

**MORAL DEGENERATION AS PORTRAYED IN SELECTED ZULU  
LITERATURE**

**by**

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**submitted in partial fulfilment of the requirements**

**for the degree of**

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**in the subject of**

**African Languages**

**at the**

**University of South Africa**

**SUPERVISOR: PROFESSOR R MASUBELELE**

**November 2021**

## **Declaration**

I declare that Moral degeneration as portrayed in selected Zulu literature is my own work and that all the sources that I have used or quoted have been indicated and acknowledged by means of complete references.

I further declare that I submitted the thesis/dissertation to originality checking software and that it falls within the accepted requirements for originality.

I further declare that I have not previously submitted this work, or part of it, for examination at Unisa for another qualification or at any other higher education institution.'

A handwritten signature in black ink, consisting of several loops and a horizontal line crossing through them.

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21 July 2021

Dear Muriel Nokuthula Ngobe

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**TITLE: MORAL DEGENERATION AS PORTRAYED IN SELECTED ISIZULU LITERATURE.**

**Degree Purpose: PhD**

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## **Dedication**

To my family, friends, and supervisor, I wouldn't have done this without your continuous support and understanding.

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I would like to express my sincere gratitude to the following people who played a huge role in my journey:

- To my children, Kgahliso, Owethu, Thembelihle, Thembaletu and Phetolo, boNgobe, Msweli, thank you for your assistance, understanding and tolerance. I know my studies took away some of the time we were supposed to spend together.
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## Abstract

Literature is a powerful tool that is used by writers to convey their observations, thoughts, and challenges in their societies. In their works, they may acclaim positive things occurring in their societies or they may castigate those that are negative. Among the negative things which they often write about is moral degeneration. Moral degeneration is a societal phenomenon that is rampant in modern societies. This study highlights the role that Zulu writers have played in exposing some elements of moral degeneration in their works. The three Zulu literary works that have been chosen for analysis are *Impi Yabomdabu Isethunjini* (2015), a novel by JC Buthelezi, *Kudela Owaziyo* (2009), a play by BP Maphumulo and a novel titled *Ngaze Ngazenza* (1994) by MM Masondo. The analysis delves on the characters which the writers have used to highlight the elements of moral degeneration and their environment which gives meaning to the reasons of their actions. Elements of moral degeneration which are dealt with in these literature books are lack of *ubuntu*, lack of respect, lack of moral values in child-upbringing, theft, alcohol abuse, xenophobia, corruption, gender-based violence, intimidation, deception, infidelity, and crime. Symbolic interaction which is a theoretical perspective that addresses the way in which society is generated and maintained through face-to-face, repeated, meaningful interactions among individual supports the discussions that are presented in the study. The study concludes that the writers of the above-mentioned literary works effectively chose characters who successfully depicted the elements of moral degeneration which they wanted to shed light on.

**Keywords:** Moral degeneration, Literature, Literary works, Characters, Values, Culture, Writer, Society, Norms and Communities.

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09 February 2022

To Whom It May Concern

### Certificate of Language Editing

This document certifies that the dissertation titled “**Moral Degeneration as Portrayed in Selected IsiZulu Literature**” by Muriel Nokuthula Ngobe was edited and proofread by me. The editing and proofreading focused on language accuracy, grammar use, format of the document, punctuation, spelling, overall style, and logical flow.

I ensured that the author’s intended meaning, ideas and the content were not altered during the review. I inserted comments and suggestions for the attention of the author where meaning needed to be clarified, or where points of confusion could arise for the reader. I did not deal with the presentation of the references as these were outside the scope of my brief.

I wish the author success with her submission.

Yours faithfully



S F Mashele (PhD)



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## CHAPTER ONE

### INTRODUCTION AND BACKGROUND

#### 1.1 Introduction

Literary writers have always had a duty of reflecting on what societies do while using their works to become mirrors that characterise the interactions and relations of the members of communities, their thoughts, real-life events, introspections, and their ills. In literary circles, literature is considered a mirror of society. In their works, literary writers extol the good they see occurring in the communities and vilify the flaws they see happening, at the same time their works become an antidote in promoting good social behaviour.

When formal education was introduced among the Zulu people, writers used written literary forms as tools to convey social values and cultural norms. Literature thus became a looking glass through which society reflected onto itself. The earliest stages of written Zulu saw small advances towards literary works which were mostly biblical in nature. As the number of Zulu people who were taught at mission schools increased, more people produced short stories and poems that were published in journals or in school magazines that were in circulation at the time (Masubelele, 2008:87).

Ntuli & Makhambeni (1998:118) regard Magma Fuze as a pioneer in the Zulu literary system. They believe that the most well-known significant contribution to the development of the language during the 1920s was the work Magma Fuze wrote, which was published in 1922, entitled *Abantu Abamnyama Lapa Bavela Ngakona* 'Where the black people came from'.

As years progressed, more literary works emerged which treated various themes that focused on social and cultural norms and values, which include amongst others, Nyembezi's novels *Mntanami! Mntanami!* 'My child! My child!', which relates the adventures of a young man dissatisfied with rural life who runs off to Johannesburg where he joins gangsters and ends up in prison, was published in 1950, and *Inkinsele yaseMgungundlovu* 'The tycoon from Pietermaritzburg', which is about an urban swindler who finds his way to the village of Nyanyadu in rural South Africa where he

tricks the villagers with the promise of untold riches, was published in 1961 (Ntuli & Makhambeni, 1998:175).

## **1.2 Statement of the research problem**

Moral degeneration is a universal theme that is treated in most literary works of the world and that affects countless countries (Mokgalabone, 1999). South Africa is not immune to the problem because of the social challenges that face society such as industrialisation, politics, and changes in the family structures. Moral degeneration is increasing in society. The concept '*moral degeneration*' means the process of decay or decline in morals. This situation can be attributed to several factors amongst which are, a general decline in the adherence to values like respect, politeness, and consideration. Lack of proper value systems leads to, amongst others, selfishness, cruelty, dishonesty, greed, heartlessness, disrespectfulness, and a loss of integrity. People who display such traits easily turn violent, lapse into criminal activities, and become abusive and corrupt. This leads to a general deterioration of harmonious and peaceful co-existence in society. As it has been mentioned above, literature has always been a looking glass through which society reflects onto itself. Therefore, this research looks at how the subject of moral degeneration is treated in the following literary works: a novel, *Impi Yabomdabu Isethunjini* (2015) by JC Buthelezi, a play *Kudela Owaziyo* (2009) by BP Maphumulo and a novel *Ngaze Ngazenza* (1994) by MM Masondo.

## **1.3 Rationale and significance of the study**

The significant role of literature is to broaden the knowledge of the people about the complexities of human experiences and literature is also used by writers to typify societal issues that need to be flagged. This study is therefore significant to the readers of these Zulu literary works in that it exposes moral degeneration as it has been expressed in the selected literary works. It will also be of benefit to the community and the society at large, when those who have gained knowledge from the study establish ways and means of addressing the problems of moral degeneration.

#### **1.4 Aim of the study**

The main aim of this study was to establish how the writers of the selected literary works treat the issue of moral degeneration in their works.

#### **1.5 Objectives**

The study sought to achieve the following objectives:

- to establish how the writers of the three selected works treat the issues of moral degeneration.
- to investigate the types of characters that have been used by the writers in dealing with the issue of moral degeneration in their works.
- to determine the types of settings that have been used by the writers in dealing with the issue of moral degeneration in their works.
- to highlight the most common types of moral degeneration treated in these three selected literary works.

#### **1.6 Research questions**

In the end, the study answers the following research questions:

- how do the writers of the selected works treat the issues of moral degeneration?
- which characters have been used by the writers of the selected works to demonstrate the issue of moral degeneration in their works?
- which settings have been used by the writers of the three selected works when dealing with the issue of moral degeneration in their works?
- which types of moral degeneration are treated in these three selected literary works?

#### **1.7 Definition of concepts**

All research studies have a particular terminology or use specific terminology that might need clarity. It is essential to provide the definition of these terminologies so that meaning may not be lost. A clear definition must be given for a specific research study. The following are terms and concepts that are used most often in this particular study:

### **1.7.1 Moral degeneration**

According to Ladzani (2011:14) moral degeneration is defined as “the process of declining from a higher to a lower level of morality.” Moral degeneration can affect an individual or a group of people. It can be caused by many factors like negative or hostile influence and defiance, amongst a few things.

### **1.7.2 Morality**

Mariaye (2006:22) says the term morality can be used descriptively to refer to a code of conduct put forward by a society or an individual, and normatively, to refer to a code of conduct that, under specific conditions, would be put forward by all rational-thinking persons. Morality also has to do with principles of societal behaviours that detect if a particular action is accepted or not.

### **1.7.3 Values**

De Klerk & Rens (2003:353) linked values to stable choices of preferences that one decides on how to behave. These choices will eventually influence one’s decisions in life.

### **1.7.4 Literature**

McFadden (1978:56) defines literature as “a canon which consists of those works in language by which a community defines itself through the course of its history. It includes works primarily artistic and those whose aesthetic qualities are only secondary. The self-defining activity of the community is conducted in the light of the works, as its members have come to read them (or concretise them).”

### **1.7.5 Writer**

In his definition of a writer Achebe (1973:617) posits that a writer is “a human being with a heightened sensitivity (who) must be aware of the faintest nuances of injustice in human relations.” He also highlights that a writer cannot shun away from the injustices of his community. Writers have an obligation to expose and condemn the social malaise of their communities’ environment.

### **1.7.6 Tradition**

Thomas (1997: 800) defines tradition as “a belief or behavior passed down within a group or society with symbolic meaning or special significance with origins in the past.”

### **1.7.7 Culture**

Matsumoto (1996:16) defines culture as “the set of attitudes, values, beliefs, and behaviors shared by a group of people, but different for each individual, communicated from one generation to the next.”

### **1.7.8 Norms**

Lapinski (2005:127) defines norms as “collective representations of acceptable group conduct as well as individual perceptions of particular group conduct.”

## **1.8 Literature review**

The main reason for doing literature review is to gain more insight into the topic that is being researched. Onwuegbuzie & Leech (2005:4) claim that the traditional literature review, which is undertaken in most studies, involves systematically identifying, locating, and analysing documents containing information related to the research problem and research topic. It is the right of the researcher to support or critique the literature that they are reviewing.

The following review of related research has been conducted.

Mugambi & Nasimiyu-Wasike (1992) studied the implications of moral decline and found that sexual immorality, dishonesty, corruption, crime, violence are the results of moral decline. They cited the following reasons in their study for the moral crisis that the whole of Africa is facing: Western culture’s influence, materialism, media, Western education, increased poverty, urbanisation, and disintegration of marriage. They concluded that Africa needs to act as soon as possible before its moral values and traditions are eradicated.

Marggraff (1998) studied the moral theme in Zulu literature. She opines that a moral theme in literature is not only unique to Zulu literature, but that any observer can make

the interesting and important discovery that the moral theme is conveyed by the following three literary types: the folktale, the moral story, and the detective story. The folktale, belonging to traditional literature, is a very well-developed genre that forms the principal means of teaching both children and adults about good and evil.

The birth of modern Zulu literature in 1930 brought with it the emergence of the moral story, a literary type in which good triumphs over evil and in which justice prevails. Further development and changes have led to the appearance of the detective story in which crimes are solved and bad people are punished. She concludes by stating that this progression has developed due to ever-changing circumstances and a need for relevance.

Gumede (2002:1) examined the portrayal of women in four Zulu texts. He professes that the novel *Uvalo Lwezinhlonzi* 'His frown struck terror', written in 1956, is a manifesto for freedom in the choice of a life partner, which is generally obstructed by the father's greed for ilobolo cattle and his ambition to be recognised among the notables of the district. *Inkinsela YaseMgungundlovu* 'The tycoon from Pietermaritzburg' (1961) fights for women's equal rights in the financial field. *NguMbuthuma-ke Lowo* 'This then is Mbuthuma' (1982) is a desperate cry in the face of abuses in polygamous families and *Ikhiwane Elihle* 'All that glitters is not gold' (1985) fights aspects of the new morality that accepts sexual freedom for women, since men also claim such freedom. Gumede (2002:1) maintains that the thesis is topical, and, to render it even more so, it often avails itself of ideas of feminist writers and critics, although such theories have not touched the nerve of the Zulu public yet. Louw (2009) did an extensive empirical study on moral degeneration and its socio-educational implications in the South African society. The findings in that study alluded to the fact that there is moral decay in the youth of South Africa. The learners who were interviewed, indicated that they used alcohol and drugs with their friends. Another aspect that was touched in the study was that learners are engaged in sexual activities (often unprotected) and this leads to unplanned pregnancies and the spread of HIV/AIDS. These learners blame their parents for not teaching them about sex education. The parents that were interviewed admitted that their children were undisciplined, disrespectful, and were not living according to positive values.



