Sonko during the time of their discussion with the researcher tended to provide her with a sense of pride as an African Xhosa woman whose husband could afford to pay her lobola, (De Haas, 1987, p. 46).

Part of her joy also was that her kin benefited from her lobola being that she was the only daughter out of the three daughters of her parents, for whom lobola was paid. This made her family members to always demonstrate their pride for her. She proudly informed the researcher that her parents were exceptionally joyful for having her as a daughter whom lobola was paid for before they were then able to pass on peacefully.

Her expression seems to affirm Walker's assertions that the status and respect that is associated with an African woman having lobola paid for her within African communities cannot be over looked, (Walker, 1992). There is persistent inner joy and sense of fulfillment in the life of a Makoti (Xhosa woman whom lobola was paid for) that one could feel when chatting about lobola cultural practices with Mama Sonko and Mama Dave and other Makotis whom the researcher had a chat with as well.

4.5.3 Pricing and Payment of Lobola

According to the assertions of Tata Kophu, which both Tata Sonko and Tata Sile confirmed, the pricing and payment of lobola involves a complex formal process of negotiation between the bride's family (*Abakhwenyanas*) and negotiators from the groom's family (*Nomazakuzaku's* in Xhosa) amid great ceremony to arrive at a consensus on the price (traditionally paid in number of cows) that the groom must pay to the bride's family before he can have her become his

wife This is because bridewealth is the cornerstone of tribal marriage. It was calculated for the most part in terms of cattle which were used also for fines and sacrifice to ensure the goodwill of the gods in some African culture, (West, 1982, p. 8).

Upon the arrival of the groom's representatives at the bride's home for lobola negotiation, the bride's family would present some wine either brandy or *umqumbuthi* (local African beer). The groom's representative would claim that they were sent by the elders of their family to take a wife for a son in their family. The bride's family would tell them to bring what they had to get a wife; they would drop some money on a mat placed on the ground. The prospective in-laws (*Abakhwenyanas*) would count the money and tell the negotiators from the groom's side (*Nomazakuzakus*) that the amount of money they dropped could not give them a wife in this family. Negotiators for the groom would ask to know, how many Ikhazi (means the cattle for lobola) do you need for your girl? At this stage very serious negotiations would commence.

The bride's representatives would give them a high bride price which would then be negotiated. Most times the negotiations happen in an electrifying atmosphere that can be contentious mingled with some funny jokes which often made the process look very interesting.

These days' many modern couples for the sake of convenience opt for cash instead of cows as it was in those days. Tata Dave used cash to pay lobola for his beloved wife because his village was very far from that of his wife. It is usually the uncles and the fathers of the intending couples that gather to negotiate the price of lobola, where custom allows. Sometimes the Aunts (*Umakazi*) and other women relatives are also allowed to be present at the side-lines of the negotiations. This is

because women are not supposed to take part in lobola negotiation for a fellow woman in most African cultures.

Tata Sile alluded that the bride's family could be visited many times for negotiation depending on how the groom's family brought lobola money. Finally, the total amount to be paid to the bride's family was determined based on the type of wedding the couple wanted; and whether it would be the bride's family that would be required to foot the bills for the white wedding or the groom's family. If the bride's family was to foot the wedding bills, the cost will be built into the lobola, but if it is the groom's family that would foot the bill for the church wedding, the lobola would be less as it was in the case of Bhuti Lela.

4.5.3.1 Criteria's for lobola cost

At the stage of deciding on the amount of lobola required to be paid for a bride by the groom to the bride's family, the prevailing customs within that region or clan may contribute in making such determination as to the amount and the value of each cow that should be paid for the lobola. Tata Sile in his lobola narrative stated that in those days, negotiations do involve the setting of a price for a single cow and then multiplying the agreed price by the number of cows the new bride was deemed to be worth. The average cow could be priced at approximately eight thousand Rand (R8000) as it is presently in far Transkei regions where lobola practice is still very strong. But in other Amakhosa regions a cow on the platform of lobola negotiation could be priced at four thousand rand (R4000). However, these pricing values were subject to change due to inflations.

Against the background that a lasting relationship is created through lobola practice, the payment of lobola can still be made in installments or

in full. Even some Africa cultures do permit that the man who could not pay his wife's lobola can accept to surrender his first daughter's lobola to his father in-law or to any of his relatives that paid the lobola of his wife for him, (Kuper, 1982, pp. 26-27).

Such kind of flexibility in lobola arrangements in an Africa context is to ensure that no serious minded man stays without being married due to lobola related issues. There is this common saying among the Xhosa nation that: *ilobola ayigqitywa* (a man does not finish paying lobola), (Yate, 1932, p. 136). It is believed that whenever a husband called *Sibali* (Brother In-law by wife's family) did anything which warranted him spending some money at his wife's home; he was believed to be paying part of his remaining lobola to his in-laws. This made a Xhosa man to acclaim that a son in-law is the bank of his father in-law and his wife's family.

The price of lobola for a girl depends mainly on the status of the father of the bride. If the bride's father is a chief or a king, her lobola will be more than that of the bride from a non-royal family, as was in the case of David who king Saul (the first king of Israel) asked to bring one hundred foreskins of the Philistines for him to marry the king's daughter Michal. But Instead David was able to bring two hundred foreskins of the Philistines soldiers whom he and his men killed in a war before king Saul accepted to give him his daughter Michal in marriage, (2 Samuel 18:20-27). Critics may be tempted to criticize the weird lobola demand of one hundred foreskins of the Philistines by King Saul for his daughter but fail to take cognizance of the resilience and bravery of young David who was able to pay a very difficult price for the woman he loved by putting his life on the line to get two hundred foreskins of the Philistines with which he paid lobola in order to have the Kings daughter Michel become

his wife. By faith in God, no amount that is demanded for lobola settlement that is supposed to hinder a young African man from meeting the lobola demand of his fiancée's family because with God all things are possible.

If a Xhosa lady is still a virgin before marriage, she will definitely attract greater respect and more cows for her lobola compared to a non-virgin. Also, the price for an educated bride is normally higher than that of an uneducated one, (Dlamini, 1983, p. 109). This might be the reason that prompted the world icon Nelson Mandela to pay as much as 60 cows as lobola for his beautiful and high profile wife Graca Machel. On the other hand, the young man called Bhuti Lela alluded to how his then Abakhwenyanas (Prospective in-laws) charged him R26000 lobola for his very beautiful wife, but his Nomazakuzaku's (Negotiators from the groom's side) were able to negotiate hard and very well, which led to the amount being reduced to R6000. Bhuti Lela as of today is happily married and blessed with a family.

I do concur with the views of Nkosi Mwelo Nonkonyana, the leader of the Congress of Traditional Leaders of South Africa (Contralesa), as he dismisses the argument of most African young men who claimed that lobola and the economic situation are responsible for them not settling down in marriage. He said that it was only young Africa men who feared responsibility, and did not want to marry that often sighted lobola as a problem.

Nonkonyana advised that lobola should never be a deterrent in African tradition since it is not about material benefits only but is mainly about maintaining your African cultural identity, Madikwa (2012). Modo reiterated the same view when he said that high bride price is supposed

to not prevent a man from marrying the woman he truly loves since the mode of payment can be negotiated to suit both families, (Modo, 1999, p. 379).

The views of Nonkonyana and Modo are in direct contrast to the information from the 2005 South Africa Social Attitude Survey which was cited by Posel, Rudwick and Casale in their article titled, “Is marriage a dying institution in South Africa” which supported the argument that current practices of lobola place a significant financial burden on couples intending to marry; and that lobola was the main reason why people did not get married these days, (Posel et al, 2011, p. 109).

The writer tends to disagree with such an assertion based on the fact that the views of Posel and her co-authors borders especially on the issues of them advocating for the total abolition of lobola practice, but seems to promote a very costly western cultural wedding which tends to ridicule and undermine the cultural identity of the African people. The researcher is of the opinion that seeking ways of eliminating distortions which tend to complicate lobola process would go a long way to bring back lobola to its original purpose and would help to ensure the pure preservation of this beautiful culture that gives African parents the opportunity to bless the marriage of their children. If it was discovered that the lady fell pregnant, before negotiation, intlawulo must be the point of entry before lobola settlement can proceed.

4.5.3.2 Intlawulo Custom (The traditional payment of damages)

Intlawulo is the penalty (mostly referred to as damage) the man has to pay for making the girl pregnant before marriage. Presently it can cost the man up to R5000 for each child in most Xhosa communities. However, it can be negotiated. This made the lobola settlement for Zandi

to be high for her boyfriend, because the prospective in-laws compelled him to pay intlawulo (paying damages in Xhosa) before he could claim traditional paternity for the three sons he had with Zandi before paying lobola for Zandi their mother, (Preston-Whyte & Zondi, 1992).

According to Bhuti Lela who gave some useful information for this study during discussion with the researcher at Tata and Mama Sile's house, he asserted that these days it is no longer a difficult process for African Christians who did not make their fiancée pregnant before marriage to face their prospective in-laws when they wanted to settle the lobola for the woman they loved. True Christians are allowed to pay lobola in most Xhosa families without them being forced to do all the Amasiko stuff, (traditional rituals) as it was before now. Therefore, it doesn't seem to be true for any Xhosa man's claim that he is not formally married to the woman he loves, and have lived with for years because there is no money for lobola, but the same man goes about spending money on many other ladies outside and making babies with those other ladies.

There is this shocking information the writer gathered from many people he interviewed in East London, Eastern Cape, which revealed that there were some men who have made as many as ten babies from ten different women, but did not get married to any of the mothers of his ten children. The painful part of this narrative is that none of these children is allowed to bear their fathers surname due to the cultural practice of intlawulo among the Xhosa speaking people. "Intlawulo is a tradition which grants a Xhosa girl's parents the cultural right to claim ownership of their daughter's child born out of marriage, the child has to bear the surname of his or her mother not the surname of his or her biological father as it should have been in an ideal situation". The child calls his or her biological mother Sisi, (young girl) but the grandmother, Mama.

Most of these innocent children have no relationship with their biological fathers; some don't even know their fathers. It is really very painful knowing about the pain some of these innocent children are confronted with in life due to the problem of having a misplaced paternal identity and absent fatherhood in the Child's life. Even if the man happened to pay damages for the child, he could only have access to the child with the grandparent's permission.

From the general observations within communities in East London and its environs, there are some men who have cohabited (vat en sit) with the mother of their children for many years without formal marriage, but one could see some of such men changing cars, building and beautifying their houses, buying cows, sheep, goats and Nqumbuti (traditional sorghum beer) for sacrifices to appease the spirit of their ancestors. Such men do spend thousands of rand monthly on liquor or drugs without them deeming it necessary to pay lobola for the woman they claim to love in order for them to receive parental blessing which legitimizes their relationship with their sweet heart, because it is obedience that brings blessing.

Without doubt, such behavior contravenes African cultural norms and beliefs, because for the people of Africa, lobola is a form of cultural heritage that gives newly married couples the opportunity to receive parental blessings as they are about to start their marriage journey in life, (Semenya, 2014).