Gleaning from the research discussed above, it is apparent that no research on the topic of moral degeneration in Zulu literature has been done. This study will be a great contribution to the Zulu literary system and to the study of moral degeneration in literature.

## **1.9 Theoretical framework**

Symbolic interactionism is a theory that is used to support the discussions that are presented in this study. Symbolic interactionism is defined as a micro-level theory that focuses on meanings attached to human interaction, both verbal and non-verbal, and to symbols. Communication, the exchange of meaning through language and symbols is believed to be the way in which people make sense of their social worlds. Blumer (1969) who coined the term “symbolic interactionism” outlined the basic premises: human interact with things based on meanings ascribed to those things; the ascribed meaning of things comes from their interactions with others and society; the meanings of things are interpreted by a person when with things in specific circumstances.

According to symbolic interactionism, communication has three main aspects, viz. meaning, language and thought. According to the theory, meaning is not inherent in objects, but is, instead, constructed and modified within different contexts through social interaction. The uniquely human ability to interpret symbols and analyse another person’s viewpoint through thinking allows meaning to emerge. Such meaning shapes a person’s self-concept and motivates behaviour.

## **1.10 Research design and research methodology**

### **1.10.1 Research design**

According to Parahoo (1997:142), a research design is described as “a plan that describes how, when and where data is to be collected and analysed.”

### **1.10.2 Research methodology**

Research methodology is the system of collecting data for research. Research cannot be done in a vacuum. A scientific method needs to be followed. Potter (1996) agrees that a variety of research methods are used as tools that are important in gathering the methods and techniques of analysing the data. Leedy & Ormrod (2010:12) define research methodology as a general approach the researcher takes in conducting the research project. This to some extent also refers to the way different tools can be used to collect and analyse data. Research methodology entails numerous approaches and systems in which data is acquired, organised, and analysed for research purposes. Each methodology used in a study depends on the nature of the research question (Polit & Hungler, 2004:233).

Leedy & Ormrod, (2010) distinguish between two basic research methods, which are quantitative and qualitative.

#### **1.10.2.1 Quantitative research**

A clear definition of a quantitative research *is* provided by Creswell (2014) as an approach for testing objective theories by examining the relationship among variables. These variables, in turn, can be measured, typically on instruments, so that numbered data can be analysed using statistical procedures. The reason for using statistical procedures is to determine if the general findings are true or not. Data is gathered using questionnaires, surveys, and planned examination. This type of research is systematic and uses numbers. The investigation is on a bigger sample of people. It is common that the main objective in this type of research is to explain, describe and quantify the research problem. More time is spent analysing the data findings than the actual data gathering. The findings in this research are easy to generalise.

A suggestion is given by Reichardt & Cook (1979:16) that “quantitative research is obtrusive and controlled, objective, generalizable, outcome oriented, and assumes the existence of ‘facts’ which are somehow external to and independent of the observer or researcher”. To Plano Clark and Ivankova (2016:4) quantitative research is an approach

that “examines the relationships between variables by collecting and analysing numeric data expressed in numbers or scores.”

Goodwin & Goodwin (1996:71) refer to quantitative study as a numerical method of describing observations or characteristics. They further explain that this research method is fundamentally a deductive process, with detailed pre-specification of most of its elements and marked use of numerical analyses and reports. In support of the above definition Burns & Grove (2005:29) refer to quantitative research as an objective, systematic process of using numerical data to obtain information about the world. They further explain that this method is useful in evaluating a theory by assessing the validity of the relationships that compose the theory. In other words, quantitative research method statistically represents analysis with dependable, valid, and accurate data.

#### **1.10.2.2 Qualitative research**

Creswell (2014) defines *Qualitative research* as an approach for exploring and understanding the meaning individuals or groups ascribe to a social or human problem. Data is collected using questions and other methods in the participants setting. The inquiry is process oriented. Leedy (1993:192) agrees that the qualitative method is used when dealing with people, feelings, values, beliefs, and interpersonal relationships. The kind of methods to gather the data is in-depth interviews, focus groups, review of documents and participation observation.

McMillan & Schumacher (2006) define qualitative research as, “primarily an inductive process of organising data into categories and identifying patterns (relationships) among categories.” Mason (2002) is of the opinion that qualitative research approaches have the following aspects in common:

- they are concerned with how data is interpreted, understood, experienced, produced or constituted
- the research methods must be flexible and sensitive to social context that is being investigated
- the data analysis is concerned with details, complexity, and a particular context.

This study will utilise the qualitative research design because this method is concerned with social aspects of our world and will answer questions about the causes of moral degeneration and how they are expressed in the selected literary works.

#### **1.10.2.2.1 Data collection instruments**

Research instruments are scientific and systematic instruments that are employed by a researcher during research inquiry to obtain and analyse research information (Kothari, 2004:8).

Williams (2007:65) refers to instruments as “practical techniques used to carry out research. These are the tools that make it possible to collect information and analyse it. This means that research methods are tools and means of gathering research data (Jackson *et al.*, 2007:22). Crotty (1998:3) defines research methods as “the techniques or procedures used to gather and analyse data related to some research questions or hypotheses.”

Qualitative research offers the following research techniques: interview, questionnaire, observation, focus groups, sampling, and documents review. Data will be gathered from document review. According to Bowen (2009:28) document analysis is a form of qualitative research in which documents are interpreted by the researcher to give voice and meaning around a particular topic. In this study, data for analysis will be collected from three literary works, namely *Kudela Owaziyo* by BP Maphumulo (2009) a drama; *Ngaze Ngazenza* by MM Masondo (1994) a novel; and *Impi Yabomdabu Isethunjini* by JC Buthelezi (2015) which is a novel. The delineation of the characters as well as the settings of each work will also be considered in relation to the subject under discussion.

#### **1.10.2.2.2 Data analysis instruments**

After the data has been collected, the next crucial step will be to present and analyse it. Content analysis will be used as an analytical tool in this study. Hsieh and Shanon (2005:1278) define qualitative content analysis as “a research method for the subjective interpretation of the content of text data through the systematic classification process of

coding and identifying themes or patterns.” Meanwhile Mayring (2000:2) sees it as “an approach of empirical, methodological controlled analysis of texts within their context of communication, following content analytic rules and step by step models, without rash quantification” and Patton (2002:453) suggests that “any qualitative data reduction and sense-making effort that takes a volume of qualitative material and attempts to identify core consistencies and meanings.”

### **1.11 Ethical considerations**

Every research must consider ethical issues. These are values that protect the researcher and the participants. Creswell (2014) puts it clearly that the researcher must address these issues in his/her research plan. It does not matter what type of research they are engaging in. This study uses a desktop approach which implies that this study is conducted purely through desktop research. It does not involve human subjects, and therefore there are no unforeseen physical discomfort or inconvenience occurring to respondents. However, the following ethical issues are still adhered to:

- the research ensures that no plagiarism takes place. All credit is given to the relevant persons or work. Quotation marks are used when exact words are quoted as required by APA (American Psychological Association, 2010).
- evidence of data, findings and the conclusion are not falsified.
- all literature that is consulted is cited and referenced accordingly.
- compliance with the policy of UNISA regarding research ethics.
- a research ethics application for research not involving human participants was made (attached to this dissertation).
- the skills of the researcher must be competent. This means that the researcher must have knowledge of the topic and how to gather and analysis the necessary data so that this can be a genuine scientific study.

## **1.12 Structure of the dissertation**

This below is the outline of the dissertation:

### **CHAPTER 1: INTRODUCTION AND BACKGROUND**

This chapter will give introduction and background to the study, insight into the rationale, problem statement, aims and objectives, research questions and the definitions of key concept.

### **CHAPTER 2: LITERATURE REVIEW**

This chapter interrogate existing literature works other researchers discussed/ researched before about moral degeneration and related literature.

### **CHAPTER 3: THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK, RESEARCH DESIGN AND METHODOLOGY**

This chapter will discuss a theory related to the topic. Other aspects that will be discussed in this chapter are, the research design, methodology, data collection and data analysis techniques. Ethical issues will also form part of this chapter.

### **CHAPTER 4: ANALYSIS OF MORAL DEGENERATION IN SELECTED ZULU LITERARY WORKS**

This chapter will present and analyse the selected Zulu literary works with a view to see how moral degeneration has been treated.

### **CHAPTER 5: A SUMMARY OF FINDINGS AND CONCLUSION**

After all the discussions, a summary of the findings from the data collected will be provided and thereafter relevant conclusions will be made.

### **1.13 Conclusion**

Admittedly, not much research has been done on the topic of moral degeneration as expressed in Zulu literature books. This study will highlight the different themes which a writer covers on the issue of moral degeneration. These themes will be analysed to see how the writers have treated the subject. Character delineation and setting will also be analysed with the intention of understanding how they contribute to the elucidation of the problem of moral degeneration.

## **CHAPTER TWO**

### **LITERATURE REVIEW**

#### **2.1 Introduction**

This chapter looks at the existing research done on moral degeneration in literature around the globe. Works related to the topic in different countries are consulted. Before a researcher undergoes an exploration of a topic, they need to engage in a vigorous investigation and identification of current existing results relating to their topic. Gray (2004) defines literature review as “the selection of documents whether published or unpublished on a topic that contains information, ideas, and evidence, and the evaluation of these documents in relation to a particular piece of research.”

In addition to gaining more insight into the topic that is being researched, the researcher's main purpose for doing literature review is to investigate what was already done or closely been done by other scholars on the topic under scrutiny (Cooper, 1988). This includes contemporary knowledge and significant findings of theories which have undergone the empirical, theoretical, and critical/analytic process of research. According to Onwuegbuzie & Leech (2005:4) traditional literature review, which is undertaken in most studies, involves systematically identifying, locating, and analysing documents containing information related to the research problem and research topic. It is the right

of the researcher to support or critique the literature that they are reviewing without being limited to scrutiny. The process of studying the existing literature begins by brainstorming.

Terre Blanche & Durheim (2002) further advance that the intended rationale for engaging in literature review is to demonstrate how one's research is pertinent on a particular field of study or topic. He identifies the following as the purpose for literature review:

- to identify a theoretical framework.
- to identifying methodologies.
- to identify conceptual and operational definitions.
- to identify knowledge gaps and developing a research problem.
- to identify issues and variables related to the research topic.

Denney & Tewksbury (2012) cites further reasons for literature study. Although they are not like those of the above scholars, they also add new dimensions of knowledge that will be helpful in conducting the current study. They list the following reasons:

- to demonstrate your knowledge of a topic.
- to provide a background to your enquiry and set out a research agenda.
- to locate your project within current debates and viewpoints.
- to support you in reviewing and refining your research topic, question, or hypothesis.
- to help you to analyse your findings and discuss them with rigor and scholarship.

As Marshall & Rossman (1995) further says that the function of the literature review is to give the researcher an idea pertaining the research question, supply data about topic in question and latest update in that field of interest, recognise the gaps in that topic, and refine the research question. The literature review material can contain primary and secondary sources. Primary sources are the major and unerring sources with information alike to the researchers' topic. Mouton (2001) mentions that primary sources include academic research journals, dissertations, books, theses, and government publications. He asserts that secondary sources are those that are mentioned in the primary sources like newspaper articles, internet, and magazine articles.



According to Michael (2014), thanks to the digital age, the process of collecting data from academic libraries has changed drastically and is undemanding because it can be obtained from different computer databases. The internet supplies materials like journals, papers, articles, and books that can be utilised by various aspiring and already existing scholars. Literature review also outlines the importance of the intended study. Literature review lays out a framework for demonstrating the significance of the intended study (Boote, 2005:5).

The researcher must bear in mind who the audience of their study is because the reader of the study is of importance to the researcher regarding literature review. The reader needs to be assured that the research is essential, fascinating, necessary and he or she must see the whole prospect of the research. The reader must also be content that the current study will address the gaps or limitations in the existing topic hence it is vital to do a thorough literature review (Hess, 2004).

There are fourteen types of literature review as mentioned by Grant & Booth (2009:91). They are: systematic, meta-analysis, systematized, umbrella, overview, literature qualitative systematic/qualitative evidence synthesis, state of the art, rapid, scoping literature, critical, traditional/narrative review, mixed methods and mapping review. For this research, the traditional/narrative review is used. In his definition of the narrative or traditional literature review Baker (2016) says it is “a comprehensive, critical and objective analysis of the current knowledge on a topic.”

The reason for using this type of literature review is that it provides the patterns and the trends regarding the topic of the research in the existing literature. A narrative review synthesises what was written before on a certain topic but “does not seek generalisation or cumulative knowledge from what is reviewed” (Davies, 2000). This means that the existing literature on a certain topic provides enough data for a researcher to work on while anticipating that the new research will produce its own new findings. One is provided with an extensive background for understanding current knowledge and emphasising the importance of the new research (Cronin *et al.*, 2008). Another reason for doing narrative review is that it can stimulate research ideas by recognising gaps or

unpredictability in a body of knowledge, thus assisting researchers to ascertain research questions or formulate hypotheses (Green *et al.*, 2006).