4.5.3.3 Other Gifts / Umngqungu (Bag of Cultural Tobacco)

At this stage of lobola negotiation according to Tata Sile and Lela, there are traditions to observe and small amounts of money to pay. These other gifts and Umngqungu or prices that usually accompany lobola

include what the Xhosa's call *Mvulamlo* (meaning opening of mouth). This is when the groom's representatives are expected to pay a small amount of gift money before they can be given a chance to state their reason for coming to the bride's family as well as during some other stages of the negotiation procedure. This small amount of money to be paid depends on what is usually acceptable within a given community. Gifts of cash, brandy, and some other stuff for refreshment are also brought to the place where negotiation is going on.

Other gifts and prices include, *Busobenetonbi* (Payment for the beautiful face of the bride), how did your son meet our daughter and who told you that we have a marriageable daughter in this home? "All these questions are part of the funs in the lobola negotiation process which usually cost the groom some additional amounts of money". *Umnkqayi* (Payment for the stick used to drive the cattle to the bride's family). The *Umnkqayi* is often demanded whether live cattle or cash is used for lobola settlement in most Xhosa communities. Normally in some African culture the stick is given in the form of a walking stick. Gifts and presents are given in the form of blankets alongside standard Xhosa outfits for the bride's mother and father.

This writer (as a pastoral care-giver) is of the view that those payments the prospective grooms are compelled to pay in addition to the *Ikhazi* (the number of cattle for lobola in Xhosa) are none essential payments; and, therefore, should be scrapped in order to lessen the cost burden of lobola on the Xhosa men who are willing to settle the lobola for the women they are in love with.

4.5.4 After-Lobola Agreement

Once the lobola negotiation between the bride and the groom's family have been completed through reaching an agreement as to the total number of cattle (Ikhazi in Xhosa) to be paid for lobola; bridewealth can be paid in full with only the price of one or two cattle left unpaid deliberately to maintain the culture that says, one does not finish the payment of lobola at once in most African traditions.

Whenever a son in-law spends money on his wife's family, he is believed to be paying part of his wife's lobola. Against the background that a lasting relationship has been created through the practice of lobola, the payment of cattle for lobola can be made in installments, with the first payment before the wedding and the residual only required after the birth of a child, (Yates, 1932, p.136).

A man who could not afford lobola could be permitted symbolically to count stones and drop them into his in-law's cattle kraal, and ask the father of the bride to agree to the marriage on the basis that the cattle paid for the groom's first daughter would belong to the father-in-law, (Dlamini, 1994, p. 20). In such arrangements, only one head of cattle would be needed to be slaughtered as a symbol for the elders and ancestors to accept the newly married couple. Although De Haas alluded to this belief that lobola payments were less frequently made in installments in recent time, (De Haas, 1987, p. 46), over the years, quick financial transactions and bulk lobola payments seems to have found increasing support and acceptance, (Derby, 2006).

But Tata Sile and some other elders interviewed by the writer reiterated that Xhosa people view paying lobola to be their cultural duty with the payment instilling a sense of pride. There is this common saying among

the Xhosa people that *Ikhazi aligqitywa* (A groom does not finish paying lobola). Others may say they will work and pay the remaining cattle together, (*Mabasebenze Bazihlawule Bobabini Eziseleyo iinkomo*). In most cases payment is made by installment, by credit or debit card especially the grooms from better enlightened families, (Kallipa, 2009, p.459). Within most Xhosa families, lobola negotiation and payment would have to precede marriage.

4.5.5 Rituals of Joining New Couples

There is a Christian young man from Libode in Transkei who paid forty thousand rand (R40 000) lobola in November 2015 for his God given wife in Mdantsane, East London, Eastern Cape, South Africa. When the required amount of lobola money was paid, a sheep was slaughtered by the bride's family for a dinner to celebrate the lobola settlement at the bride's home according to Xhosa tradition. Thereafter a kitchen party was organized at the bride's family home before a church wedding. A kitchen party is a function organized by the bride's family for well-wishers to give present to their daughter that is about to marry. This Christian bride got gifts worth about a hundred thousand rand (R100 000). Though the bride price may seem too high, but the gifts she took into her marriage tripled the amount paid for her lobola, this in no doubt reflects the beauty of the lobola practice.

As it is commonly practiced by the Christians in Xhosa communities, the joining of the new couples together in traditional marriage involves having their parents and family elders pray for the groom and the bride at the bride's home before proceeding to the church for a Priest to bless them in a holy wedlock; and finally to the groom's home where another ceremonial prayer service is being made for the success of the marriage. Communities in Xhosa land are beginning to accommodate

Christian practices which are void of the appeasing of ancestral spirits during naming ceremonies, circumcision, marriage, burial, and other celebrations as is commonly done in African traditions.

For non-Christian families, joining of the new couples in marriage is more traditional, the oldest man in the bride's family has to pray over a can containing Nqumbuti and give it to the bride who sips a little quantity and kneels down to give her groom straight into his mouth for him to sip a little from the same can too. Thereafter, the groom is called *Mkhwenyana* (Bride's Parents call their son in-law), as he is formally welcomed to become part of the bride's family. He then ceremoniously thanks his *Umkhwekazi* (Father and Mother In-laws), greets the *Ebukhweni* (what the groom calls the home of the bride), and part of the celebration is that both parents of the bride and groom now start calling themselves *Abakhozi*. The way Xhosa families do the joining of their newly married couples after lobola has been paid may differ from one village or clan to the other, but would still have some similarities the way it is practiced because African cultures inter links with each other.

Similarly, the ritual of joining couples traditionally in the Illah Delta state in the South-South region of Nigeria in West Africa is not much different from how it is done in some Xhosa clans. The oldest man in the bride's family says words of prayers over a piece of cola nut and the people present will respond by saying iseeeh! (Meaning Amen) He will then give the piece of cola nut to the bride to take a bite before kneeling in front of the groom to put the remaining piece of cola nut into the mouth of the groom. People who are around witnessing this ritual of joining the couple together clap their hands with great joy. The same elder also takes a glass of wine and prays over it and the people shout aloud by saying iseeeh! The bride is given the glass of wine; she drinks and

kneels in front of the groom to put the cup to his mouth for him to drink from same cup too. Feasting and celebration then start at the bride's home immediately after the ritual of joining the new couples has been completed.

Ima; an intelligent 46years old young chemist from Nnise town in Awka South of Anambra state of Nigeria, but stays in East London, Eastern Cape shared an interesting story of how the Igwe in council decides on how the lobola process is carried out in most of the South Eastern region of Nigeria. The amount of money to be paid as lobola by the groom is decided by the Igwe in council from time to time, not by the bride's parents or family as it is in most other African communities. The bridewealth may be just one thousand naira (#1000) which is about one hundred South African Rand (R100), which is agreed from the perspective that their daughter is not for sale.

He said that some family even tell the suitor to pay what he can afford to pay as lobola provided he will happily take good care of their daughter for them. The fascinating part of his lobola narrative was the excitement with which he shared about his sister's lobola settlement when her husband came with his family to marry her at their father's house; the ceremony he said was electrifying.

He got rejuvenated treading back the memory lane of his sister's traditional marriage which happened many years ago. However, the joy which the lobola settlement ceremony brought to him and his family is still very fresh in his memory. This is part of the beauty of the African culture of lobola as it revives the soul with joy whenever the narration is rehearsed. Pure Africans who are free from colonial mind-set and cultural pollution cannot be biased towards this beautiful culture of lobola

as practiced in African communities. Joyfully he reiterated how his father was able to provide enough food, drinks and meat for a lot of people who attended the function. As he was discussing with the researcher he suddenly remembered that it was time for him to do his school run, which was fetching his children from their schools for fear of paying a fine if he fails to fetch them at the stipulated time. He pleaded that the researcher should please wait for him.

On his arrival back from the school run, he excitingly continued his lobola narrative by telling the researcher about the liturgy of joining new couples in traditional marriage in most Eastern parts of Nigeria. He shared that when the very large crowd comprising of family members of both couples marrying had gathered, with all well-wishers, both those invited and even the uninvited are free to attend within the community. The community head man pours palm wine into a calabash cup and gives it to the bride who goes into the thick crowd to look for the groom who would be staying in the midst of the crowd. As the bride look for her groom to give him the cup of palm wine, many other young men would plead with her to give them the cup of wine, she would refuse to give the cup to another man, she would only give it to her right groom.

When she found her groom in the midst of the crowd and gave the cup of palm wine to him, the groom would drink the wine contained in the cup given to him by the bride and fill the cup with some money notes that would be returned to the oldest man (Diokpa in Igbo language) who would collect the money and then pray for their marriage to be successful.

It is great fun attending such a function according to Emma as he is usually called by those who know him in the East London business

community. He did highlight how risky it was for the bride to mistakenly give the calabash cup of palm wine to a man that was not her groom. They had to deal with the sacrilege caused by such a mistake before the marriage could be re-contracted if the real groom was willing to forgive the bride for such a mistake. On the other hand, the man she gave the cup of wine can also go ahead and marry her.

The bottom line is that the ritual of joining is symbolic; in that it culminates the essence of cultural marriage among African people. Be it in South, East, West or North Africa, there are similarities in the way lobola is practiced and liturgy of joining is performed in African villages and communities.

4.5.6 Naming of the Bride

Among the good people of Xhosa origin, marriage changes the status alongside the corresponding rights and privileges of both the men and women living in African communities in South Africa. Usually a teknonymous name is given to a newly married woman generally called *Makoti* in Xhosa language. It is the responsibility of the groom's parents to give a teknonymous name to their new daughter in-law to keep her in-laws from addressing her or referring to her by her maiden name. Her husband by tradition is expected to call her by the teknonymous name, especially amongst family members during family functions and in the public. With the Basotho culture, teknonymous name can become permanent to the point that the woman's first born child's name will usually match his or her mother's teknonymous name, Guma (2001:272).

According to Tata Sile's narrative, teknonymous names for newly married women in his clan known as Mpandla clan in Xhosa nation are

mostly given to a new wife in a traditional marriage in the groom's family home. In the olden days, the new bride with all her stuff would be carried in an Ox wagon called *Iduli* to her new husband's family home in a celebratory mood. She would be accompanied by a maiden girl called *Impelesi* who will live with her as a new maid in her marriage. Also, a grown up lady called *Umngqungu* would also be sent by the bride's family to stay with the bride and assist her in the domestic work for a while in her new marriage home before going back to her home. This type of arrangement is not commonly practiced as before due to civilization and economic meltdown.

For this practice to be performed, a sheep or goat for *Tsiki* would be slaughtered at the groom's family home to introduce and integrate the new bride into the groom's family. She would be told to sit on a mat on the floor, dressed in *Makoti's* attire, and given a cup of Sour milk (*Amaasi* in Xhosa) to drink. In addition, she would be given a paer-boiled lap of goat or sheep meat which she had to eat alone and the gall of the animal placed on her head as is done in some Xhosa culture. It is during this stage that the teknonymous name is given to the newly married woman by the father in-law (*Tata Zala*) or mother in-law (*Mama Zala*) in the presence of both the bride and groom's families (*Imilowo*) and their guests at the groom's family home. The new bride would then start bearing the surname of her husband as Mrs so and so (Mama so and so). For non-Christian's this practice is done only after lobola has been paid or after agreement has been reached by both the groom and the bride's family as to when and how lobola will be paid by a man that wants a wife on account because he does not have the money to pay his wife's lobola at the time.