There are four types of narrative literature review, and they are the general, theoretical, methodological, and historical literature review. The general literature is the appropriate one for this research because it gives the crucial and critical aspects of the current knowledge on any given topic while it is defined by what the goal and the problem of the research is (Onwuegbuzie & Leech 2005:4).

## **2.2 Studies on moral degeneration**

Extensive research has been done in many countries of the world on moral degeneration, in different fields of study amongst others, sociology, anthropology, educational studies, religious studies, and literary studies. The focus of this section is on research done in countries outside South Africa, that is, internationally, also on those done within the borders of this country, nationally. Furthermore, this section focuses on research done on moral degeneration in countries outside South Africa.

### ***2.2.1 Research on moral degeneration in countries outside South Africa***

Taking into consideration that moral degeneration is a human phenomenon inherent in all the cultures of the world, a lot of research has been done on the aspect. In the section below some of the studies done on moral degeneration will be investigated.

Dromii & Illouz (2010) have scrutinised the impact literary works can contribute to the general morality of the whole society using the readers as moral critics. Although there has been not much discussion on the relationship between the field of sociology and literary studies, they have contributed to the theme of morality and ethics lately. Literary works classic or popular can act out as moral critiques utilising the very same readers as experts in moral critique irrespective of the type of readers involved. Sociologists Luc Boltanski and Laurent Thévenot agree that fiction plays a dual role in society. The first role is the one played by novels in their ability to use characters to show inadequacies and clashes in society. The second role is that the readers of the novel as public figures

who have a position and moral capacity can personally critique the novel negatively or positively, questioning its objective, applauding and the content within.

The relationship between literature and society is correlative (Katte, 2011). Literature shapes the ethos of society. It also portrays society's principles or doctrines and the psyche. The author's outlook toward society plays a crucial role in advancing the history and repercussions of society. In the scope of literature writing, novelists portray the events and beliefs through their characters to represent what they see in society. Upamanyu Chatterjee is an Indian author and a civil servant whose literary work presents India as a country of decay, chaos, corrupt and mistrust.

The following protagonists in Upamanyu, Chatterjee literary works, Agastya in *English, August: An Indian Story* and *The Mammaries of the Welfare State*, Jamun in *The Last Burden* and *Way to Go* and Bhola in *The Weight Loss* are used to reflect the crumbling Indian value system and moral degeneration in all spheres of life delineating the present condition of the society. The above literary works also exposes how industrialisation and urbanisation played a drastic role of changing the life and the culture of the Indian people.

According to Parihar et al. (2018) there are trends like corruption, political interference, inadequate government policies in India that are skyrocketing, and they are affecting families, causing broken homes/marriages and moral degeneration in general.

To discuss moral decay in Bulgaria, Nikolova (2018) outlines the state and reasons for it. Moral generation in Bulgaria is still ongoing and has become an occurrence in the society. The crisis of moral degeneration has a negative impact in the economy, politics, environment, religion, and individuals. After 1989 the already frail economy led to more social uncertainty. The level of affluence decreased and that led to continuous poverty. The World Bank conducted a poverty and living conditions research in Bulgaria in 1995, 1997 and 2001 to track the dynamics of poverty in those three different periods distinguished by social instability (1995), social instability (1997) and the gradual economic recovery (2001). The results of the study done show that a weak economy, corruption, unemployment, and rape contributes to social crisis that leads to moral degeneration in the Bulgarian economy. This has led to social destabilisation.

In his study Dragneva (2006:99) uses an old Bulgarian literature called *Zhitie i stradanie grashnago Soroniia* (1806) by Sofronii to Vratsa, to demonstrate how characters and the environment in a literature can be used by an author to demonstrate moral degeneration. In this book the city of Constantinople is depicted as an iniquitous place that encourages “unnatural sexual practices, homosexuality and prostitution.” His findings were that characters in literature can be used to demonstrate the situational moral position of society.

Again, Dragneva (2006) uses old Czech literature in his study to explain moral degeneration in literature. The few examples of literature books that will be used as an example will demonstrate the power of literature on how society actions are evolving with time. The literature goes back to the 1890s. In her book called *Jitrenka SvStla Karolina* (1868), mentions a character called Hedvika. Despite being raised very well, she goes to the city of Prague where she ends up being engaged in infidelity and prostitution. Another book by SvStla called *Na usvite* (1864), a character named Jarolim’s father has an affair with another woman thus making him to do something unspeakable: leaves his wife and kids. He later fathers a child with the lover who unknowingly ends up falling in love with his daughter. The characters in the books display disloyalty, incest, infidelity, betrayal which all form part of moral degeneration. The study concludes that moral degeneration is more perennial in urban areas, hence the characters who were staying in rural areas became more and more morally unconscious when they reached the city.

Modern day Nigerian literature as supported by Akingbe (2014:184), especially poetry does not shy away from addressing societal and moral issues that affect the poor like prostitution, corruption, and alcoholism. The Nigerian poet Chinweizu Ibekwe has portrayed moral degeneration elements in his poems. In one of his poems called “*Faithful Mary Lou*” elements of moral decay like infidelity and corruption are apparent. Another Nigerian poet who uses literature to demonstrate moral degeneration is Ogaga Ifowodo. One of his poems named *The Oil Lamp* portrays vile elements of moral decay like torment and killings of innocent people. Otunne (2017:177) uses the Chimamanda Adichie’s novel named *Americanah* to illustrate the author’s ability to use characters to display elements of moral degeneration. The characters named Ifemelu and Obinze in the novel have an extra marital affair which leads to Obinze losing his family. The novel

also shows betrayal, premarital sex, explicit public display of sexual conduct and public drinking.

The society has experienced an escalation of immorality like “corruption, broken homes, teenage pregnancies, crime, and sexual promiscuity” (Wachege, 2017:698). All these immorality traits are the results of the malfunctioning moral values. The Swahili literature from Kenya as Wamitila (1997:121) describes it is a prose that demonstrates cultural and societal issues such as “immorality, urban life, theft, witchcraft and sorcery, teenage pregnancy, cultural conflict, juvenile delinquency and recently suppression and discrimination based on gender and race.” A novel by Chimera named *Nyongo mkalia Ini* is an ideal example of moral degeneration whereby the character called Khalifa participates in shady business dealings, drugs, corruption, and mistrust.

Nenduva (2018:1) uses a variety of Zimbabwean novels to illustrate moral degeneration in literature. In Mahanya’s novel *Munzwa mundove* (1999), the characters Violet and Patricia are in a well-respected profession, nursing. Violet is the total opposite of what she is expected to be by society. She joins an extremely dangerous gang which engages in criminal activities. She becomes engaged in murder, prostitution, and poaching. In Masundire’s *Mutikitivha Dumbuzenene* (1991), one comes across a character of a religious leader who is expected to adhere to the moral standards they preach. On the contrary, the character Father Chipembere is obsessed with greed and money. He is also involved in criminal activities like murder, drugs, corruption, extortion, and stealing.

### **2.2.2 Research on moral degeneration in South Africa**

South Africa as a country is not an exception to declining morality. According to Louw (2009:1), the following scholars, Straughan (1998); De Klerk & Rens (2003:359) and Mokgalabone (1999:55) have found that:

modern society, also the South African society, is becoming increasingly more unstable, belligerent, lawless, self-centered, violent, undisciplined and permissive, with these trends being more apparent among the younger generation.

These behaviours have negative implications on every member of the society. In her study on one-act plays Diamond (2012) categorise Zulu plays in themes and some of these claims are proof that just like most countries in the entire world, South Africa

cannot shun away from the fact that these immoral behaviours are inevitable. For example, in Mkhize's *Ngavele ngasho* 'I told you so' (1965) the theme of women abuse, disrespect of authority, and murder is evident. The character MaNtombela is physically abused by her husband and chased away from her home. The stage play by Molefe *Wayesezowela* 'He was about to succeed' (1992) centres on murder, poisoning and unfaithfulness. After being abandoned by his father Xolani is involved in changing his father's will and poisons him so that he can be able to kill him. The play by N.S Ntuli *Ngenxa kaThulani* 'Because of Thulani' from the book *Izimbokodo* (1998) deals with jealousy, poisoning and unfaithfulness from people who are supposed to be exemplary. Lawrence Molefe's play called *Bahlangana* 'Then they met' (1991) tackles the issue of infidelity from the character named Bheka who is married but brings a mistress to his home. Another one of Molefe's plays named *Umslado* 'Marriage' (also deals with unfaithfulness, jealousy, murder and conspiracy. The character Pewula courts two girls at the same time and marries the other. This leads to the other conniving to kill the couple because of jealousy. The last example is Molefe's play called *Isihlakaniphi* 'The wise one' (1991), the main character St Ngwenya investigates insurance fraud.

In his study, Gumede (2002) uses the book *Inkinsela Yasemgungundlovu* 'The tycoon from Pietermaritzburg' by Sibusiso Nyembezi (1961) to make an example of deception and crime. Ndebenkulu the main character is responsible for lying and deceiving the people in the rural areas. Firstly, he introduces himself as an esquire and promises the Nyanyadu people to make them rich. The people risk losing their livestock along the way, but Ndebenkulu does not care about that, he is only concerned about robbing the people.

In his study, Ntuli (2000) exposes the moral decay of immorality found in R.R.R. Dhlomo's *Indlela Yababi* 'The way of the wicked' (1979). The character of Delsie Moya's is involved with different men including a well-respected member of the community Rev. Dube. She ends up eloping with the Reverend and becomes involved in a rebellious lifestyle which results in the murder of the Reverend.

### **2.3 Studies on the implications of moral decline**

Moral deterioration is fast becoming a common thing in different societies and cultures whereby certain behaviours are on the verge of decline. Many nations have caved in on lack of moral stability throughout history. In a study done by Santrock (2005), it was

presumed that moral development arises in moral contexts like school, family, and religion. These institutions are believed to be equipped in the reinforcement of moral development. Immoral behaviours that are prevalent or prevailing are killings, violence, robbery, sexual and emotional abuse, substance abuse, rape, bribery, adultery, and others. These behaviours leave horrendous results like, orphans, psychological problems, reiteration, violence, divorce, killings, and drug dependency in society.

Turiel (2002) alluded in his study that if the youth can fail to integrate moral values in their daily lives, it can result in moral decline. Santrock (2005)'s study on moral decline also found that moral behaviours and values are pertinent to different societies, individuals, and whole nations. Societies with less immorality behaviours prosper more than societies affected by growing moral decline. Africa is not immune to the decline crisis. The findings of these studies show the crisis faced by humanity irrespective of age and environment. In his study, Soyingbe (2015) agrees that the major problem confronting Africa, like any other continent, is the declining general level of discipline and morality decline. Discipline and morality have been virtues that the continent was proud of. Moral decline is swiftly leading to the disintegration of societal values and traditions of communities. These consequences affect all members of that community.

## **2.4 The role of literature in society**

One cannot discuss civilisation without mentioning the invention of letters. Civilisation started with the creation of letters which later made it possible for 'communion' in generations and that the Victorian ruling class used literature as a tool for ideological dominance in replacement of religion (Pantic, 2006:402). She further says that the French novelist Gustave Flaubert made a pronouncement to read to live and "suggests that books and literature can teach us something about ethics and the human condition in its intimate and universal aspects, as well as illustrate the follies and achievements of our own epoch."

A study by Eliot (1932) found that fictional characters have a power to impact the readers of the literature to behave equivalently with them. There was also a link between the English classics and moral education.

Among other positive strengths of literature is the power to influence its reader. This influence can either be positive or negative. Rosenblatt (1994) writes that readers “often pay attention first to the feelings and ideas accompanying the emerging work,” adding that the experience may stimulate the reader “to clarify his own values, his own prior sense of the world and its possibilities. Literature also fosters general ideas or theories about human nature and conduct, definite moral attitudes, and habitual responses to people and situations.” The impact can come in many forms on specific individual literature readers. In his study, Noddings (2002) discovered the impact of stories in the establishment of identity in both moral and political education. The readers can identify with the characters and the morale of the narrative and that can lead in them changing the way they view life in general of what they aspire to be.

Another scholar who has a lot to say about the influence of literature is Steiner (1970). He mentions that “a great poem, a classic novel, press is upon us; they assail and occupy the strong places of our consciousness. They exercise upon our imagination and desires, upon our ambitions and most covert dreams, a strange, bruising mastery.” Irrespective of the genre that the reader is reading, they are bound to feel the impact of the literature in one way or another. The decision of the influence is on the reader.

There are various kinds of knowledge that can be acquired in literature. Nelms (1988) identifies five vital kinds of knowledge that speak to the moral development of the reader.

- a. Knowledge of the self
- b. Knowledge of others
- c. Knowledge of contexts
- d. Knowledge of processes
- e. Knowledge of texts

Reading of literature involves more than reading for delight or pleasure. According to Nussbaum (1995) literature has a moral dimension of moral activities in the reader that leads to moral activities in life.