But for Christians, this practice is done after lobola is settled and a church wedding is conducted, then the woman is escorted to her husband's family home where this teknonymous name-giving ceremony is performed for her in a non-idolatrous way depending on the couple's level of faith. According to Semenya even if Mahadi (Bride price in Basotho) has been paid in full the married couple must still have a white wedding so that the bride may receive a teknonymous name, which is of great importance amongst Sotho wives, (Semenya, 2014, p. 4). Culturally, it was with a deep sense of pride and great honour that an Africa woman went through these cultural practices during her marriage.

4.6 CONCLUSION

The aim of this chapter was to explore lobola culture and its impact among Xhosa people. It is considered the vehicle through which to seal marriage agreements between a man and a woman in Xhosa tradition and also in most other African nations. Lobola as a marriage ritual is very important in African culture, because it is a mark of cultural identity for the people of Africa. But the distortion and commercialization of the practice tends to pose a serious challenge to the intending couples with regards to them getting married in recent times. The lobola custom is widely supported and respected by most Africans, but measures should be put in place to protect the practice from abuse, distortion and commercialization in order for it to achieve its original goal of giving the African families a platform where cordial relationship can be built between the grooms and the brides' families. Lobola should be practiced in a manner where no man or woman is deprived of fulfilling his or her marriage aspirations and dreams. The next chapter deals with the outcome of conducted interviews and responses to research questionnaires

CHAPTER FIVE

RESULTS OF INTERVIEWS AND QUESTIONNAIRES WITH DATA ANALYSIS

Data for this research work was collected from three categories of respondents: the unmarried, the married and the clergy. Different sets of relevant and related questions were put to the three categories to enable the writer gain a broader people's view concerning the issue of lobola.

5.1 THE UNMARRIED:

The researcher administered questionnaire to thirteen unmarried people of which seven were women and six were males. The respondents have been coded with P1 to P7 representing participants one to seven and they are all unmarried female respondents. P8 to P13 represents participants eight to thirteen and they are all unmarried men. Their Questionnaire was structured to obtain information relating to:

- General Knowledge of the lobola Practice
- Views on whether Lobola has been commercialised
- Will any Reduction in the cost of Lobola lead to more men settling Lobola for their women?
- What Price is affordable
- Views on cohabitation

5.1.1 General Knowledge of the Lobola Practice:

P1 to P13 have sound knowledge of the lobola practice. All the unmarried women P1 to P7 respondents affirmed their support for the payment of lobola. Their reasons included:

1. It would make them valuable in the sight of their husbands
2. It would make their husbands to care and love them.

3. It is a Xhosa identity that should be preserved.

Among the unmarried men (P8 to P13), P12 believed that paying lobola was irrelevant because many married women still had affairs with other men. To put it in his own words, *“I do not support lobola practice these days because most ladies who are married still go about with other men as boyfriend. I cannot pay my money for a lady that is free for all men”* However, the other five unmarried male respondents supported lobola payment on the following grounds:

1. That it has to be paid by the man before the woman will become his wife
2. It is a Xhosa tradition

Importantly, P12 stated that, *“It is how different family goes about lobola that can be wrong or right”*

5.1.2 Views on whether Lobola has been commercialised:

The respondents believed that the commercialisation or non-commercialisation of lobola depended on the perspective of view. According to P1, *“...lobola money is spent to buy home things for the lady, so the bride’s family no longer get money out of their daughter’s lobola”* P2 echoed the submission of P1 stating that, *“It is the type of marriage and wedding that will determine the amount of lobola the man should pay”*

On the other hand, most of the unmarried men believed that lobola had been commercialised. On the question whether you think lobola has been commercialised, four out of the six unmarried male respondents stated emphatically that lobola had been commercialised while the other two believed that it had to do with individual families. According to P9,”

Among the Xhosa families, Parents are asking too much money for lobola” P10 submitted that, “In some families, yes lobola has been commercialized” P13 stated that, “Yes! Some families are trying to make gain from lobola but good families use it to start a family life for their daughter in her marriage” P8 stated thus, “Yes! Though it depends on the family the guy is marrying from”

5.1.3 Will a Reduction in the Cost of Lobola help Motivate you to Pay Lobola for your Woman?

All the unmarried men P8 to P13 that participated in this study believed that reducing the price to what they could afford would help them settle the lobola quickly. P13 believed that it would give him the opportunity to pay lobola for her girlfriend he has lived with for the past eight years. In his own words, *“I go nah (sic) pay lobola for my girlfriend I have been living with for eight years quickly”* P13 falls into the category of people that had been adversely affected by inability to afford lobola. P11 was of the view that a reduction would give him the opportunity to go to the lady’s house and negotiate better. Putting it in his own words, *“I will go to her family and negotiate better”* P10 submitted that such reduction would make him plan towards paying lobola for his woman. P8 responded that, *“I will settle her lobola quickly”* P9 said he was already saving R300.00 every week to enable him pay lobola and a reduction would make it possible for him to settle the lobola earlier than he would have done without a reduction.

5.1.4 What Price is Affordable for you?

This section provided insight into the kind of reduction needed to produce the expected motivation that would push these unmarried men to move towards paying lobola for their women. P8 believed that

allowing him pay R15, 000 would be of immense relief to him. From his submission, he wanted to pay R15, 000 not because that is what his woman was worth but because he earned little at work. P10 would be willing to pay R20, 000 for the woman that he loves. P11 believed that he can pay up to R30, 000 for his girlfriend and could not afford R100, 000. According to P12, *“I can pay R50, 000 lobola for a lady that does not drink liquor, and does not sleep around”*. P13 also stated that he would be glad if the in-laws would charge him R50, 000. For P9, R5, 000 and 2 life cows were enough in his view.

5.1.5 Views on Cohabitation:

Some of the respondents justified cohabitation while others denounced it. According to P3, *“Some Xhosa people do it but it is not our culture. Mnah (me) I hate it, but men want wives for mahala (free of charge) that is why they don’t want to pay lobola”*. P4 said that though it was happening in our day but it was not Xhosa culture. P5 submitted *“that cohabitation was an abomination”* According to P1, cohabitation was wrong and Makoti’s (married women in the family) in the man’s family would not regard her as a Makoti because lobola was not paid for her. P5 described cohabitation as an abomination.

P7 also stated that it is wrong and it made the men not to be committed to marrying their partners. She also said that people could not serve God in that state of sin; and cohabitation diminished the dignity of the families of both the man and the woman. P6 believed that it was Unafrikan. P2’s submission that, *“Cohabitation is wrong, but we are doing it because men are no longer ready to pay lobola in a hurry”* painted a picture of the many reason(s) why people are still there. P13 who happened to have stayed with girlfriend for the past eight years said, *“It is not right to do*

cohabitation but I am planning to pay lobola for my wife very soon” P10 also denounced cohabitation and stated, “In our culture you must pay lobola before you stay with a Lady” On the contrary P8 believed that, “there is no problem, provided the guy and the girl agree together. The guy has to pay the lobola when he has got the money” P12 saw nothing wrong with cohabitation and said, “...if the lady and the guy accept to stay together, let it be” For P9, there was nothing wrong with cohabitation. Putting it in his own words, “It is not wrong living with your girlfriend before marriage. I am living with my girlfriend now though I have not yet paid her lobola...I am happy with her because she is taking good care of my son whom I got from another girlfriend”

5.2 THE PARENTS:

Six parents participated in this study. They are represented as P14 to P19. Questions were put to them to find out their views with respect to the following:

- Is Lobola still Valid in our present age?
- What Criteria are taken into account while pricing Lobola?
- How much are you willing to charge for your daughters?
- Beneficiaries of Lobola Money
- How much are you willing to allow your son pay as lobola?
- Views on Cohabitation

5.2.1 Is Payment of Lobola Still Valid in this Present Age?

All the respondents answered in the affirmative. They believed that lobola settlement was still valid in our time. Respondents gave reasons to back their support for lobola payment to continue. According to P14, “It is not about money it’s about relationship between two families” For

P14, the relationship that was built was more important than the money that was paid. However, she did not state whether she could embrace just the relationship without the money. P15 stated, “Yes, it is our culture. Although lobola is being commercialised in some families, but it is still a relevant African culture” P16 added that it involved adults and lobola negotiations should be done on family values on both sides. P18 gave insight to what the Xhosas thought about lobola. According to P18, “I believe it is a right thing especially to us Africans, a practice that signifies our prestige” P19 brought another perspective into the discussion when she wrote as follows, “Yes because I have fed her, took her to school, taught her everything about life” For P19, Lobola settlement should be about compensation or reward for the labour the parents dispensed in raising their daughter. Obviously, there are varying reasons people would want lobola settlement to continue. Such reasons as deduced from this analysis do include culture preservation, relationship and compensation.

5.2.2 Criteria for Determining Lobola Price:

The following criteria came up in the answers turned in by the respondents:

- Level of Education
- Whether Working or Unemployed
- Dignity of the family/ Family Status
- Behaviour
- Her Looks
- Whether still a virgin
- Hard worker
- Royalty

These criteria according to P18 may vary from family to family and from clan to clan.

5.2.3 How Much Lobola will you Charge for your Daughter?

From the responses of the Parents, the type of wedding the couple will desire came up prominently as an indispensable determinant of how much should be charged for lobola. P14 believed that she had to charge enough to cover the wedding cost. P15 wrote, “I will charge ten cows and one ox for each daughter. Each cow cost R10, 000 but for lobola pricing, a cow can be R 5,000 each. But it depends on what my family will ask for” P16 and P17 were of the view that R30,000 would be adequate because according to P16 the couple would need to build their own family and must not do that in debt as that would bring problems. P18 stated that, “Ten cows are paid sometimes in other families twelve cows. When it comes to me, I think I will be considerate with my daughter” P19 added that if lobola was not paid, my daughter was not going to enjoy recognition as a married woman in the Xhosa community.

5.2.4 Who Benefits from the Lobola Money?

P14 believed that since the lobola was normally used to fund the couple’s wedding, both families enjoyed the money. P15 wrote that, *“Lobola is used for wedding these days if it’s the bride’s family that will foot the bills for the wedding”* P16 believed that, *“Today nobody is benefitting from lobola money. It was good in the olden days’ livestock was used for lobola but today, the cost of wedding is up ...”* P17 mentioned that the Oonozakuzaku and the parents benefit small amounts from the lobola money. P18 wrote that the family of the bride benefited in terms of money but both families enjoyed the exchange of

relationships. P19 believed that the main beneficiaries were the parents because of the hard work they had done raising the child.