## **2.5 Conclusion**

Both international and national studies on moral degeneration in literature have revealed that moral degeneration is a worldwide plight. Amongst all the reasons for moral degeneration industrialisation, economic hardships and lack of parental guidance are at the top for making people resort to immoral acts. Literature writers, contemporary or modern use their writing skills to expose the elements of moral degeneration like immorality, murder, corruption, theft, prostitution, sexual harassment, drug abuse, infidelity, and teenage pregnancy.

The reviewed literature also outlines the implications in societies that are affected by moral decay or degeneration. Research on moral degeneration in Zulu literature has not been done to a great extent. This study will be a great contribution to the Zulu literary system and to the study of moral degeneration in literature.

## **CHAPTER THREE**

### **THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK, RESEARCH DESIGN AND METHODOLOGY**

#### **3.1 Introduction**

This chapter focuses on the theoretical framework that is suitable for this study because it supports the discussions presented on the topic of moral degeneration in the selected Zulu literature. The research design and methodology which include the data collection and data analysis techniques are also discussed.

#### **3.2 Theoretical framework**

A theoretical framework can be described as unified or interconnected thoughts that steer directions into the whole research. Kerlinger (1979:64) describes a theory as:

a set of interrelated constructs (variables), definitions, and propositions that presents a systematic view of phenomena by specifying relations among variables, with the purpose of explaining natural phenomena.

On the other hand, Trochim (2006) describes a theoretical framework as “the structure that can hold or support a theory of a research study. It introduces and describes the theory which explains why the research problem under study exists.” However, Eisenhart (1991:204) defines a theoretical framework as:

a structure that guides research by relying on a formal theory, constructed by using an established, coherent explanation of certain phenomena and relationships psychological process, at a variety of levels that can be applied to the understandings of phenomena.

The last definition of theoretical framework is provided by Anfara & Mertz (2015:15) as “any empirical or quasi-empirical theory of social and/or psychological processes, at a variety of levels (e.g., grand, mid-range, and explanatory), that can be applied to the understanding of phenomena.”

The above definitions of a theoretical framework summarise it as unified or interconnected thoughts that steer direction into the whole research thus making it essential that the researcher helps the readers of the study to grasp the viewpoint and

context of the topic they are researching. A research theory or theories is discovered during the process of literature review while engaging with the main theme.

If a theory is used correctly MacIntyre (1985) says it can be utilised to make a prognosis so that the correct questions can be asked by the researcher. The concepts in a theory form building blocks which can be abstract or notional. He also mentions that a theoretical framework is important because it assists the researcher to gain insight on how things work. Herbert (2013) asserts that a framework is important because it demonstrates an understanding of the concepts that are crucial to the topic that is being investigated. He further posits that the framework strengthens the research because the theoretical assumptions allow the reader to assess them critically and identify limitations. A theoretical framework can also be an indicator according to Saunders (2003) that assists the researcher to assemble all the facets from the research question, literature review, data collection, sampling to, analysis and interpretation. A thorough investigation of theories and other readings must be done to strengthen the study by selecting a correct theory.

### **3. 2.1 Theory of symbolic interactionism**

Symbolic interactionism has been the way we learn to interpret and give meaning to the world via our interactions with others, even though there have been numerous sociological theories that relate to human conduct and group life. Symbolic interactionism has been influenced by several theorists, including George Simmel, George Herbert Mead, Charles Horton Cooley, Erving Goffman, and Herbert Blumer, among others (Sandstrom & Kleinman, 2005). Herbert Blumer, a sociologist, later crystallised and enlarged Mead's ideas, coining the term "symbolic interactionism" to describe them.

The major schools and varieties of symbolic interactionism are not easy to identify; 'there is simply not a great deal of consensus among the interactionists concerning whether one can meaningfully speak of real varieties or schools of symbolic interactionism (Reynolds & Herman-Kinney 2003:85). Although they may not be distinct varieties of 'schools' in any rigid or mutually exclusive sort of way, we nonetheless reasonably characterise 'variations' of symbolic interactionism in at least two methodological and

conceptual ways. On the one hand, we can identify what are called the 'Chicago School' of symbolic interaction and the 'Iowa School' of symbolic interaction. On the other hand, and in a more conceptual way, we can also follow Scheff's (2005) suggestion and characterise variations of symbolic interaction into two forms – one associated with Mead and Blumer and the other with Cooley & Goffman (Waskul, 2008:131).

This study will adopt Blumer (1969)'s variation of symbolic interactionism as its theoretical foundation. Charon (2007:60), asserts that

it is the symbol that translates the world from a physical sensed reality to a reality that can be understood, interpreted, dissected, integrated, and evaluated. Between reality and what we see and do stands the symbol. Once we learn about symbols, we are in the position of understanding our environment rather than simply responding to it, and once that happens what we come to see and act on is coloured by our symbols."

Blumer is alleged to have coined the term symbolic interactionism in his major book *Symbolic Interactionism: Perspective and Method* (1969) where he suggests the theory is built around three key premises: The first premise is that human beings act toward things based on the meanings that things have for them. The second premise is that the meaning of such things is derived from, or arises out of, the social interaction that one has with their group. The third premise is that these meanings are managed and modified, through an interpretative process used by the person in dealing with the things he encounters (1969:2).

In discussing the three premises in detail Blumer (1969:3) maintains that few scholars would see anything wrong with the first premise. This simple view is ignored or played down in all the thought and work in contemporary social science and psychological science. Meaning is either taken for granted and thus pushed aside as unimportant or it is regarded as a mere neutral link between the factors responsible for human behaviour and this behaviour as the product of such factors. Blumer (1969) asserts that this is clearly seen in the predominant posture of psychological and social science today. Common to both fields is the tendency to treat human behaviour as the product of a range of factors that play upon human beings; concern is with the behaviour and with the factors regarded as producing them.

Thus, psychologists turn to such factors as stimuli, attitudes, conscious or unconscious motives, various kinds of psychological inputs, perception and cognition, and various features of personal organisation to account for given forms or instances of human conduct. In a similar fashion, sociologists rely on such factors as social position, status demands, social roles, cultural prescriptions, norms and values, social pressures, and group affiliation to provide such explanations. In both such typical psychological and sociological explanations, the meanings of things for the human beings who are acting are either bypassed or swallowed up in the factors used to account for their behaviour (Blumer 1969:3).

Blumer (1969:3) continued to elucidate that if one declares that the given kinds of behaviour are the result of the factors regarded as producing them, there is no need to concern oneself with the meaning of the things towards which human beings act; one merely identifies the initiating factors and the resulting behaviour. Or one may, if pressed, seek to accommodate the element of meaning by lodging it in the initiating factors or by regarding it as a neutral link intervening between the initiating factors and the behaviour they are alleged to produce. In the first of these latter cases the meaning disappears by being merged into the initiating or causative factors; in the second case meaning becomes a mere transmission link that can be ignored in favour of the initiating factors.

The position of symbolic interactionism as expounded by Blumer (1969:3) is that the meanings that things have for human beings are central. To ignore the meaning of the things toward which people act is seen as falsifying the behaviour under study. To bypass the meaning in favour of factors alleged to produce the behaviour is seen as a grievous neglect of the role of meaning in the formation of the behaviour. The simple premise that human beings act toward things based on the meaning of such things is much too simple to differentiate symbolic interactionism—there are several other approaches that share this premise. A major line of difference between them and symbolic interactionism is set by the second premise, which refers to the source of meaning. There are two well-known traditional ways of accounting for the origin of meaning. One of them is to regard meaning as being intrinsic to the thing that has it, and as being a natural part of the objective makeup of the thing.

Symbolic interactionism emphasises that society is human group life – human beings engaging in social (symbolic) interaction (Blumer 1969:7). As such, for symbolic interactionists, society is an ongoing process of symbolic interaction wherein people continuously interpret and respond to the cues, i.e., signals or messages, in our social environment. Precisely because people act based on the meanings that objects (cars, clothes, wrinkles, other things, people, and social institutions) have in their social environment (i.e. their “world of objects”), “the life and action of people necessarily change in line with the changes taking place in their world of objects” (Blumer 1969:12).

According to Redmond (2015), symbolic interactionism qualifies as a theory in part because, in addition to standing the test of time, it has served as the framework for a vast quantity of study. Different strategies were used by institutions where groups of like-minded scholars lived due to differences in the notion of symbolic interaction and the emphasis of researchers. The Chicago School, for example, was concerned with the human involvement in the development of the social environment and hence used field studies, whereas the Iowa School was concerned with the concept of a core self and strong empirical methodologies. To Manning & Smith (2010), the title of the book reaffirms that symbolic interactionism is both a perspective, a way of looking at the social world and a method, a way of gathering data about the social world. They allege that in 1969, Blumer devised a more focused and analytic introduction to symbolic interactionism than the one he inserted into his 1937 literature review of social psychology.

Symbolic interactionism, according to Wood (1992:63), is "a process in which humans engage with symbols to generate meanings." People learn information and ideas, interpret their own and others' experiences, share sentiments, and get to know other individuals through symbolic encounters. None of this would be possible without symbols.

Symbolic interactionism according to Redmond (2015) entails much more than merely talking through symbols. He claims that two fundamental concepts are inherent in a symbolic interaction: 1) people evaluate, interpret, and adapt to other people's activities; and 2) people's symbolic interactions connect them to society, connect society to them and reflect the society in which they act. In comprehending social life, symbolic

interactionism is a sociological perspective that emphasises the relevance of meaning, interaction, and human agency. According to Blumer (1969) Mead understood symbolic interactionism as the essential foundation from which a society originates, not only as a medium through which sociological issues are articulated. Symbolic interactions provide the foundation for the birth of our intellect and sense of self, in addition to being the foundation for the evolution of society (Redmond, 2015).

The meaning of a thing is simply the expression of the given psychological factors that are brought into play in conjunction with its perception; consequently, one attempts to explain the meaning of a thing by identifying the specific psychological aspects that form the meaning. As a result, symbolic interactionism views meanings as social goods, as creations that emerge from and are shaped by people's defining activities as they interact. This viewpoint places symbolic interactionism in a unique position, with far-reaching ramifications that will be examined later (Blumer, 1969:5).

Manning & Smith (2010:38) argue that after elaborating his premises Blumer then added six root images or basic notions. The first is that social life "exists in action" and as such must be examined. The concepts and theories employed by sociologists are only useful to the extent that they clarify the everyday activities in which people are all engaged. Manning & Smith (2010) believe that throughout, Blumer was certain that symbolic interactionists must investigate the behaviours occurring in specific, concrete groups. They contend that Blumer was careful in his attempts to anchor symbolic interactionism to empirical issues and research. The second root image is of members of a group communicating with one another.

Many sociological and psychological theories, according to Blumer, consider contact as merely the vehicle through which social forces or psychological qualities are expressed. They argue that social interaction should be prioritised because human behaviour is produced through interaction. Blumer's sixth image emphasises how people's activities were interwoven together as joint productions. Symbolic interactionism is something people do in everyday life. It is the active, reflexive, creative and communicative doings of people in which meaning is fashioned, a uniquely human quality that bestows the capacity for both self and society at the most fundamental level. Symbolic interactionism

is also a perspective and analytical method for doing social science and understanding our social, cultural and communication worlds (Waskul, 2008).

Symbolic interactionism is relevant for this study because it allows an individual to be responsible for their own thoughts and actions while interpreting the actions of other people. This is done by constructing meaning to the objects or reaction of others in the society. The interaction of an individual with the society can be morally correct or wrong and thus the meaning they give to the objects also allows them to act in a good or bad way towards the significant others. The symbolic meaning that is developed and built by an individual is also part of the social interaction irrespective of the interpretation that the individual makes. This theory is also relevant because it provides the basis for understanding communication using the symbols in the interaction of people.

When the three literary books *Kudela Owaziyo* by BP Maphumulo (2009), a drama; *Ngaze Ngazenza* by MM Masondo (1994), a novel; and *Impi Yabomdabu Isethunjini* by JC Buthelezi (2015), a novel, are presented, discussed and analysed and in the process, it is established how symbolic interactionism supports the discussions. It should be remembered that what has been discussed above regarding this theory is that it refers to the peculiar and distinctive character of interaction as it takes place between human beings. How the characters in the three literary works interact differently with others in different social environments because of the different meanings they assign to the contexts they find themselves are discussed.

### **3.3 Research design**

The daunting task of elucidating the research problem in a research/study is the preparation of the research design because too many decisions must be made. The researcher must decide on how they are going to execute their plan of gathering data by outlining their plan of action with the purpose of obtaining the desired results of the research question. The plan eventually becomes a scheme of work with specific procedures and approaches for the researcher. Research intellectuals such as (Selltitz, *et al.*, 1965) consider a research design as a scheme, form and approach of examination that enables the researcher to obtain answers to research questions or problems. It is important for every study to have a research plan so that it can be a success.



According to Parahoo (1997:142), a research design is described as “plan that describes how, when and where data is to be collected and analysed.” Parahoo (1997) further indicates that the design also describes how the respondents are approached, informed, and recruited. Supporting the above notion, McMillan & Schumacher (2006) define a research design as the procedure for investigating, which includes when, from whom, and under which conditions the data will be collected.

Adding to the above-mentioned definitions, Babbie & Mouton (2008) defines research design as a plan or blueprint for conducting the research. The research design is a detailed plan according to which research is undertaken. Selltiz *et al.* (1965) as cited by Mouton & Marais (1996:32) define research design as “the arrangement of conditions for collection and analysis of data in a manner that aims to combine relevance to the research purpose with economy in procedure.”

Mouton and Marais (1996:193) further emphasise that the aim of a research design is to plan, structure and execute a given research project in such that the validity of the findings is maximised. A researcher needs to make this plan for the research to have a direction.

What is the aim of a research design? Mouton (1998:108) says that the main aim of the research design is “to plan and structure a research design in such a way that the eventual validity of the research findings is maximised through either minimised; or were possible eliminate potential error.”

The definition of a research design summed up by the above-mentioned scholars consolidates the main idea of a research design into three operations: collection of data, deciding on the instrument to be utilised and lastly the sampling process.

### **3.3.1 Research methodology**

Research methodology and design are the engine of the study because they guide and informs the researcher on the necessary methods, tools, and techniques to use. A distinction between research methodology and research design is made by Saunders *et*

al. (2003) as they clarify that a research design is more of an overall plan that needs a variety of different methods, and a research methodology is more of a particular process. Senam & Akpan (2014) define research methodology as a strategy, guide or a plan that is systematically administered to conduct research and solving the research problem.”

According to Neuman (2002) research methodology is a detailed research plan of action with specific objectives for the purpose of exploring areas of interest. Kothari (2004:8) clearly puts it that “research methodology entails specific procedures and operations for the problem statement and getting the desired results while reaching the anticipated conclusion.”

The focal point of this chapter is on the most important activity of collecting data using a scientific method. One must acknowledge that research is a delicate process that must be done with caution because it must not be about gathering information only but about providing reliable, valid, and truthful results. Researchers use a variety of research methods as tools that are important in gathering the methods and techniques of analysing the data (Potter,1996). According to Leedy & Ormrod (2010:12) research methodology is a general approach the researcher takes in conducting a research project. This, to some extent, also refers to the way different tools can be used to collect and analyse data. Research methodology entails numerous approaches and systems in which data is acquired, organised and analysed for research purposes. Each methodology used in a study depends on the nature of the research question (Polit & Hungler 2004: 233). This means that research methodology follows a particular process of collecting data in an organised way whereby it is analysed until the desired results are acquired.

Leedy & Ormrod (2010) distinguish between two basic research methods, which are quantitative and qualitative.

### **3.3.1.1 Quantitative research**

To Creswell (2014) quantitative research is “an approach for testing objective theories by examining the relationship among variables. These variables, in turn, can be measured,

typically on instruments, so that numbered data can be analysed using statistical procedures.”

Cohen & Manion (1980) view quantitative research as “a method that employs empirical methods and empirical statements.” However, Sparks (1999:53) defines it as:

an enquiry into a social or human problem, based on evaluating a theory, composed of variables, measured with numbers, and analysed with statistical procedures, to determine whether the predictive generalizations of the theory hold true.

The reason for using statistical procedures is to determine if the general findings are true or not. Data is gathered using questionnaires, surveys, and planned examination. This type of research method is systematic and uses numbers.

It is common knowledge that the main objective in this type of research method is to explain, describe and quantify the research problem. More time is spent analysing the data findings than the actual data gathering. The findings in this research are easy to generalise. A suggestion is made by Reichardt & Cook (1979) that “quantitative research is obtrusive and controlled, objective, generalizable, outcome oriented, and assumes the existence of ‘facts’ which are somehow external to and independent of the observer or researcher”.

To Plano Clark & Ivankova (2016:4) quantitative research is an approach that “examines the relationships between variables by collecting and analysing numeric data expressed in numbers or scores.” But Goodwin & Goodwin (1996:71) refer to quantitative study as a numerical method of describing observations or characteristics. They further explain that this research method is fundamentally a deductive process, with detailed pre-specification of most of its elements and marked use of numerical analyses and reports. Supporting the above definition Burns & Grove (2005:29) refer to quantitative research as an objective, systematic process of using numerical data to obtain information about the world. They further explain that this method is useful in evaluating a theory by evaluating the validity of the relationships that compose the theory. In other words, quantitative research method represents statistical analysis with dependable, valid, and accurate data.

### **3.3.1.2 Qualitative research**

The aim of a qualitative researcher is to gather as much authentic data from the chosen sample and to dwell on the interpretation and meaning using own observation and interpretation. Liamputtong (2009) gives a reason that it implies “a concern for more inductive analysis, for exploring, explaining, uncovering phenomena and for generating new theoretical insights,” when a researcher focuses on meaning and interpretation.

Creswell (2014) defines qualitative research as “a means of exploring and understanding the meaning individuals or groups ascribe to a social or human problem.” Meanwhile McMillan & Schumacher (2006) add the aspect of categories in their definition and defined it as “primarily an inductive process of organising data into categories and identifying patterns (relationships) among categories.” Leedy (1993:192) also agrees that the qualitative method is used when dealing with people, feelings, values, beliefs, and interpersonal relationships. When Mason (2002) is of the opinion that qualitative research approaches have the following aspects in common:

- they are concerned with how data is interpreted, understood, experienced, produced or constituted.
- the research methods must be flexible and sensitive to the social context that is being investigated.
- the data analysis is concerned with details, complexity, and a particular context.

Data is collected using questions and other methods. The inquiry is process oriented. There following are two characteristics of the qualitative approach:

- Interpretative - meaning that it is made up of words and not numbers which make the focus on meaning and exposition. The researcher becomes involved in interpreting the data during the study. This also means that qualitative research is characterised by flexibility and freedom in the structure terms and order given to the researcher. The researcher’s ethical, personal issues and strategic range are to be taken into consideration in qualitative research (Locke *et al.* 2013).

- No numerical analyses of the data - this means that as the research deals with behaviour, experiences, beliefs and attitudes, there is no need for numerical or statistical collection of the data, and it cannot be measured.

Leedy and Ormrod (2010) state the following as the most important purposes of qualitative research:

- Description - It discloses the essence of certain situations, operations, relationships, settings, systems, or people.
- Interpretation - It qualifies the researcher to have deep new insights about a certain phenomenon, creates a new concept or theoretical viewpoint about the phenomenon, and finds the challenges that are within the phenomenon.
- Verification - It allows for the testing of the validity of assumptions, affirmations, theories, or rationalisation in the real-world contexts.
- Evaluation - It assists the researcher to give judgement on the effectiveness of a certain policy, practice, or alteration.

Denzin (2001) highlights the following four key issues which are crucial to qualitative research:

- Conceptual (identifying the form and nature of what exists)
- Diagnostic (examining the causes for or causes of what exists)
- Evaluative (appraising the effectiveness of what exists (and the reasons to why it exists))
- Strategic (identifying new policies, plans or actions).

Using the above four key issues in this research meant that literature had to be/ needed to be interrogated and explored in-depth to understand moral degeneration in society.

The qualitative research method is ideal for this study because moral degeneration is a societal phenomenon that needs to be explored and understood. This method enables the researcher to capture the meaning or essence using procedures that are suitable to gather the anticipated data in the selected literary works. The vigorous exploring of data in this method of research also assists in the identification and interpretation of societal

challenges. It assists in the description of the essence of the moral degeneration phenomenon.

### **3.3.1.3 Data collection instruments**

Every research needs organised information or facts in any form used by the researcher to make the study successful, dependable, and valid. This information is called data and it must come from relevant sources. Describing the role of data in research, Matthews & Ross (2010:43) says that it is as “data stands in place of the social reality we wish to study. We cannot simply know a social phenomenon, but we can attempt to capture it as data which represent the reality we have experienced, observed, asked questions about, or are trying to explain. As social beings we all gather and work with data every day as we take part in the social world through conversations, reading, observing, and writing.

## **1.4 Types of data**

Data comes in different forms and can be classified as primary or secondary. Nkuna (2010) clarifies that primary data is information that is collected for the first time and secondary data is information that is already available. It can be written, verbal or spoken. The topic and aim of the research guide the researcher which type of data must they use for their study. This study uses written data in literature which falls under primary data.

### **3.3.1.5 Data collection techniques**

Research techniques are scientific and systematic techniques that are employed by a researcher during research inquiry to obtain and analyse research information (Kothari, 2004:9). Williams (2007) refers to techniques as “practical techniques used to carry out research. These are tools that make it possible to collect information and analyse it. This means that research methods are tools and means of gathering research data (Jackson, *et al.* 2007:22). Crotty (1998:3) defines research methods as “the techniques or procedures used to gather and analyse data related to some research questions or hypotheses.”

In research, the techniques of data collection are especially important if the researcher wants to achieve the desired results of addressing the problem. There are different techniques of data collection, namely:

- Interviews
- Questionnaires
- Surveys
- Focus groups
- Observations
- Case study methods
- Documents and records
- Oral histories
- Experiments
- Desktop approach

The desktop approach is used in this research. Juneja (2015) defines the desktop method as “a research technique that involves collecting data from existing resources.” The desktop approach is neither expensive nor time consuming.

Data was gathered from the three selected Zulu literary works, namely: *Kudela Owaziyo* by BP Maphumulo (2009) a drama; *Ngaze Ngazenza* by MM Masondo (1994, a novel; and *Impi Yabomdabu Isethunjini* by JC Buthelezi (2015) which is a novel, to see how each writer has treated issue of moral degeneration. These literary works were intensely read with a view to establishing how the writers depicted the elements of moral degeneration through the characters and the setting they have used.

According to Bowen (2009) document analysis is a form of qualitative research in which documents are interpreted by the researcher to give voice and meaning around a particular topic. Different themes on moral degeneration will be coded. Bowen emphasises the need to code the content into different themes. The advantages of document analysis are that documents are manageable, accessible, dependable, and practical. In addition, documents can be read repeatedly and be reviewed repeatedly. Other questions that were not part of the initial research problem can arise which can lead to the research being interpretative and broad.

### **3.3.1.6 Data analysis instruments**

The data that has been collected must go through a process of being vigorously analysed, interpreted and findings must be made. This process is referred to as data analysis. Giving a definition of data analysis, Bogdad & Biklen (1982:145) simplify it as “working with data, organising it, breaking it into manageable units, synthesising it, searching for patterns, discovering what is important and what is to be learned and deciding what you will tell others.”

Hancock (1998:17) gives a precise definition of content analysis as “a technique for gathering and analysing the content of the text to classify, summarise and tabulate it. The researcher has an obligation of making sense of the collected data. This involves deeper understanding of the data, interpretation and finally the analysis the data which can be concluded at the same time guided by the topic of the study (Creswell, 2014).

There are five types of data analysis according to Liamputtong (2009:283):

- Content analysis - this type of an analysis is commonly used to analyse data in written texts.
- Narrative analysis - this method for analysing data that is obtained in sources like interviews, survey, and observations.
- Discourse analysis - this method is used to analyse people’s interactions in the social context.
- Semiotic analysis - this method is used for the analysis of sign processes evolving from cultural representations and languages.
- Thematic analysis - this method is mostly used in research that involves a text that can be divided into themes or topics.

Content analysis and thematic analysis were used as analytical tools in this research study because literary set works of different genres and different themes were the primary sources of information.

Thematic analysis Is a foundational method that identifies, analyses, and reports on specific themes (Liamputtong,2009). Similarities and differences can be a guide in



choosing real patterns in text that will be classified as themes. The literature was divided into specific themes that are relevant to the topic of moral degeneration like, promiscuity, crime, murder, dishonesty, substance abuse and wickedness.

Hsieh & Shanon (2005:1278) define qualitative content analysis as “a research method for the subjective interpretation of the content of text data through the systematic classification process of coding and identifying themes or patterns.” Mayring (2000:2) perceives content analysis as “an approach of empirical, methodological controlled analysis of texts within their context of communication, following content analytic rules and step by step models, without rash quantification” and that “any qualitative data reduction and sense-making effort that takes a volume of qualitative material and attempts to identify core consistencies and meanings (Patton 2002:453).”

Weber (1990) mentions the following advantages of content analysis:

- it provides insight into complex models of human thought and language use.
- it is an unobtrusive means of analysing interactions.
- it looks directly at communication via texts or transcripts, and hence gets at the central aspect of social interaction.
- it can allow for both qualitative and quantitative operations.
- it can provide valuable historical/ cultural insights over time through analysis of texts.
- it can be used to interpret texts for a purpose such as development of expert systems (since knowledge and rules can both be coded in terms of explicit statements about relationships among concepts).