5.2.5 Views on Cohabitation:

P14 believed that it lowered the dignity of both families. P15 condemned cohabitation stating that, *“it is not our culture as Xhosas...”* P16 stated that it is rare for a man to marry her cohabiting partner. P17 submitted that it was wrong for both believers and unbelievers as the man would not see any need to marry. P17 said that the practitioners call it a marriage trial and said that it made each other feel worthless and there was always a failure at the end of this bitter game. P19 wrapped it up by stating that the man would not bother to settle lobola because he was getting all the benefits.

5.3 THE CLERGY:

Seven Clergymen participated in this study and are represented as P20 to P26. Questionnaires were administered to them to test their views on the following:

1. Mediation in Lobola settlement especially where a stalemate arises.
2. The role the Clergy can play to reduce cost associated with Lobola.
3. Experience with the Xhosa's regarding church wedding without Lobola settlement.
4. Views on Cohabitation

5.3.1 Mediation in lobola Settlement

Five respondents (P20, P21, P23, P24 and P25) believed that the Clergy should mediate while two (P22 and P26) disagreed. P20 submitted that *Clergies should encourage Xhosas' to settle lobola for their wives because it is African Culture for them to qualify for parental blessing.* P21 believed that things would be good when the leader of the church is among those sent to negotiate lobola. P23 highlighted that *the family turns to trust the man who proposed to their daughter when the Pastor is there. The Pastor can stand the ground when the family wants to impose ancestral practice.* P24 believed that the mediation of the clergy *would bring in Godly order into the lobola and help bring God's fear in the family.* P25 supported the mediation of the clergy on the ground that it would *bring fairness and stability in both parties.* On the contrary, P22 disagreed with the mediation of the clergy in Lobola negotiation on the ground that lobola was between the two families of the affected parties. Also P26 wrote that clergy should not mediate because *Clergy are ordained for religious duties, especially in Christian Church. Clergy can only be there during lobola negotiation only if the son or daughter is involved, otherwise lobola negotiation is between the couple's families.*

5.3.2 The Role the Clergy Should Play in Respecting of Cost:

This was about the role the clergy could play in ensuring that cost of lobola settlement was adjusted to make way for intending couples to settle the lobola and get married. P20 stated that, *"Parents and families should be discouraged from asking far too much as if they are commercializing lobola practice"* P21 suggested communicating with the families as they were the ones putting the price. He also suggested that the lady can also help in this regard as the leader cannot negotiate the

price. P22 suggested the role of educating the families that were coming to the church about the risk of the high cost of lobola among Xhosas'. In his own words, *"As a clergy, I feel it is my responsibility to teach the families that are coming to the church about the risk of high cost of lobola among Xhosas' as I believe that families that are marrying each other, the purpose is to love each other and come together as a big family"* P23 suggested that parents and family members should be reminded that young people are making babies outside wedlock because lobola is out of reach. Moreover, they should be reminded that a man does not take full responsibility for a child when there is no marriage involved. P24 submitted that the Xhosa people should get a proper understanding of lobola that it was not the selling of their children but a token of a right of parenting your daughter. P25 suggested educating the people that, *"it is not about money but building family that comes together"* However, P26 cautioned that, *"the cost of educating the daughter and the cost for the wedding should be put into consideration when lobola is being negotiated"*.

5.3.3 Church Wedding without Lobola Settlement:

Here, the researcher wanted to know what happened in a situation where maybe an intending couple was joined in a church wedding without lobola settlement being made. How did the Xhosa view such issues? All the respondents submitted that such routes were not entertained among the Xhosas' and as such marriages of those sorts were not recognized among the people. According to P20, *"they are not acknowledged as married couples in Xhosa families"*. P21 added that even members of the church who knew lobola was not paid; did not accord such marriages recognition. According to P21, Xhosa families recognised a marriage with lobola not without lobola. P22 stated that

lobola was the first requirement before a wedding could happen and so such wedding without lobola paid is not recognized. P23 revealed that, *“In most cases, the family does not give their blessing and that creates tension between the family and the couple and I believe that both church and family blessing are necessary and the community does not respect the wife and the man”* P24 added that, *“it is natural for every culture to receive lobola in order to make the marriage legitimate to both parties”* P25 said that in Xhosa tradition, lobola must be paid for marriages to be recognised by the family. P26 reported that in Xhosa culture, it is an insult and disrespectful not to pay lobola.

5.3.4 Views on Cohabitation by the Clergy:

It was believed that even in the church, you found people cohabiting and are not interested in settling lobola. Many do break up the cohabitation with one sister or brother and move on to cohabit with another brother or sister in the same church. Here the researcher seeks to know the views of the Clergies. All the respondents condemned cohabitation. P20 said that, *“It kills the root of relationship between the bride and groom’s family”* P21 saw it as, *“the poison that destroys the future husbands and wives because most of them end up fighting and doing wrong things there”* P22 stated that, *“I don’t see it as a good thing because its uncultured according to my belief as a Christian and also according to our customs it’s not something pleasing”* P23 added that because of the increasing number of people indulging in cohabitation, society was beginning to see it as normal. He stated that cohabitation was disrespectful to the girl’s family. P25 lamented that cohabitation was killing our nation. Children without proper foundations and heartbreaks were seen as the products. However, it was easy for them to separate

because there were no proper commitments from both sides. Lastly P26 saw cohabitation as disrespectful to the lady and her family.

5.4 MARRIED MEN AND WOMEN:

For the married men and women, the questionnaire sought to find out their views on the following:

1. Their experience when they paid for Lobola
2. Whether there will be any need to transform the Lobola settlement practice.
3. Whether there are rituals during Lobola settlement that can hinder intending couples from getting married
4. Whether Lobola practice should be abolished.
5. Views on Cohabitation.

Nine married men, women and couples responded to this questionnaire and are denoted as P27 to P35. Their views are as follows:

5.4.1 Their Lobola Experience and Recent Costs of Lobola:

This group of respondents had all gone through the process of lobola settlement at one point or the other in their lives and have the real experience of what it looks like to pay lobola or being paid lobola for (in the case of a woman). P27 is a 43 years old man and he believed lobola is right because it made you respect your wife and if one paid lobola, he was doing the right thing. P28 is a foreign national married to a Xhosa lady. He submitted that, *"...during lobola negotiations they charge me high but I managed to negotiate to reduce a little bit. We ended up agreeing on R 20,000 which is reasonable"* P29 is a 30 years old lady and she admitted that, *"Yes, it was high when lobola was paid for me. R35, 000 was paid"*.

P30 also a married woman stated as follows, *“It is much what they are charging in some families. It’s like we are being sold”* P31 who is a 43 years old man said that the amount to be paid as lobola is a product of negotiations and varies from family to family while considering other criteria like having a child out of wedlock, level of education and her family status.

P35’s story lent credence to P31’s submission. According to P35, *“Most families charge according to the educational level of the girl. So since my wife was a graduate, in 2006 when I got married I paid R 21,000 plus the preparation”*. Regrettably, no consideration was given to the outstanding qualities of the bride groom in terms of his academic achievement, Character and conduct. The writer was of the view that the educational level and the morals of the bridegroom will invariably affect the quality of live and marriage the bride will have and hence should also be considered as a way of encouraging men to become more responsible.

P32 stated categorically that, *“Generally, R 50,000 is being charged depending on the family of the bride”* Considering the present economic climate, not too many people will be keen to pay R 50,000 as lobola for a woman they are not convinced will bring some returns into their economic life after the marriage. If we are to go by that amount, many unemployed and employed people may take many years to save such amount. The implication is that they may decide to still play around while waiting for their money to be paid completely. It can indirectly lead one into cohabitation. According to P33 who is a 54 years old man, lobola cost depends on the specific family and the bargaining power of the representatives of the bride groom. P34 also corroborated the

submissions that the cost depended on the family but added that the cost ranged from R 25,000 upwards.

5.4.2 Should Lobola Practice Be Transformed?

It was considered that since lobola settlement was something that involve people and economic resources, maybe the passage of time and economic shifts happening over time may have influenced it. This section intends to extract the view of the people on this.

Out of the 9 married persons and couples that responded to this question, 7 of them representing 78 per cent of the respondents wanted Lobola practice transformed while 2 respondents representing 22 per cent wanted the status quo to remain. Among those calling for the transformation of the practice there were varied reasons postulated.

Three of the respondents wanted it transformed specifically because of the price. P29 and P34 believed that Lobola should be reviewed to make way for affordability because the costs were currently high. According to P29, “The price of lobola should be reviewed for it to be affordable for most unmarried couples” P34 wrote as follows, “I can say yes. It needs not to be so expensive to be done as it is something to build a relationship more than money issue” P35 submitted that lobola should be transformed because there was unemployment which was not there when it was started. In his own words, “Yes, because there is unemployment which was not there when it was started” P35’s response raised the debate as to whether marriage was for the unemployed since the man was required to provide for his wife and children.

P33 wanted it transformed on the basis of convenience to pay. He submitted that some families do ask for the lobola in two halves. One

half was monetary and another half was the livestock. According to P33, there are few cows now and the demand should not be mixed. P30 wanted it transformed because some families were abusing it. Such a transformation should be one that would eliminate the abuse.

P31 believed that there were so many unnecessary demands from the groom's family in the practice that needed to be trimmed out. Such included: *ubusobentombi* (face of a bride), *uswazi* (stick for driving of cattle) and the bottle of brandy for the girls and women. P32 called for the transformation of the practice on the basis that Money should be used for lobola instead of live cows.

However, on the other hand P27 disagreed with those calling for the transformation of the lobola practice stating that, "*it does not need transformation*" P28 wrote, "*No, because it is the pride of a woman. No woman will like you to have her for nothing*". The high/low cost of lobola made a woman to feel that she was worth something.

5.4.3 Was your Lobola Settlement Cost High or Low?

Whether cost was high or low was linked to level of income and the percentage of that income that would go into settling that cost. For a wealthy man, paying R200,000 for the lady she loved whether she was working or not; educated or not educated may not be draining compared to a Petrol attendant who was required to pay R50,000 for the lady he loved.

In summary, what was expensive for someone may not be so for another depending on their income levels and the value each of them attached to what he was paying for: P28 paid R20, 000 for his wife and believed that the amount was low. He believed it was a reasonable

price. P30 believed that the amount of lobola paid for her was low. P35 paid R21, 000 and took care of his wedding preparation. According to him, the cost was neither high nor low. He believed it was moderate. On the other hand, P27 who paid R20, 000 believed that the amount was high. In his words, “It was high, I pay R20, 000. A married man does not finish paying lobola. I am still spending money in my wife’s family”.

For P29, an amount of R 35,000 was paid for her as lobola and she submitted that it was high. For P34, an amount of R25, 000 was required from him as lobola settlement for his bride. He wrote as follows, “*I can say it was high according to my view, but I’m still busy with paying. I paid R15, 000 now left is R10, 000*”. From P34’s submission, it can be seen that there is room for payments of lobola in installments. However, P32 and P31 believed that the amount they paid for lobola was reasonable. According to P32, the way he and his kinsmen approached his wife’s family made them to get a reasonable amount for the lobola settlement cost. This implied that the manner of approach by the groom’s family towards the bride’s family could make a difference in the lobola costs. In situations where parents did not want a certain man for their daughter, one of their strategies was to make the lobola cost unaffordable for him so that he would go.