A researcher who uses the content analysis must always ensure that they give an accurate, authentic, and legitimate interpretation of their findings. The content in the literature must not be just presented as a believable interpretation of the narrative but as a truthful data within the document related to the theme/title of the study. While doing their study, the researcher must give detailed accounts, the process they used and their findings at the end. Altheide (1996) says that an “audit trail” and a report of any challenges that can lead to discrepancies must be reported.

It is particularly important that the content analyst researcher be truthful in their analysis. It is important that the researcher provides two crucial guarantees to verify that their analysis is genuine. Firstly, “they must be explicit as to the process by which they interpret their evidence and secondly, they must provide access to their data, so that their findings may be verified,” (Guba & Lincoln, 1994).

There is a three-stage process for the analysis of data to be followed by a document analyst as mentioned by Altheide, (1996) is:

- Open coding/Searching of themes
- Axial coding, and
- Selective- coding

In the section below follows a brief discussion of each of these coding processes.

- Open coding/Searching of themes

At this initial stage, the researcher must do a comprehensive review of the content in the text and identify, categorise, and describe extensive themes. This is done by recording or writing down distinguishable patterns in the text.

Moral degeneration has a variety of elements. For example, promiscuity, substance abuse, adultery, violence, crime, corruption, prostitution, and murder. From these elements, patterns and themes were deduced while vigorously engaging in the chosen three literature books. These themes were coded accordingly.

- Axial coding

At this stage, the researcher related categories and concepts that were identified in the first stage of searching for themes. The elements mentioned under the open coding were categorised in common themes. For example, adultery and prostitution fell under the same category of sexual illicit behaviours.

- Selective - coding

During this last stage, the researcher must do the final selection of one category that forms a core concept or theme. One theme or core concept that has more weight and

relevancy in the literature books was chosen. This theme is interrogated thoroughly in the books so that at the end of the whole research the books validate how moral degeneration is portrayed in the Zulu literature.

As mentioned by (Krippendorff, 2004: 314), the content analysis authenticity relies on the subjective evaluation of the researcher. This means that as the researcher vigorously engages in the content of the research, they must ensure that what they personally find is a reliable, valid, and genuine information that can be trusted by any person reading the research. This involves putting their own perspective on the findings in the content.

### **3.4 Conclusion**

This chapter focused on symbolic interactionism as a theory and dwelt on the origin of the theory, the prominent scholars who initiated it and its principles. What was also discussed in the chapter was the research design and methodology or the plan on how the research will be conducted. To understand and be able to distinguish between the main methods of research, both quantitative and qualitative methods were discussed, and the qualitative method was chosen as a suitable method for conducting this study because the research topic on moral degeneration is a societal phenomenon that needs to explore interpretatively and be described more constructively using qualitative research. The discussion also focused on how the data would be collected, the methods and the techniques and how it would be analysed.

## **CHAPTER FOUR**

### **ANALYSIS OF MORAL DEGENERATION IN THREE SELECTED ZULU LITERARY**

#### **WORKS**

##### **4.1 Introduction**

The preceding chapter discussed the theoretical framework which supports the discussion carried out in this study. It also discussed, the research design and methodology used in conducting the research. The symbolic interactionism as espoused by Blumer and other theorists underpin the discussions made in the three selected Zulu literary works. It reflects an approach that reflects the social world in which people live, and their interpretations of the symbols that define their actions and words. The central assumption of symbolic interactionism is that meanings are created as people act and interact with one another. It employs a wide variety of methods to understand both intra- and interpersonal processes. The starting point for symbolic interactionism is that individuals make sense of what they encounter.

Thus, humans consistently create (their) meanings, and they also try to influence the way other people view them. Symbolic interactionism suggests that we constantly make sense of everything in the world around us. This perspective supports the idea that people have expectations about how things should be and act accordingly.

Generally, symbolic interactionism suggests that everyone is constantly acting to maintain their identity. In this way, people are not born with pre-existing social identities; instead, they are shaped through the meanings and definitions others assign to them.

In other words, the things that are important in our lives (such as family, friends, jobs, careers, community service, and religion) shape how we think about ourselves, each other, and the world. The symbolic interactionist perspective helps us better understand the process by which people create their understanding of reality. This perspective supports the idea that people are active agents who cause change within society. The most fundamental principle of symbolic interactionism can be expressed in one simple sentence: people's reactions are based on the meanings they attach to those things.

This means that something is based on how people interpret it. Because our collective understanding of these signs develops over time and changes with each new generation, social structure can also be considered an ongoing process involving creating and manipulating shared meanings. When you interact with another person, you learn how to interpret the signs around us through socialisation. In other words, people create a shared reality when we interact and understand what it means to “be social.”

The research design and methodology which explains the procedures, techniques and steps for data collection and analysis also received attention in the preceding chapter. It was decided that the discussion of moral degeneration as a societal phenomenon in the selected literary works be qualitative in nature, exploring to provide an understanding of a social or human problem by individuals or groups, and assist in the identification and interpretation of societal behaviour. The desktop method was used as a research technique where data was drawn from documents and be reviewed. The documents will be analysed and interpreted, and meaning be accordingly assigned by the researcher.

Data analysis was drawn from existing Zulu literature books namely, a play *Kudela Owaziyo* by BP Maphumulo (2009), a novel, *Ngaze Ngazenza* by MM Masondo (1994), and a novel, *Impi Yabomdabu Isethunjini* by JC Buthelezi (2015). The desktop approach has been found beneficial because through desktop data is easily accessible, it is low-cost and time saving. The discussion on moral degeneration encountered in the literature books was divided into various sections presented, discussed and analysed. The main characters in the literature as well as the milieu in which the stories unfold was thrown into prominence. It is of great consequence to first discuss what is meant by moral degeneration before looking at how Zulu literary writers deal with the subject.

## **4.2 Moral degeneration**

Mandubu (2021) opines that living in an egalitarian society has resulted in the corrosion of moral base among certain sectors in the community. Some people misconstrue egalitarian as an authorisation to act as they see fit. Young people are gradually losing touch with reality in relation to acceptable behavioural norms in South Africa society. The definitions of morals, morality, moral degeneration, and moral decay that are given below in such a manner that they will be easy to follow in the discussion.

Cherkowski *et al.* (2015) define morals as principles and standards that vary from place to place amongst human beings to compare what is good or bad depending on the environment or the people involved. Sliwa (2017) advocates that the capacity of moral understanding is the ability to acquire moral knowledge is constitutive of moral understanding. So, an agent has moral understanding if he or she could acquire moral knowledge and gives an unadorned definition of the term morals as an ability to understand between right and wrong.

According to Harris (2010:3), a person must be conscious in modelling the moral correctness or incorrectness of an action. Harris further expounds morality as behavioural values that enable people to flourish. Mariaye (2006:23) says the term morality can be used descriptively to refer to a code of conduct put forward by a society or an individual, and normatively, to refer to a code of conduct that, under specific conditions, would be put forward by all rational-thinking persons. Morality also has to do with principles of societal behaviours that detect if a particular action is accepted or not.

Ladzani (2011:14) defines moral degeneration as “the process of declining from a higher to a lower level of morality”. Moral degeneration can affect an individual or a group of people. It can be caused by many factors like negative or hostile influence and defiance amongst a few things. In his attempt to define moral degeneration, Lusenga (2010) says it is the decline of morality and decline of quality of life of young and old people. Bayaga & Jaysveree (2011) indicate that Africa in general and South Africa are experiencing rapid moral decline. Furthermore, they indicate that “moral degeneration undermines the virtues and values appreciated in traditional African society.” Adamo (2011) laments the contemporary moral crisis which is characterised by the display of shocking acts of sexual immorality, dishonesty, corruption, crime, and violence, “may hasten the communities to go to the graveyard.” He maintains that this moral degeneration is caused by the lack of role models especially from the older members of society. Different scholars ascribe the moral degeneration phenomenon to different reasons. Moral degeneration especially in young people is attributed to the lack of cultural knowledge and the disregard of African traditions (Ladzani 2011).

According to Carl & Johannes (2002:162) the most contributing factors to moral degeneration is modernisation, advanced technology, political change, and the absence of a value system. In an attempt to seek for reasons that contribute to moral decline

Hazlitt (1964:01) mentions that the decline of religious faith is the cause of moral regeneration in the society which at the end results in the increase of crime and violence. He attributes this to the fact that religion as a specific system that deals with faith, morals, belief, and ethics, helps people behave in a certain morally acceptable way/manner and if they do not affiliate with any religion then it leads to moral degeneration.

Intellectuals and academics contribute to the rise of moral degeneration by using the media in criticizing traditional values which help an individual to have an acceptable behaviour and conduct (Turiel, 2002:8). As more and more people have access to the media, they are exposed to different opinions of traditional values by intellectuals and academics. These varieties of opinions may be different to the initial traditional values and thus degrading what is believed to be the core traditional values which can lead to moral degeneration. Carl & Johannes (2002) say that the moral decries, or decay is due to the lack of cultural values.

Among the people who speak publicly about morality Hlagala (2012) indicates that politicians, religious leaders, and social commentators speak about the breakdown in morality in South Africa, which is accompanied by crimes like murder, robbery, rape, corruption, destroying of property, and theft being most commonly cited evidence. Uzoigwe (2013) says that corruption, bribery, embezzlement, mismanagement of public funds, and injustice are the results of moral degeneration. To curb the scourge of moral degeneration, Dolamo (2012) calls for the revitalisation of humanity as espoused in the *ubuntu* philosophy arguing that humanness, promotes self-love, respect and compassion for others.

Unfortunately, moral decay has disastrous results that have left the society in a hopeless continuous state. Amongst the manifestations of moral decay, (Louw 2009) mentions perverse sexual practices, gender-based violence. Tanga & Gutura (2013) add, robbery, vandalism, theft, alcohol, and drug abuse, bullying trends, abuse and addiction to social media, teenage pregnancies, and disrespect for authority to the list of negative consequences of moral decay. The end product of moral degeneration is mentioned by Yucel (2013) as he maintains that moral degeneration is the leading factor to social collapse that is mainly affecting the youth.

### 4.3 Literature as a mirror that reflects society

Literature is a potent tool that is used by the writer to express their feelings, observation, and their experiences. Literature can become more of just a written text intended for a particular reader. The following discussion will focus on how literature can reflect society.

Literature is used as a tool that epitomises the interactions and relations of the members of communities, their thoughts, real-life events, introspections, and their ills (Shalini *et al.*, 2017) Literature conveys the positive virtues and values that can be imitated by the society. Literature has the power to mirror society's problems and difficulties and therefore aid in making reparations. Shalini *et al.* (2017) further says that "It is impossible to find a work of literature that excludes the attitudes, morale and values of the society, since no writer has been brought up completely unexposed to the world around him."

Literature becomes "the social determinants of an artistic creation depend upon the degree to which the writers are bound up with the life of the community, to the extent they take part in the struggle going on around them or their merely passive observers of the events" (Lukacs, 1962). This means that for the writer to present a true reflection of the society they need to be part of it. Some African writers like Chinua Achebe and Ngugi wa Thiong'o believe that literature helps in reflecting the society's political and social state. Loflin (1995) quoted Ngugi wa Thiong'o saying that "literature does not grow or develop in a vacuum; it is given impetus, shape, direction and even area of concern by social, political and economic forces in a particular society." According to Achebe (1988) amidst the other roles of literature, social and political accountability holds the most important role for literature.

What these writers and scholars mean is that literature cannot be divorced from its reflection of the society's political, social, and economic status.

From the discussion above it is apparent that literature as an imitation of human action, presents a picture of what people think, say, and do in society. In literature, people find stories designed to portray human life and action through some characters who, by their words, actions, and reactions, convey certain messages for the purpose of educating, informing and entertaining.



The following section of the discussion presents issues of moral degeneration that have been depicted in the three selected Zulu literature, namely, *Impi Yabomdabu Isethunjini* (2015) by JC Buthelezi, *Kudela Owaziyo* (2009) by BP Maphumulo and *Ngaze Ngazenza* (1994). These are discussed and analysed.

#### **4.4 Analysis of the three selected Zulu literary works**

##### **4.4.1 *Impi Yabomdabu Isethunjini* (2015) by JC Buthelezi**

This book comprises 313-pages. It is a novel written by JC Buthelezi and was published in 2015. This novel is about urban and rural family life just after South Africa became a democratic country. It looks deep into family values after 1994. It treats among others, the following topics: disparity in child-upbringing, lack of *ubuntu* 'humanness', looking down on those we consider backward or low in status and children born out of wedlock.

This novel is about urban and rural family life just after South Africa became a democratic country. This novel looks deep into family values after 1994. It treats among others, the following topics: disparity in child-upbringing, lack of *ubuntu* 'humanness', looking down on those we consider backward or low in status and children born out of wedlock.