5.4.4 Accommodating other Belief Systems in Lobola Practice

Are there Rituals during Lobola settlement that can hinder intending couple’s from getting married? This raises the issue of conflict of beliefs. Cultural systems are in a way associated with religious beliefs. However, it becomes a challenge when custodians of cultural systems refuse to accommodate other belief systems in the practice of communal culture

by maintaining hard lines on what must be done even if it contradicts the belief of the other group.

The Xhosa nation is fast becoming multi-religious with the traditional, Christian and Muslim religions all present. At the time of inception of the lobola tradition and its rituals, the Xhosa nation was homogenously immersed in traditional religion but considering the fact that the society is now multi-religious, the researcher at this point wanted to know if there were certain rituals opposed to by other religions which may be a hindrance for intending couples to go ahead with their marriage.

It is the belief of P27 that no marriage ritual can hinder a man from marrying the woman he loves. It is P27's view that love should be put above religious beliefs; but how possible can that be? P28 submitted that of a truth, there are hindrances, *"...when you are newlywed a goat is slaughtered and you have to eat a piece of meat which they call (utsiki) after the advice you are getting from the family as a new wife"*. P29 objected to the ntlawula cultural practice as a part of the marriage process. P31 feels that demands for things like brandy for the girls were unnecessary and should be removed. P32 complained of the tsiki ritual among others as been a problem for Christians when getting married. P34's submission tended to suggest that most of these rituals tend to make lobola more expensive because all of those rituals need to be paid for. In his words, *"yes one of them is the highest price because even all those rituals needed to be paid for"*. P35 did not like the aspect that compelled people from royal families to marry into royal families as well. Other things like *intonjane* and *imbeleko* before marriage were of serious concern to P35. In his words, P35 stated that, *"...for example, if the son comes from the royal family, he is forced to marry a royal girl. Religious*

differences like intonjane, imbeleko before marriage". **5.4.5 Should Lobola Practice Be Abolished?**

Considering the complains about the costs of lobola settlement and the prevailing level of unemployment, the researcher wanted to know from his respondents if it would be better to abolish the lobola practice. All the married respondents with the exception of P34 stated emphatically that Lobola should not be abolished. On the question whether lobola should be abolished, P34 responded as follows, *"I think according to my view, I don't see anything that lobola changed or added to married life"* P34 believed that the lobola practice made no difference to marriage life contrary to some claims that it would make the man value his wife much more. On the other hand, others believed it should not be abolished. P27 queried, *"Why lobola should be abolished? Nobody must try that because lobola is our culture"* P28 believed that lobola payment was a cultural identity and wrote that, *"No, it must not be abolished ... it's a pride of every woman and it's a culture that is practiced in my country as well"*. P29 rejected the abolition of the lobola practice on the grounds that it was a Xhosa woman's dignity and our culture as Africans. She wrote that, *"...it is our culture as Africans", and it's a Xhosa woman's dignity"*. P30 believed that the Lobola practice should continue because it is our culture as Africans. P31 added that lobola builds relationship and should not be abolished. In his words, *"It should not be abolished because it combines both families together, and to know each other better"*. Considering this issue from another point of view, P32 rejected the abolition of Lobola practice on the grounds that, *"...in Xhosa nation, the man will have say in the bride's family. If he does not pay now, he will pay when his wife dies or if the man dies the woman's family will not go to his funeral because they see him as a man who crooked the*

woman family". Lastly P33 stated that lobola should stay while arguing that it is one of the concepts that identified who we were as Africans. *"It is a tool that defines the prestige of our African ladies"*, he concluded.

5.4.6 Married Peoples' Views on Cohabitation:

All nine married respondents condemned cohabitation on the ground that it was wrong, disrespectful, abomination (from the African perspective), Unaffrican, Ungodly, shameful, dangerous and a killer. P35 wrote that, *"...it is wrong and not respecting the good element of Xhosa culture"* P34 considered cohabitation as a killer. In his own words, *"I see it as a killer"*. P33 stated that, *"It is a dangerous practice which is not cherished amongst black community"* P32 submitted that, *"It destroys their cultural identity, and is a thing of shame in African community"* P31 was against cohabitation because, *"it's against our culture and its ungodly"* P30 puts it categorically that, *"as Xhosas' it is not our culture to cohabit"*. P29 added that, *"it is an abomination in African culture"*. Lastly P27 stated that, *"It is very wrong. The man has no respect for the Xhosa woman and her family"*. P27's advice to the unmarried is, *"marry God first and look for a spouse that has married God first in order for your marriage to be successful"*. Due to the ugly experiences some went in regards to lobola related issues, the writer came up with therapeutic healing process and deliverance to care for those who were traumatized and were in pain.

CHAPTER SIX

THERAPEUTIC HEALING PROCESS AND DELIVERANCE

6.0 INTRODUCTION

The application of therapeutic healing modules outlined in this chapter will assist counsellors and pastoral care givers in helping those who are brutalised and traumatized as a result of lobola related issues in order to help victims find inner healing and meaning in their lives again. The Nurturing faith and hope process as advocated by Wimberly was employed to provoke in victims lives the evocation of awareness that, it is God with us in the person of Jesus Christ and the Holy Spirit at all times, who have not forsaking us even in the difficult wrenching trials of life.

Those who were traumatized and in pain like Zandi, due to lobola related issues were guided pastorally to strengthen their faith in a never failing God with whom they have a relationship and also to know that God was in relationship with them through Jesus Christ and the Holy Spirit. They should endeavour to live in hope with expectation, confidently and courageously in community after the model of Jesus Christ in times of triumph and in the midst of hard trials and tribulations.

Gerkin's pastoral care of shepherding was applied in journeying with people like Zandi who were wounded and in pain towards recovery and total healing emotionally. In order for victim to recover themselves and be perfectly made whole again, Pollard's method of positive deconstruction was used to gain entry into the space of people like

Zandi who was wounded and in severe pain due to challenges caused by lobola.

The Deliverance method is put forward as being suitable for those battling with evil spirits that got access into the lives of innocent but ignorant victims when they were hurting. This chapter advocates a process to enable them to take charge of their lives as they allow God to be in control.

6.1 TRAUMA AND SUFFERING IN THE CONTEXT OF LOBOLA PRACTICES

Trauma is an emotional wound caused by an event that is extremely upsetting during lobola practice. This psychological injury caused by extreme emotional assault often leaves trauma victims with a feeling of helplessness, suffering and pain, (Mitchell, 1983, p. 814). In the lives of victims like Zandi, trauma pain and suffering are used to disrupt the processes which regulates the health and optimal functioning of a person. Unpleasant situation usually produce discomfort and protracted dysfunctioning state of mind and life.

For people like Zandi to cope with traumatic life events that caused them stress, suffering and pain is not an automatic process; it requires some effort. For one to say that he or she is successfully coping means coming to terms with the traumatic pain and suffering. Having ability to gain and process new information, there by maintaining control over one's own emotion in order to be able to move freely in the world, (Rioos et , 2002, pp. 7-8) cited by (Masango & Dreyer, 2015, p. 6).

6.1.1 Seeing God in Your Suffering and Pain after Trauma

Human existence as a creation of God calls for wholeness and joy, but suffering and pain caused by trauma is against human wellness. Pastoral care providers should lay the truth bare to counselees by therapeutically making their client to understand that suffering and pain are part of human existence. All people born of a woman will experience suffering and pain in the course of their life time. Suffering and pain are not experience the same way by all people, because every person is unique, and every experience of suffering and pain is also unique. Suffering and pain caused as a result of actions by people in the groom's or bride's family and the community can be handled by victims when properly guided by pastoral care providers for them to see the almighty God in their suffering, pain and struggles, (Masango & Dreyer, 2015, p. 24).

6.1.2 Finding Meaning in your Suffering and Pain

Finding a reason or an explanation for suffering will differ from person to person and from situation to situation. Care providers must assist their clients to find his or her own explanation and meaning, this is the prerequisite to emotional healing. Once people like Zandi are guided through "Probing" that is when a pastoral care giver investigate and question to know the true state of the counselee and try to meet them there. This helps counselees to come to grips with their suffering and pain, and find acceptance and meaning in their situation, (Louw, 2005, p. 263). The outcome of caring for those suffering evokes faith and hope in God for healing and wholeness of the victim's wounds.

6.2 EVOKING FAITH AND HOPE IN GOD

Wimberly in her work tried to get us to understand the essence of true worship and the wholesome feeling true worshipers enjoy when they

connect with God through Jesus Christ and the Holy Spirit. A happening in worship that evokes or enkindles the kind of heart and head that knows what impacts positively on a person's life is through the unfolding of the order of worship, the symbol of the altar and the language sermons, songs, and prayers are among the intrinsic aspects of the "happening" that give food for the mind and our imagination of God's nature. In this way, worship nurtures our conscious knowing of God, (Wimberly, 2004, p. 4).

Lobola related issues do impact on victims negatively in such a manner that often leave the person who is emotionally assaulted bruised and wounded. Those who are affected and left with the feeling of helplessness in churches within Xhosa communities should be encouraged and comforted by care givers to evoke their faith and hope in God in true worship for them to experience comfort and nourishment that comes through knowing God and staying connected with God.

6.2.1 The Wounded Healer

Masango et al cited Roos et al who articulated the critical need of creating an actively supportive social environment which fosters development by helping people who are stressing and struggling as a result of problem with lobola to cope more effectively, (Masango & Dreyer, 2015, p. 6). Those who are emotionally abused or that suffered disappointment in relation to lobola matters should be journeyed with by Pastoral care givers and counsellors, in order for them to find inner healing. They should be listened to as they share their stories of hurts and pain.

Counsellors who are knowledgeable in trauma informed care service will be in the best position to assist those that are in pain emotionally.

Trauma informed care providers see survivors as injured people not as sick or bad people, (Wilson, 1983, p. 201). Xhosas who are negatively affected because of lobola issues are not bad or sick people they should be viewed as injured people and that Jesus Christ received 39 strokes of the cane from the Roman soldiers for their spiritual, physical and emotional healing, (Isaiah 53:3-5). The suffering and the wounds Christ received is for humanity to receive healing in every area of life as well as wholesomeness and wellness.

6.2.2 Appreciative Consciousness

The concept of appreciative consciousness is identified by Wimberly as the formation of new insights or interpretation of who Jesus Christ really is and the significance of His presence and relationship with us in our situation, (Wimberly, 2014, p. 23). She cited Frankly who acclaimed that “I come to know Jesus Christ A little bit better”. Humanly speaking, it is hard to explain how one experiences Christ, but the reality is that there are moments when the presence of Jesus Christ becomes so tangible and real to the point that the person can hear Him speak to him or her. Jesus said in (John10:27-30) *that my sheep hear my voice, and I know them and they follow me. And I give them eternal life, and they shall never perish; neither shall anyone snatch them out of my hand.* The more one hears Jesus speak into his or her life and situation, the little more the person gets inspiration and is comforted to go with life as a Christian, (Louw, 2005, p. 267).

6.2.3 Nurturing faith and hope in True Worship

Wimberly indicated that nurturing faith and hope in God usually happen through an evocative process that comes alive from a participative habitation and the use of scriptures in delivering of sermons, singing of

hymns and songs with prayers are the primary pathways through which these aspects of nurture occur in true worship that fosters relational knowing of Jesus Christ, (Wimberly, 2004, p. 21).

A participant Betu's narrative (not real name) was that she suffered depression, dropped out of school when she discovered that her boyfriend with whom she got her two sons has infected her with HIV before leaving her for another lady. She was pregnant with the second child when he dumped her; this act made her to prefer death to life then, before her mother took her battered life and cared for her and her two boys. She was taken to psychologist but her breakthrough happened when she went back to God in true repentance and true worship. "Now I have got my Honours degree and I am working and preparing to get married".

It is amazing what God can do in the life of a sincere and penitent worshiper like Betu whose life God transformed through the nurturing of her faith and hope in Christ Jesus. Pastoral care givers should communicate the power of God's word and prayer to encourage people who are stressing, depressed and in pain to avail themselves unto becoming actors in a true and Holy Spirit governed worship in order for them to find meaning in life again. The other critical aspect of maintaining our focus on Jesus is to visualise Him regularly.

6.2.4 Visualization of the Relational Jesus

The dictionary meaning of visualization is to form a mental picture of something or someone. Therefore, knowing the pathway of nurture through visualizing Jesus Christ with the eyes of faith is key for the recovery of bruised and wounded souls. Pastoral care givers should endeavour to therapeutically journey with victims who suffered abuses

during lobola settlement and are disappointed, discouraged, down and damaged. This kind of journey should be in a faith nurturing manner in order for victims to see Jesus Christ whose relational character is worthy of our thanks to God because Christ does not leave us alone to move by ourselves. He promised to be with His people always.

The scriptures told us in (Hebrews 11:24-27) that by faith Moses, when he became of age, refused to be called the son of Pharaoh's daughter choosing rather to suffer affliction with people of God than to enjoy the passing pleasure of sin, esteeming the reproach of Christ greater riches than the treasures in Egypt; for he looked to the reward

By faith he forsook Egypt, not fearing the wrath of the king; for he endured as seeing Him who is invisible.

Just as Moses did not fear the visible king because he saw the invisible God, on the same note, having victims of lobola abuse visualize Jesus Christ with the eyes of faith, will help start the process of inner healing in their lives.

In order to clearly explain the normative role Pastors of God's people, the writer decided to employ Gerkin's method of Pastoral care.

6.3 NORMATIVE PORTRAIT OF A PASTORAL CARE PROVIDER

Gerkin's method of pastoral care of shepherding has beautifully pointed our attention to the scriptural verse of, (John 10:14) which clearly explained to us how Jesus Christ who is the role model of the pastoral care providers is depicted as the good shepherd who knows his sheep and is known by his sheep. His sheep, who are his true disciples, do hear his voice and follow Him Anywhere He leads them, (John 10:27). Gerkin says that this has painted a meaningful, normative portrait of the

pastor of God's people. Reflection on the actions and words of Jesus as he related to people at various levels of social life gives us the model sine qua non for pastoral relationships with those immediately within our care and those strangers we meet along the way in life, (Gerkin, 1997, p. 80).

The writer was guided by Gerkin's shepherding model of the prophetic role in a normative manner to point to victims like Zandi, Betu and others who are bruised and in pain to a hopeful future and playing a priestly role of caring for them. As pastoral care providers and counsellors apply wisdom in guiding the victims of lobola related issues on how to apply the knowledge they have about the Lord correctly, without doubt, traumatized victims will be healed emotionally.

To be able to accomplish such a task, care providers should embark on a therapeutic journey with those who are depressed and in pain due to lobola related issues with a view to helping them find inner healing and self-worth again. These are the pastoral perspectives which were convincingly lauded in this work. However, where it appears Gerkin is not able to journey deeply in reconstructing the lives of those who are brutally crushed emotionally, Pollard helps us with his pastoral care model of positive deconstruction.

6.4 POSITIVE DECONSTRUCTION

The evangelism of positive deconstruction is used to gain entry into the lives of those who are emotionally damaged due to lobola related issues. Nick Pollard's positive deconstruction is the process which seeks to help people to deconstruct (take apart) what they believe so that they can carefully examine the belief and analyse it. The process is "positive" because this deconstruction is done in a positive way in order to replace

it with something better. This method is contrasted with branch literacy criticism known as deconstructionism which has negative connotations. It is a positive search for truth, (Pollard, 1997, p. 44). The Analogy of taking apart of two cars, first car - good chassis and most of body parts are in poor condition. A second car involved in accident – write off but contained lots of new parts in good condition. In the process of dismantling both cars and evaluating parts – good parts are kept and poor ones discarded after reassembling, the end result will be a very good car which will be far better than the former.

This model is used to guide depressed victims like Zandi, Betu and others who are depressed, damaged and in pain to discover and develop the good gifting in them, to discard the failures, delay, disappointments of the past and put their faith in God through Christ's suffering, pain and death on the cross in order to recover themselves and regain their self-worth again.

It became imperative for faith workers and pastoral care providers to intensify Pollard's evangelism of positive deconstruction, also reiterated by Brown in his sermon cited by Wimberly on the human story as the point of departure which suggests that God's story has something to say to our story of brokenness that can inspire our responses, decisions, beliefs, hope, and willing participation in a reconstruction story, (Wimberly, 2004, p. 47). The act of directing and communicating the gospel of Christ correctly gives salvation, deliverance and hope to the recipients who, by faith, identify with Christ's suffering on the cross for humanity.

6.4.1 Deliverance for Reconstruction of Lives

Jackson cited by Wimberly alluded to the fact that Christian's are called to participate in the liberation of others, for we have become heirs of the message of freedom and inheritors of the liberation agenda, (Wimberly, 2004, p. 31). She tried to explain how humanity is held captive by their past did and ridden with shame and guilt. Most notable in her highlights are the issues of modern day society being caught up in its own web of greed and abuses with the majority of the people being blind to the truth and overshadowed by ignorance of spirit.

Those who are emotionally bruised and burdened with lobola related issues need to be taken through deliverance as part of a therapeutic process necessary for the reconstruction of their lives. Deliverance is to be rescued from the dominion of the enemies of human soul i.e. the devil, his demons and their human agents. It is to be set free from every form of bondage in live and in family lives, (Olisa, 2006, p. 1).

When applying Pollard's evangelism of positive deconstruction in trying to therapeutically attend to victims of lobola abuse, pastoral care-givers and counsellors should also apply the concept of deliverance to help victims whose lives have been invaded by evil spirits called demons in the scriptures. In (Matthew15:22) we are told of a Canaan woman who cried to Jesus, saying have mercy on me, my daughter is severely demon-possessed. Jesus Christ solved the woman's problem by delivering her daughter. Christ gave His disciples the power to do exactly what He did to the devil and his demons, they were to cast them out and set the captives free, (Luke 10:19, Mark16:17, John 14:12). When it seems that medical care is failing to perfect the work of healing

in the lives of victims of lobola abuse, as they are taken through the therapeutic process of deliverance, as recommended by Christ in faith.

6.4.2 *Jesus is the Deliverer*

Christ the deliverer manifested to liberate victims of lobola abuse from oppression and deliver them from frailties of body, mind, and soul to the end that they become instruments of God's mission of righteousness, peace and justice where they are positioned. He does it by revealing His divine nature in humanity to transform us by inspiring those who solicited for His help the quest to rely on Him and to be like Him. Jesus Christ said, and you shall know the truth and the truth shall make free...If the Son shall make you free, you shall be free indeed, (John 8:32, 36). Christ the deliverer is also the truth that can bring total liberty and sanity into human life, family and community. Hurting people can get their freedom by invoking the prescience of the Holy Spirit in their lives.

6.4.3 *Actors in God's Liberation Agenda*

Those who were victims of lobola abuse but are now liberated are supposed to accept and act on God's liberation agenda of confronting the ills within social structures and corporate institutions that bind us. Jesus freed us in order for us to partner with Him to free whosoever Acquaint themselves with us in their hurts.

This kind of freedom will enable one to make the choices that result in a richer, fuller life and to participate in a transformed community with other people who found liberty as well. Just because Christ initiated into the lives of those He liberated the power to continue striving until they were able to overtake any form of oppression without giving up at all. As co-

liberators, Christ set you free to take risks that go along with living as a person with faith and hope and not in fear anymore.

6.4.4 Human Ability and Vision Liberation Process

The welcoming of Christ and the Holy Spirit into one's life is what can bring fresh breath of new life and sense of relief and liberty to victims of lobola abuse. Trauma caused by lobola abuse can set the stage for unfocused responses to subsequent stress which often leads to obsessive behaviour, smoking, substance abuse, self-injury, sexual promiscuity, sexual pervasion, aggression, violence and inadequate-self soothing behaviour, (Masango & Dreyer, 2015).

Sure steps to liberty for victims of lobola abuse can be fostered by pastoral care providers embarking on a therapeutic journey with victims unto Christ, who is the redeemer and liberator of human ability to regain self-worth and dignity. Those who have obtained liberty through Christ will be able to see worth and dignity in God's children from the least to the greatest. In them Christ has initiated the desire to attain the best quality of life for all.

Jesus Christ is the one that liberates human vision to grow in the goodness and greatness of God. Christ does initiate in the lives of those who are redeemed the quest for an ever-deepening knowledge of who God is and who those liberated can become in the Lord. Apostle Paul in (Philipian 3:10) acclaimed that I may know Him "Christ" and the power of His resurrection. The more one knows Christ, the better his or her life will become, and easier, in obeying godly principles for abundant blessings.

6.5 CONCLUSION

The human spiritual system needs life that can only flow through Holy Spirit filled worship, whenever one experience is fractured in his or her sense of wholeness it can cause one to call faith in an able God.

Because of disappointments in wanting to practice the culture of lobola this, can cause one's spiritual respiratory system to be out of order due to pressure all around from those who are challenged by lobola related issues. But with the assistance of skillful pastoral care providers and counsellors, stakeholders who are wounded, bruised and damaged emotionally, spiritually and physically can find meaning in their lives again and be made perfectly whole so as to be able to soldier on again.

CHAPTER SEVEN

FINDING, RECOMMENDATIONS AND CONCLUSION

7.1 INTRODUCTION

Chapter five of this work discussed the results of interviews and questionnaires gotten from those who participated in this study. In this chapter the researcher laid bare the research findings as they were “teased out” from diverse opinions of those who contributed immensely to this work, (Masango & Dreyer, 2015). Civilized African cultural recommendations that will help to bridge the gap between the crude custodians of the lobola cultural practice in African local communities and the enlightened religious African folks, is loudly articulated in this chapter. In conclusion as is contained in this chapter, the study unraveled how significant the custom of lobola was to Xhosa speaking people and other African’s who practiced this culture.

7.2 RESEARCH FINDINGS

In this research study, it has been discovered through the responses from most of the participant’s interviewed by the researcher and answers to the questionnaires that lobola was not the core reason why the majority of the young men and young women of marriageable age were not married or were cohabiting in Mdantsane, East London area, Eastern Cape, South Africa.