##### **4.4.1.1 Lack of *ubuntu* 'humaneness'**

*Ubuntu* is an African philosophy. Mugumbate & Nyanguru (2013) defines *ubuntu* as an African philosophy that places emphasis on 'being self through others. It is a form of humanism which can be expressed in the phrases 'I am because of who we all are' and *umuntu ngumuntu ngabantu* in Zulu language.

Ramose (1999:193) describes *ubuntu* as a way of life that originates from the belief that one is a human being through others – "I am because you are". Existing or being human is the affirmation of one's humanity in recognising the humanity of others and establishing respectful relations with them. *Ubuntu* has the following characteristics, (Shutte, 2001:46):

- an expression of human dignity, an underpinning of the concept of an open society,
- trust
- helpfulness

- respect
- sharing
- caring
- community
- unselfishness

According to Chitumba (2013:1269) *ubuntu* is a complex concept, elusive or difficult to describe and contains different features. This concept forms part of the African way of life that is communitarian.

*Ubuntu* accentuates that regardless of the cultural diversity of people and social background, people can live together in peace and in trust (Hofstede, 1980:42). Buthelezi (1994) depicts the issue of lack of *ubuntu* 'humanness' in Bafana, the main character in the story who reveals his lack of humanness the way he does not treat his uncle Cele well when he comes to request him to take over raising his sister's children. The uncle can feel that he is not welcomed in Bafana's house. In chapter one, Cele eloquently introduces what his visit to Bafana is all about. The following extract illustrates how Cele made a plea to Bafana:

1. *'Mbhambhadisi John Bafana Ngubane, mshana wami engimthandayo nengimkhonzile, ngivulele ngingene ngoba ngihamba ngodaba olukhulu oluthinta udadewenu uLinono kanye nezingane zabo u-Uzithelile kanye noHhlanganisani. Mbovu, Somashi, Ngogo zabantu owakwenu uLinono wona ngokuzalela izingane ekhaya. Kodwa umuntu akalahlwa. Nathi masingamlahli* (Buthelezi 2015:1).

'Mbhambhadisi John Bafana Ngubane, my beloved nephew, please open the door for me so that I can get in, I'm here to talk about a serious matter that concerns your sister Linono and her children Uzithelile and Hlanganisani. (Cele calling Bafana by his clan names, *Mbovu, Somashi, Ngogo zabantu*) Linono made a bad decision by conceiving the children while she was still staying at her parent's home. You cannot discard a person. Let's not give up on her.'

What the old man Cele is asking of Bafana is to be part of the children's life and unselfishly help in raising them. His response to the old man's plea is:

2. *'Kwaba umzukuzuku phakathi kukaBafana nomalume uCele kwashuba kubangwa ozohlala nalezi zingane ezishiywa uLinono ekhaya. UBafana wasethi "Sengiphuthumisa umkami emsebenzini kanye nezingane zami esikoleni. Ngiyaxolisa ukuthi ngeke nangebhadi ngikwazi ukukunikeza esinye isikhathi ngoba besingahlelanga. Nanti ikhadi lami nezinombolo zocingo oyongithinta ngalo uma ungidinga."* Washo lokho uBafana wabhaklaza isicabha sema isivakashi sakhe okomgodoyi okuthiwe kuwona, *Phandle!* (Buthelezi 2015:1).

'It was a tough contest between Bafana and his uncle Cele on account who should stay with the children Linono left at home. Bafana said "I'm rushing to take my wife to work and my children to school. I'm sorry I won't be able to afford you another time since we didn't have an appointment. Here is my card with my phone number to use if you will need me." Bafana banged the door and his visitor stood like a dog that was told to go outside.'

From the example above, Bafana's actions can never be described as an epitome of anything that has been done in the spirit of kindness let alone the spirit of *ubuntu*. As a person born and raised in the rural areas, we can attribute this type of behaviour to city life where he is now staying with his wife and children.

Poppie's response to the plea of her in-laws contradicted the elements of *ubuntu* in all respects. The following example demonstrates her utter unwillingness to be of help to her in-laws:

3. *'Mthwalo muni lowo Bafana? Kubuza owakwakhe elindela impendulo isikhashana'* (Buthelezi 2015:50,59).

"What burden is that Bafana?" Asked the wife who was eagerly waiting for an answer.

Bafana's response to his wife's question is an indication of who is calling the shots in this household. Bafana tries to explain as illustrated in the following discourse, but it is apparent that decisions have already been made:

4. *'Cha umalume ubethi masi...masi...masithathe o-Uzithelile noHlanganisani, izingane zikaLino'* (Buthelezi 2015:50).

‘No, my uncle said we needed to take, take, take Uzithelile and Hlanganisani, Lino...children.’

Poppie is persistent with the questions wanting to know what exactly Bafana’s uncle had come to say.

5. *‘Ubethe sizithathe sizisephi lezi zingane?’* (Buthelezi 2015:50).

‘He said we needed to take these children where to?’

Bafana’s answers are not straightforward; it is evident that he also does not concede to what his uncle had come to say.

6. *‘Ubethi masizithathe zizohlala lapha eMlazi ukuze zifunde ngapha ngaseThekwini’* (Buthelezi 2015:50).

‘He said we needed to bring them to stay here in eMlazi so that they go to school this side in Durban’.

The following response shows that Bafana does not have a say in his own home. His wife is the one who makes all the decisions and whose word is final:

7. *‘Habe! Waze wazisikela kwelinonile bo umalume wakho. Ingathi sengiyabona izingane zasemafamu zizohlala lapha ekhaya. Njengamanje sesizama ukugudlukela eLa Lucia noma e-Mhlanga Rocks. Zingaya kanjani izingane zasemafamu ko-La Lucia noma e-Mhlanga Rocks? .....mina angiwona umgqomo kadodi, akungenwa kimi. Kade ngenziwa itubal ligation dade’* (Buthelezi 2015:50,59).

Whoa! Your uncle thinks he is the smart one. Just imagine children from the farms staying with us here. We are trying to move to La Lucia and Mhlanga Rocks. How will the farm children travel from La Lucia and Mhlanga Rocks? I am not a waste bin to throw in all their rubbish. They will never do that to me! I have been taken for granted for too long.

What Bafana’s wife says below demonstrates her personal dislike and irritation at the mention of Bafana’s clan.

8. *'Kukho konke okwenzayo Bafana, uze ukwazi ukuthi mina ngazogana wena, hhayi lonke lolu quqaba lwakini nolwaseMpaphala, nalolu olugcwele KwaMashu naseMalukazi. Angibenameli laba o 'O Mbomvu! Sikhulekile ekhaya.'* (Buthelezi 2015:53)

'In everything you do Bafana, don't forget that I came to this family to be your wife and not the wife of your entire family and those who are filled in KwaMashu and Malukazi. I don't like them these members of your Mbovu clan who come here saying their greetings from outside the house *'Sikhulekile ekhaya'*.

In all her responses towards the family of Bafana, Poppie has not shown any qualities of being helpful, understanding, supportive, cordial and being considerate which are some of characteristics of *ubuntu* but has been unfriendly, haughty, unsociable, scornful, had an exaggerated self-opinion and a high sense of superiority among other things which do not go hand in hand with the spirit of *ubuntu*. Poppie fails to show the respect worthy of a daughter-in-law to Bafana's people. She is aware that Cele and his wife are old and are surviving on pension but is unwilling to assist with the children. She thinks of her family's high status and how they need to upgrade and move to a more beautiful and expensive place. *Ubuntu* encourages people to share the little they have and unselfishly care about each other which Poppie fails to do.

Bafana does not even accommodate Cele for a night. Gana (2007) posits that it is an African culture to welcome visitors always even if they do not announce the intentions of their visit. The reason is that Africans are a hospitable nation (Nkrumah 1975). So, what Bafana does to his uncle is against moral African traditions. Amongst the African moral values is the willingness to show collegiality by providing food to those who needs it, water to the thirsty and most importantly support for the aged (Karenga, 1989).

The treatment that Cele receives from his nephew breaks his heart. He is humiliated and cannot believe that his own blood can treat him like that. The following excerpts illustrate how he reacts after he is chased:

9. *'Pho-ke okaNdosi wayezothi webani kusabele bani, asabelephi? Kwakungathi ukwelinye nje izwe lapho abantu bakhona bekhuluma ulimi angalwazi. Yena wayengazi muntu lapha edolobheni ngaphandle kwakhe lo mfana kadadewabo owayesanda kumkhakhabisa okomgodoyi'* (Buthelezi 2015:3).

‘Who would have Ndosi lamented to and how would they have helped him? It was like he was in another country where people spoke a language unknown to him. He did not know anyone in that town besides his nephew who has just chased him like a dog.’

What Cele experiences is first of its kind. As he is going back home, he is contemplating all that has happened to him. The following extract illustrates that which he thinks about:

10. *‘Wayehamba ekhuluma yedwa, efunga, edemelayisa abuye athule anikine ikhanda; kubonakala ukuthi lukhulu olumvelele. Kuyena le nto ayeyenziwe umntakadadewabo yayibuhlungu ngendlela engechazeke, futhi wayebuye angakholwa nguye lo oxoshwa okwesinxibi ebesizocela imali’* (Buthelezi 2015:4).

‘He was speaking to himself while he was walking alone, cursing, walking back and forth, and shaking his head as it was clear that something catastrophic happened to him. According to him, what his nephew has done to him is excruciating in an unexplainable way and he does not believe that it is him who has been chased away like someone begging for money.’

Cele continues to entertain the bad that has befallen him:

11. *‘Wanikina ikhanda uCele, kubonakala ukuthi lukhulu olwalumphethe kabi. Kuyena yayibuhlungu ngendlela ayengeke akwazi ngisho ukuyichazela omunye umuntu le nto ayeyenziwa umntakadadewabo. Wayezibona ephimiswe okwesikhwehlela esiluhlaza’* (Buthelezi 2015:7).

‘Cele was nodding his head; it was evident that something was stressing him out. He was heartbroken in such a way that he could not explain how bad he was treated by his niece. He felt like a tossed green phlegm.’

Buthelezi (1994) gives us another example by Poppie towards Linono’s children. The Ngubane children, Uzithelile, Hlanganisani, Melody and Euthenasia know of each other’s existence, but they are discouraged by Bafana and Poppie from knowing and bonding with each other. Poppie does not hide the fact that she does not like it when her children spend time with Linono’s children. She despises and is jealous of them. Uzithelile and Hlanganisani also sense the hatred but choose not to dwell much on it. This is evident in Hlanganisani’s words *‘abasizondayo bazokhathala.’* Meaning that those who hate them will eventually get tired. Poppie shows an unwelcoming and rude reaction on the

day of the athletics when the children come to greet her and Bafana. She makes them feel like they do not belong or are not relatives when they are introduced during the sports day. She says:

12. *'Ngiyababona abantwana basemapulazini. Ubaba wakho usayothenga ukudla. Ake uhlukane nabo uyohlala laphaya ukuze ngikunike imithi yakho yokugijima'* (Buthelezi 2015:164).

'I can see the farm kids. Your father went out to buy food. Just move away from them and go sit there so that I can give you your running medicine.'

Both the girls are running in the competitions on this day and as a parent Poppie is supposed to show them *ubuntu* by sharing food and other necessities that are needed by athletes. She chooses to discriminate against them.

Buthelezi (1994) uses the character of Madonsela who Cele's friend is, to describe how life in the urban areas is like especially in eMlazi. The environment that the Ngubanes live in contributes to how they treat each other and other people. The following examples are a variety of descriptions of eMlazi that Madonsela gives:

13. *'Uyabona Ndosi lapha emadolobheni wonke umuntu uziphilela impilo yakhe. Akaxhumene nomunye umuntu ngaphandle kokuba lowo muntu eyisisebenzi sakhe, yikhasimende lakhe, nguthisha wakhe, ngummeli wakhe, ngudokotela wakhe, ngunesi wakhe noma ngumfundisi wakhe. Uma abantu bexhumene kule ndawo, yazi ukuthi kukhona bobabili abakuzuzayo kulokhu kuxhumana. Njengoba imizi iklelile nje ko-B.A abazani laba bantu. Wena wakontuthu ungekohlwe abantu bengomakhelwane, uthi bayathandana, futhi bayazana, kanti ukhe phansi. Umthetho omkhulu okwamanje kulaba bantu ngothi 'Wothanda imoto yakho njengoba uzithanda wena'* (Buthelezi 2015:10-11).

'You see Ndosi, every person in the urban areas is living their own life. People are not connected to other people unless if the other person is their employee, their customer, their teacher, their lawyer, their doctor, their nurse, or their pastor. If you see people connected in this place just know that they are both benefitting in that connection. The people at the lined-up houses in the B.A section do not know each other. You as a person from the rural areas will think that the neighbours love and know each other but you will be mistaken. The great law with these people is the one that says 'Love your car as you love yourself.'