Some other respondents were of the opinion that the culture of lobola practice was not what hampered marriage intention among Xhosa people, though few others were of the belief that lobola was the problem.

Some other respondents alluded to the fact that peoples' past live experiences in regards to relationships could be a contributing factor to the problem of them not wanting to give their commitment to any one in marriage. Such group of people chooses rather to cohabit with their partners even though it was contrary to culture of the Amakhosa.

Some claimed to be afraid of paying lobola for a woman, having witnessed how unpleasant and unworkable marriage relationship seemed of late. A high level of abuse was meted out against married folks they knew and the alarming rate of divorce in the world could be responsible for why young people were scared of going into marriage these days. The majority of the ladies, according to some respondents, chose rather to have one or two children, own their car and a beautifully furnished house where they could host their boyfriends or girlfriends if they decided to become lesbians. Such groups of ladies detested the tradition of waiting to have children only within the confines of marriage. On the other hand, some decided to become gays or lesbians due to grief suffered as a result of subsequent disappointments with people of the opposite sex they tried having a relationship with.

Respondents were of the opinion that lack of love for oneself and for others often caused people to hurt each other when it came to lobola related matters. Young folks found it difficult to abstain from sexual activities before marriage as commanded by the Lord. These days' most Xhosa men interviewed found it unreasonable to pay lobola for a girl friend since they could get sex and have children from ladies without them necessarily having to pay lobola and go into proper marriage according to Xhosa tradition. Such men think they are clever, but according to some respondent's blame the issue of cohabitation and

making of babies out of wedlock on over desperate women who present themselves so cheap for men to ride on them so easily.

According to a respondent, “Mnah, (as for me in Xhosa) as I am now, I refuse to be that cheap being a child of God, I have made my mistakes in the past by having sex with some dishonest men who would come and promise you heaven and earth. When you start dating them and having sex with them even to the point of having a baby with them, they would not remember the promises they made to you including even getting married to you when they decided to dump you for another lady. Such an act was very painful, and tears dropped down her eyes”. The researcher had to minister to her therapeutically by encouraging her and praying with her. She was able to continue sharing her opinion on lobola after she recuperated.

The participant said, “I am against the abolition of lobola, but I am of opinion that ladies should keep themselves so that men will see the need of getting married, now they don’t see the need of doing so because they are getting everything they needed to get in marriage whereas not married, that is the problem”.

She alluded that ladies should learn from past mistakes or from the mistakes of others. “I pray that God will help us ladies because we are suffering too much in the hands of men these days”. Paul the Apostle admonished the Philippian disciples to forget those things which are behind and pressing forward to those things which are ahead, (Philippians 3:13).

In the light of this scriptural verse, there is no sense for any person to continue living in the ugly experiences of the past because we are not our past. One can deal with his or her past by first discerning what

hindered him or her from having a good working relationship with his or her previous partner, let go of things once cherished, considering them distractions to relationship goals, discover what you want in a relationship and determine how to get it, (Maxwell, 2002, p. 1451). Learn vital lessons from your past, avoid repeating your mistakes and focus on pursuing your dream of a good and godly marriage relationship in African cultural context as an African.

About ninety-five percent of the thirty Xhosa participants who contributed to this study reiterated that cohabitation (vat en sit) was an abomination to the Xhosa nation. The majority of the men the researcher chatted to had the notion that lobola was too high, so there was no need for them to make an attempt to propose marriage to the woman they loved or to approaching their girlfriend's family to ask how much lobola they wanted for their daughter.

Because of the general believe of most men that lobola was too expensive which was not all together very true with some families being willing to accept small lobola provided their daughter would be well cared for.

Those that ended up cohabiting with their girlfriends for many years never bothered to know the family of the lady they were living with according to Xhosa custom. Most Xhosa ladies who were cohabiting, expressed the deep pain and shame they were sitting with by the way they cried when being interviewed by the researcher. Persistently they had tried telling the man to settle their lobola with their family in order for them to have some respect and recognition in both the man's family and the lady's family. Women whose lobola was not paid for were not allowed to participate in activities with wives in the man's family during

family functions. One of the lady's in a cohabitation relationship was in tears when she was sharing this aspect of her life story with the researcher. It was a pitiful hearing and knowing the pain people were bearing due to lobola related issues.

7.3 DISTORTION IN LOBOLA PRACTICES

From very clear indications, lobola can be subjected to abuses and distortion that tend to complicate the process of the practice. Davidson defined distortion as turning a different way from the normal way which tends to perverts a process and misrepresents a purpose, (Davidson, 1929, p. 271). When lobola gets distorted, it turns the practice aside from its purpose of uniting the families of the bride and groom in a mutual relationship. It is distorted lobola practice that perverts and complicates the process during negotiation according to participants.

7.3.1 Possible Causes of Lobola Distortion

- **Greed:** Definition of greed by the free dictionary is an excessive desire to acquire or possess more than what one need or deserves, especially in respect of material wealth acquisitions. It distorts lobola proceedings when the bride's parent and family comes to the plat form where their daughter's lobola is to be negotiated with an overwhelming urge to make excessive gain out of their prospective son in-law and his family. It was found that such an attitude was very dangerous' for the preservation of the lobola culture. Davidson views greedy people as covetous folks having voracious appetite with an eager desire to grab or extort money or things from their victims, (Davidson, 1929, p. 399). For a son in-law and his family to feel safe coming to pay lobola for a lady in a Xhosa family, there is need for brides and their families to

be fair when it comes to demands during lobola transactions between families so that no party sees self as a victim after lobola transactions. Lobola negotiations that are free of greed will save the practice from distortions. Families that suffered in the hands of greedy families when they went for lobola negotiation might as well become vengeful by treating other families that came to marry their daughter in the same way if not worst as the case may be.

- **Revenge:** Being vengeful according to the dictionary meaning is to exact punishment for a wrong done to a person or his or her family, especially in a resentful or vindictive spirit. By taking vengeance in the form of reprisal, retribution, in return for one received.

Vengeful people are often overwhelmed with feelings of hate. These are people whose family happened to be victims of lobola abuse when they went to negotiate lobola for one of the sons of the family. It was discovered that some innocent family may suffer a reprisal from some bride's family who are still hurting due to the unpleasant experience they had when they went to some other family to get a wife. The groom's family that came to marry a wife from this hurting family may likely encounter some level of distortion during negotiations due to the vengeful attitude the bride's family might exhibit. There is a common saying that hurting people hurt others as they try to show their pride.

- **Pride:** Is a feeling of deep satisfaction in an achievement, an accomplishment, or in someone else or something else, but it has also been described as conceit, egotism, vanity, vainglory. Pride is an inwardly directed emotion that can easily offend others, (Davidson, 1929, p. 728). The researcher was made to know that

some bride's in wanting to show off their pride and arrogance do participate in negotiating their own lobola to ensure that the amount paid for them is far higher than what was paid for other ladies in their family or community.

Some grooms also try showing their pride by paying so much money for their bride's lobola. Such behaviour distorts the process because it is contrary to how lobola is supposed to be practiced in African culture. Solomon in (Proverb 16:18) highlighted the fact that pride leads to destruction. For this culture not to be destroyed, the offensive display of pride during lobola settlement should be shunned. In as much as De Haas alluded to the fact that paying lobola provided an African woman with a sense of pride, good feeling of deep satisfaction enjoyed by Xhosa ladies for whom lobola was paid should be enough for a bride. (De Haas, 1987, p. 46). Couples should avoid the seeking of vainglory in carnal competitive activities during lobola settlement.

- **Unhealthy Competitions:** In today's world, competition is so highly valued and achievement is somehow tied to a person's self-esteem and value. The unconscious notion that men and women have which makes them believe that there are two possibilities in every competition, which are either that one will be a winner or a loser. These two possibilities are not as simple as most people think, reason being that they can hide other dangers such as winners in an unhealthy competition finding themselves being hated while losers often carry with them the inevitable feeling of self-hate, (Barth, 1991-2016). Unhealthy competition in lobola matters often leave the bride being hated by the groom and his family if they get to know that she was responsible for the

difficulties they encountered during her lobola negotiation, because of her desire to fulfill an ambition of wanting to have more lobola paid for her than other ladies in her family and community. The feeling of self-hate and maybe the debt the groom is taking into the marriage might end up causing a very serious damage in their relationship if not dealt with and settled.

- **Jealousy:** It could as well happen that some brothers, sisters or kinsmen to the bride's father may be unhappy or resentful because of the feeling that the bride's father is better and luckier than them for having suitors coming to pay lobola for his daughters, whereas no man has ever come to pay lobola for their own daughters who have got one or two babies at home without being married. As discovered, jealous relatives in the bride's family who scramble to be present during lobola negotiation with hidden agendas can start putting up some demands and arguments that often distort and delay the process unnecessarily.
- **Carnal comparison:** In trying to maintain a cordial and healthy relationship within families during lobola negotiations, superiority or inferiority complex display if not avoided can erode the bride's family the ability to create the required peaceful atmosphere for a happy lobola negotiation.

There are incidents where either of the families' claims superiority over the other by comparing each other and measuring each other's family and this results in having one family disrespecting and undermining the presumed lesser family when they converge for lobola settlement. The family that perceived being undermined and disrespected could put up some resistance and such action can distort and complicate the process. Apostle Paul admonished

in the scriptures that such action is not wise thing to do in a relationship building with in-laws, (2Corinthians10:12, 17-18). He alluded to the fact that if anyone should boast, let him or her do so in the Lord who gave him or her ability to accomplish great things in life. It is not being self-praisers nor bragging of one's self or family status that earns individuals an approval, but is those whom the Lord recommends that really counts.

- **Ignorance:** Most Xhosa young men and women of marriageable age who participated in this study seemed not to be knowledgeable enough about the culture of lobola. Though they were against the abolition of lobola cultural practice but are ignorant of the friendliness of most families these days, possibility of reducing the price through negotiation, paying lobola in installments, the importance of parental and family blessings on the new marriage. Most families no longer make gains from the lobola of their daughters as before when life cattle were strictly used for lobola. These days, it is the type of wedding or marriage ritual ceremony the couples want that usually determine the amount of lobola money families will ask from the groom. Bride's families as the case may be might end up spending more than the lobola money to escort their daughter to her new marriage home. Being unaware, uneducated or unknowledgeable about lobola practice has made some young folk to cohabit for years. Most of the young men were of the notion that lobola was too much money; therefore, there was no need to attempt to pay lobola for the lady they claimed to love. Such assumptions were not absolutely correct according to the findings of this research.
- **Household wickedness and witchcraft:** Some participants reiterated the assertions of Berglund that night-witches are evil and

fiery in their wickedness, (Berglund, 1975, p. 371). They were of the view that wicked people in a family or the community could gang-up to strongly oppose every step taken during some lobola negotiations which they planned to hinder due to reasons best known to them.

Some ladies in the families or communities who never got married could become cruel to the point of going all out to bewitch the lobola procedure of others in a way that the suitor may have lost interest in the lady, or could not get money to carry the process to a conclusive end. It is an established fact that in God's word that the enemy's onslaughts against people are best facilitated, through their own kindred. "And a man's foes shall be they of his own household" (Matthew 10:36). There is a common believe that household witches in wickedness can use their evil power to distort and complicate lobola settlement in some families or communities.

7.3.2 Commercialization of Lobola

There is also the issue of commercialisation of lobola as it was prevalent in some families and communities.

From all indications, the main problem from the writer's point of view was that many of the people seemed to have gone far away from the true God and His laid down principles concerning Godliness in one's life and marriage as it is clearly stated in the scriptures. The Lord is the author of marriage, it appeared that lack of respect for God and His word could be the reason why most of the people no longer practiced what was recommended by the Lord even if they attended different church programmes. Most young men interviewed no longer deemed it

necessary to follow the traditionally laid down marriage procedures these days in order for them to receive blessings from their parents and their Priest and for the Lord's blessing to flow in their lives and relationships.

In this research, four out of six unmarried males that participated in this study believed that lobola has been commercialized. However, findings from the responses show that the amount to be charged for lobola is directly proportional to the wedding taste of the couples especially in situations where the bride's family is to bear the cost of such wedding.

Other points emanating from the study include the belief of some parents that they have to recoup the money they spent on their daughter through lobola. Also, it was pointed out by a respondent who happened to be a parent that in a situation where the family did not want the man coming to marry their daughter, the easiest way to ask him to go would be to make the lobola cost unreachable for him. In the view of the researcher, the reasons above, deviated from the original intention of lobola which included the building of a relationship between the two families and serving as a token of appreciation of the parents of the bride for raising the bride to become such a woman that caught the attention of the groom as a possible wife.

Considering many factors that were discovered from the responses of the respondents in this study, it may be a difficult task to make a determination on whether lobola had truly been commercialized. Some respondents added that certain characteristics and achievements of the bride were taken into account in arriving at the amount that should be paid as lobola. Out of nine married people that answered question on whether lobola needs to be transformed, seven respondents answered

in the affirmative. Out of these seven respondents, three of them supported transformation based on the price or cost associated with lobola settlement. One of the respondents raised the issue of unaffordability as the reason such transformation should happen. However, can we say that unaffordability of lobola implies commercialisation? Doing that would be a misnomer as many issues contribute to unaffordability. Such things may include the level of income, saving culture, bargaining power, payment pattern, unemployment, dwindling economy to mention but a few, not necessarily the cost.

From, the responses, there was not enough evidence to suggest that lobola has been commercialized. However, what was needful at this point was fair pricing and negotiation. A fair costing should take into account affordability on the part of the man; and his future prospects.

Feeling for one another among the intending couple; character and achievement of the man as well. Determining lobola cost based on the personality and achievements of the lady alone is unfair to the man. The current form of cost determination in itself is a marginalization against true love. For instance, the system makes it impossible for a man earning in the region of R5, 000 a month to get married to an achiever lady he loved and whose lobola amount (based on the so-called criteria) maybe about R200, 000. In a fair costing, their affection, the man's prospects and character should serve as mitigating factors that would leverage him above the stipulated amount. The issue of fairness would look at the man's genuineness and willingness to settle lobola and ask the question, "How much can you afford?" It should also make room for a payment term that was considerate.

7.4 RECOMMENDATIONS:

From the findings of the research, the following recommendations are hereby made:

Stakeholders of the lobola practice should come together and deliberate on ways of restoring the lobola practice to its original intention of establishing a relationship between the two families and appreciation (not repayment) for the parents of the bride for raising her to become a good woman.

Lobola negotiators should no longer consider the attributes and achievements of the bride only in lobola negotiations but should also consider the man's attributes and prospects. It is my belief that such action would help instill a culture of good behaviour into our young men knowing that their conduct would be taken into account when they wanted to get married.

It is a finding of this study that love and affection for each other among intending couple is not a consideration in lobola negotiation while issues of money are been projected. The basis of marriage is true love and that should be accorded the due consideration that it deserves in lobola negotiations. What is happening is that ladies and families now ignore true love in search of who can afford the lobola bill that is put on their head. In most cases, men that can afford such bills may not be their true love. When things of this sort happen, such marriages get swallowed up when storms confront the marriage on the way. This might be the reason we are experiencing such high rate of divorce and cohabitation in these days.

For further research studies, the effect of absent fathers on the rising rate of cohabitation in our society should be investigated to search out whether there is any correlation between absent fathers and cohabitation with respect to their children.

The writer is also recommending that this research on lobola practices should be replicated amongst other tribes in South Africa to know if the same findings will be made.

It is therefore my recommendation that true love be accorded greater preference in place of money in lobola negotiations. In situations such a man cannot afford the lobola, a flexible payment plan can be negotiated and this will help the couple to have a happy marriage.

Lastly, Ministers of the gospel and the church should get involved in the negotiation as mediators as a way of ensuring that church members are not hindered from getting married either for monetary issues or issues based on ancestral worships and beliefs.

7.5 CONCLUSION

In conclusion, the practice of Lobola is a beautiful cultural practice that should be allowed to thrive without distortion. Hence, all stakeholders should arise to defend it from any form of abuse or distortions that we are seeing these days. Africans who practice the culture of lobola should protect it from the attacks of Western cultural beliefs and ideologies. Its original intentions were perfect and good and that should be maintained. Greedy parents and community members should be condemned by all lovers of this beautiful culture as a way of ensuring its preservation.

Again, it is unfair for anyone to be stopped from marrying because of money. Community members and other stakeholders should look at

other ways that people can be allowed to determine what they have to pay as lobola so that we do not create a society where sexual pervasion thrives.

APPENDIX

QUESTIONNAIRE FOR UNMARRIED MEN

I am Joel Olisa, a student at the University of Pretoria. As part of the requirement for the award of master's degree, I am carrying out a research to investigate the impact of lobola on marriage and the pastoral perspective as regards to the church and is inviting you to participate in this study by been one of my respondents. All the information's you will provide will be kept confidential.

1. Would you mind sharing your experience about lobola?

2. Do you think lobola has been commercialized? Explain

3. If the price of lobola is lowered, how would you go about settling your marriage with your girl friend? Explain

4. How much will you be willing to pay for your bride? Explain

5. How do you see cohabitation (vat en sit) amongst black Africans as is commonly practiced these days?

QUESTIONNAIRE FOR UNMARRIED WOMEN

I am Joel Olisa, a student at the University of Pretoria. As part of the requirement for the award of master's degree, I am carrying out a research to investigate the impact of lobola on marriage and the pastoral perspective as regards to the church and is

inviting you to participate in this study by been one of my respondents. All the information's you will provide will be kept confidential.

1. In your own opinion, what do you think about unmarried women having babies? Do you think it is a problem shared by high price of lobola?

2. Do you think that the price charged for lobola need to be regulated? Explain

3. Do you think lobola should be abolished? Explain

4, How do you see cohabitation (vat en sit) amongst black Africans as is commonly practiced these days?

5. How do you see cohabitation (vat en sit) amongst black Africans as is commonly practiced these days?

QUESTIONNAIRE FOR PARENTS

I am Joel Olisa, a student at the University of Pretoria. As part of the requirement for the award of master's degree, I am carrying out a research to investigate the impact of lobola on marriage and the pastoral perspective as regards to the church and is inviting you to participate in this study by been one of my respondents. All the information's you will provide will be kept confidential.

1. Is it a right thing for parents to still demand lobola for their daughters in this modern age?

2. What criterion is being used for lobola price during negotiation?

3. How much lobola would you charge for your daughters?

4. Who benefits from the lobola money? Please explain how and why?

5. How much lobola would you like your sons to pay for their wives when getting married?

6. How do you see cohabitation (vat en sit) amongst black Africans as is commonly practiced these days?

QUESTIONNAIRE FOR THE CLERGY

I am Joel Olisa, a student at the University of Pretoria. As part of the requirement for the award of master's degree, I am carrying out a research to investigate the impact of lobola on marriage and the pastoral perspective as regards to the church and is inviting you to participate in this study by been one of my respondents. All the information's you will provide will be kept confidential.

1. What should be the role of the clergy concerning lobola?

Do you think that clergy should mediate in lobola negotiation in order to help prevent a stalemate during negotiation?

2. What can you do to help solve the problem of high cost of lobola in most Xhosa communities?

3. Do Xhosa families and communities recognize couples whose wedding was blessed by the Church without lobola settlement? Please give reasons for your answers

4. Would Xhosa people see the above marriage as being proper and correct?

5. How do you see cohabitation (vat en sit) amongst black Africans as is commonly practiced these days?

QUESTIONNAIRE FOR MARRIED MEN AND WOMEN

I am Joel Olisa, a student at the University of Pretoria. As part of the requirement for the award of master's degree, I am carrying out a research to investigate the impact of lobola on marriage and the pastoral perspective as regards to the church and is inviting you to participate in this study by been one of my respondents. All the information's you will provide will be kept confidential.

1. Can you share your experience about the high price of lobola. say about how much that is being charged for lobola these days?

1. Does lobola settlement need transformation? Explain

2. How was lobola settlement in your marriage, high or low?

3. Do you know some marriage rituals which are hindering people from getting married in most Xhosa communities?

4. (See question 1 Does lobola settlement need transformation? Explain)

5. Should lobola payment be abolished? Please share your reasons for your answer.

6. How do you see cohabitation (vat en sit) amongst black Africans as is commonly practiced these days?

CONSENT LETTER FOR PARTICIPATION

Dear Sir/Madam

REQUEST FOR CONSENT TO PARTICIPATE IN A RESEARCH STUDY

I am a M.A (Trauma Counselling) student at the University of Pretoria, presently engaged in a research project titled, **“A PASTORAL PERSPECTIVE ON LOBOLA PRACTICES”** under the supervision of Prof Maake Masango of the Department of Theology.

The Objective of this study is to explore ways of protecting the beautiful culture of lobola from been distorted. This is because distortion gives rise to complications which in our opinion can make marriage plans elusive. Also it will consider better avenues to assist those who have been emotionally bruised as a result of lobola issues regain self worth.

To achieve the above objective, I will need to conduct an interview of approximately 30-40 minutes’ duration which may be audio recorded for independent verification. All the information you will provide will be kept confidential and access to your responses whether on tape or questionnaire will be restricted to me and the data capturer. Your participation in this research is not obligatory and you are free to withdraw at any time or not to answer any question you do not deem fit to answer.

The benefit you will have for participating in this study is the opportunity you will have to bare your mind on the issues and fall-outs around lobola settlement in our communities. You will be provided a summary of the findings of this research should you wished to have it. If you will like to contact the researcher, please do so at the address below:

JOEL UJU OLISA
3412 NU 2
Mdantsane 5219
Cell No.: 073 153 2624
E-mail: joeolisa@yahoo.co.nz

The above information has been explained to my understanding. I therefore agree to participate in this study.

.....
Date

.....
Participant’s Name and Surname

.....
Participant’s Signature/Thumbprint

.....
Joel Uju Olisa (Researcher)

.....
Prof. Maake Masango (Supervisor)

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