He continues to give his own perspective of people who are living in cities such as Durban. This is illustrated by the following example:

14. *'Ngisho lokho Ndosini. Laba bantu abazani, abanakani, abahambelani, abananelani, futhi ababingelelani. Uma nje ungahle ubuze omunye wabo ukuthi konje ngubani umakhelwane wakho kumbe loya mlisa owakhe ngenhla kwakho, ngeke uyithole impendulo ecacile. Impendulo ongayithola nje kungaba ngumbuzo othi 'Usho loya ohamba nge-BMW noma usho lo oganwe unesi? Lapha imizi yaziwa ngokuthi kukwanesi, kukwamabhalane, kukwathisha noma kukwammeli. Kuyenzeka futhi kube nemizi ebizwa ngabesifazane, abadume ukudlula abayeni babo' (Buthelezi 2015:11).*

'That is what I am telling you Ndosini. These people do not know each other, don't have interest in one another, do not check on each other, do not have an open hand for giving and do not greet each other. If you can ask them who their neighbour is or the guy who lives above them, you won't get a clear answer. The answer that you can get is this question' You mean the one who is driving a BMW or the one in a relationship with a nurse? In this place the houses are known as the house of the nurse, administrator, teacher, or lawyer. Sometimes you can find houses that are named after women who are more famous than their husbands.'

Cele, who wants to know more about the place asks more questions about the type of children that are found in such places. This is illustrated by the following questions asked by Cele:

15. *'Uthi izingane zisekhona yini kuleli zwe? Bakhona yini abadala? Konke kufuhlulelwe ndawonye kulo mhhume wempucuko. Igebe phakathi komuntu omdala nengane kade laqedwa. Iningi lezingane kade zangena ngesivinini ezingeni labadala zaya ngale kwalelo zinga ngezikuxoxayo, ngezikwaziyo nezikwenzayo' (Buthelezi 2015:11).*

'Are there any children in this place? Are there any adults? Everything is entangled in this modern cave. The gap between an older person and a child was long demolished. Many children quickly entered adulthood by what they speak, know and do.'



Cele continues to ask questions about what is happening in such places when death has occurred. The following explanation illustrates what is happening during death in these places:

16. *'Cha bo, usuthini phela Ndosi, nezifo azibahlanganisi. Kuthi uma omunye eshonelwe kuthunyelwe izingane ukuba ziyothola ukuthi abashonelwe abakwabani'... Abantu abezi emingcwabeni ngoba ishayisana nemidlalo yebhola ku-TV kanye nemishado'* (Buthelezi 2015: 12-13).

'No way Ndosi, what are you saying, even death cases do not make them to meet with each other. When someone has a death case these people send their children to go and search for information about whose family did the late person belong to'... People don't attend funerals if the funeral coincide with soccer matches on TV or weddings.'

We find Bafana and his wife Poppie being the characters that have been used by Buthelezi to portray the issue of lack of humanness in this novel. These characters have been aptly chosen. Bafana shows lack of courage to deal with issues that need him as head of the family to take decisions. Hence, he acts in ways that always give his wife the final word. Their big, beautiful house is set as a place which they think cannot accommodate uncultured people like Cele, Bafana's uncle from rural areas such as Mpaphala.

When people lack sympathy, love, care, and empathy towards one another, the whole society is affected. People drift from the spirit of helping each other to the spirit of greed, selfishness, and cold heartedness. When these negative traits manifest themselves suffering, hate, jealousy and humiliation appear. Madonsela has been effectively used by the writer to explain the different lifestyles of people living in rural areas and those living in cities. The different lifestyles as explained by Madonsela make Cele understand why his nephew, Bafana behaved in the manner he did.

#### **4.4.1.2 Lack of respect**

In African cultures, which are in the most patriarchal, respect by female partners is of utmost importance. It is a sign of a solid marriage. According to Darwall (1977:37) respect is an attitude or esteem for a person, things, institution, authorities as a

consolidated disposition to respond to oneself or others which is prompted by a previous identification and evaluation of specific properties. This attitude of respect includes an array of dimensions like cognitive, affective, motivational, and evaluative dimensions that need the regard and sensitivity of both addressee of respect and of the property/ies that make/s her worthy of a respectful response (Dillon 2007: 202–203).

Darwall (1977:38) mentions the following as the characteristics of respect:

- the presence of two subjects, i.e., the respecer and the respected object (either animate or inanimate)
- directive-directed to a particular person or a thing.
- evaluative-can be assessed towards some specific properties.

In her study De Kadt (1998:183) emphasises the fact that in *Zulu culture*, children and young people are expected to adhere to the respect strategies of *inhlonipho* that separate the young from the adults. Raum (1973:5) distinguishes between the different behavioural aspects of respect in *Zulu culture*. She mentions the respect of the in-laws by a bride, respect of manner of action and speaking, respect of children to their parents, respect by avoidance of certain places, dressing in a specific way respect of authority and respect by the wife to the husband.

In this novel, Buthelezi (2015) has demonstrated how different behavioural aspects of respect has deteriorated among the Ngubanes. For example, in *Zulu culture* there is a manner of address by the bride to her in-laws. The manner of dressing by *umakoti* when the in-laws are around is supposed to be decent especially when the elderly male members are around. Poppie does not show any form of respect to her in-laws, by manner of speech or dress and is adamant that she would not want to change her way of dressing just to show respect to her in-laws. This is illustrated in the following example:

17. *'Bengingeke ngishintshe Bafana. Phela kukwami lapha. Angizikutshelwa ngabakini ukuthi ngigqokeni emzini wami. Ngahlonipha ngokwanele eMpaphala, ngilokhu ngifukuzela ngamatshali lishisa ilanga laseShowe ngoba kuthiwa mangihloniphe njengomakoti. Uma umalume wakho engayazi ithilekisudi, kuhle ayazi. Mina bengifuna kabi ukuza khona lapho ekhishini nethilekisudi yami kodwa ngabuye ngazikhuza ngabona ukuthi angiyeke izinto zasemafamu*

*zingaze zihambe zikhuluma ngami esitimeleni size siyongena eShowe'*  
(Buthelezi 2015:49).

'I am not going to change Bafana. This is my house. I will not be told by your people on how to dress in my house. I did show my respects at Mpaphala, busy wearing a bride blanket while the Showe sun was scotching hot because they said I must be respectful as a bride. If your uncle does not know a tracksuit, then he better know it. I wanted to come to the kitchen wearing my tracksuit but then I reprimanded myself because these farm things will talk about me until the train reaches Showe.'

The fact that Poppie calls Cele this 'thing' shows that she has no respect for the elderly.

In Zulu culture it is known that the men, as opposed to women, are in authority and are heads of their families (Mogotlane *et al.* 2014:39) and Mulaudzi (2005:335). Bafana leaves his marital home when life with his wife Poppie becomes unbearable and finds himself co-habiting with Alice. He also experiences repetitive disrespect as a man by his live-in partner, Alice.

After Bafana wrecks Alice's car and that of a neighbour, Alice does not hesitate to call Bafana *isiphukuphuku* in public, a derogatory term for an idiot in Zulu. Not only does Bafana tolerate being called names but he is also treated as a child or maid by Alice because of his financial situation.

The following are instances of some of the orders Bafana gets as a man from Alice:

18. '*Letha ukhamba lobulawu Ngubane*' (Buthelezi 2015:267).

'Bring the medicinal charm.'

19. '*Qhelisa ibhodwe eziko liyasha*' (Buthelezi 2015:267).

'Shift the pot from the stove because it is burning.'

20. '*Ubovala amakhethini uma sekuhlwa*' (Buthelezi 2015:267).

'Close the curtains when it is dark.'

21. *'Angithandi ukuba ngiphindaphinde into eyodwa'* (Buthelezi 2015:267)

'I don't like repeating myself.'

22. *'Ngubane, ngathi izicathulo zakho zingahlali phansi kombhede. Akukhona eWema'* (Buthelezi 2015:267)

'Ngubane, I said your shoes must not stay under the bed. This is not a compound house.'

In the above instances, Alice speaks to Bafana as if he is a small child who cannot think for himself. Bafana is further humiliated by Alice by making him wash her underwear. This is unheard of in *Zulu culture*. It is the lowest form of disrespect.

23. *'Sengiyahamba ngisayopholisa ikhanda kwamfowethu. Izingubo bese ngiziqalile emshinini wokuhlamba izingubo. Ubozikhapha bese uzifaka emshinini wokuzomisa. Ezinga-ayinwa ubozigoqa uzibeke ezindaweni zazo, kuthi ezi-ayinwayo uzi-ayine bese uziphindisele ezindaweni zazo. Lezi ezingaphansi yizingubo zami zangaphansi kanye namahembe akho amhlophe'* (Buthelezi 2015:268).

'I am going to my brother's place to clear my head. I have started putting clothes in the washing machine. Take them out and put them in the dryer. Put the non-ironable clothes in their place and iron the ones that need to be ironed and put them in their place. The ones underneath are my underwear and your white shirts.'

To Mgwazeni who is MaMthimkhulu's son, Bafana is known as Johnny. Mgwazeni also does not show any respect for an elderly person who is her mother's partner. This is evident when Prisca who is Mgwazeni's sister gets involved in a car accident in Bafana's car, the Lexus. Mgwazeni goes to Bafana's place to confront him about his carelessness with the car keys. Mgwazeni is agitated and questions why Bafana would want to sue Prisca. His anger is demonstrated in the excerpt below:

24. *'Wayesephendukeinja ebomvu uMgwazeni ethi ngeke ubaba uJohnny ethi ethandana nomama, akwazi ukumangalela uPrisca ngokuthatha iLexus. UMgwazeni watheleka lapho kusebenza khona uJohnny wambuza ukuthi*

*wayengagcini ngani izikhiye zemoto endaweni lapho izingane zazingeke zizithole khona'* (Buthelezi 2015:214).

'Mgwazeni was livid, saying that it won't happen that Johnny who was his mother's lover is pressing charges for Prisca for taking the Lexus. Mgwazeni went to Johnny's workplace and asked him why he did not put the car keys where the children would have not reached them.'

When Prisca and her boyfriend wreck Bafana's car, Mgwazeni threatens Bafana by saying that he must not open a criminal case otherwise, he is going to die. At the end he says:

25. '*Uma ingane yakubo ike yashona, uBafana uzoyiphelezela.*' (Buthelezi 2015:214)

'If his younger sister car die, Bafana will follow suit.'

Mgwazeni strengthens his death claim by giving Bafana a time span of three days to make a decision that will make Mgwazeni happy. The following example highlights how serious Mgwazeni is about his threats:

26. '*Kakwamukelanga lokho uMgwazeni, wathi unikeza uJohnny izinsuku ezintathu zokuba asule icala uma engafuni ukuba kwesulwe yena*' (Buthelezi, 2015:214).

'Mgwazeni did not accept that, he said he will give Johnny days to retract the case or else he will be 'dealt' with.'

This manner of address to an elderly person demonstrates how rude Mgwazeni is to Bafana. Being rude to elderly people is not morally acceptable in *Zulu culture*.

Alice and her son Mgwazeni are characters who have been used in the novel to impel the problem of lack of respect. They both show utter disrespect towards Bafana in speech and action. The environment Mgwazeni and Alice live in might have had an impact in the way they behave or treats Bafana. Mgwazeni, for example, lives in Newcastle, Madadeni.

Buthelezi (2015) describes Newcastle as follows:

27. *'EMadadeni impilo yayishesha, ibucayi. Uhhaha kwakunguhhaha. Uma ungabhekile, imbibizane yayihlala emakhaleni. Kwakunomoya waseGoli kakhulu eMadadeni.'* (Buthelezi 2015:201)

'Life in Madadeni was fast, very dangerous. A criminal remained a criminal. If one was not careful, they got a powerful clap instantly. There was too much of the Johannesburg spirit in Madadeni'.

The women of Madadeni are also vicious towards men. They target men with cars and money. The following passage demonstrates their behaviour towards men:

28. *'Ukuhamba komuntu ongaganiwe ngeLexus kuyingozi, ikakhulu endaweni lapho abesifazane bezazi izinyoni, nemigibe yokuzicupha.'* *'Ukugula kwakhe kwakuvama ukuba kumngenise esibhedlela lapho ayethola khona impatho yobukhosi kubahlengikazi bemkhithisela izithelo, bemlethela izimbali kanye nezincwadi zokufunda. Noma iningi labahlengikazi lalazi ukuthi uJohnny Bragger indoda yomuntu, lalingakunaki lokho, lona lizithokozela ngaleyo nkeshezane yamanembe entokomalo elaliyikhothoza kuJohnny Lexus.'* (Buthelezi 2015:199)

'A ride by bachelor who was driving a Lexus was dangerous, especially where women knew their targets and how to lure them. His sickness usually led him to the hospital where he got a king's treatment from the nurses, bringing him fruits, flowers, and books to read. Even though many nurses knew that Johnny Bragger was someone's man, they did not care, all they were interested in is the little entertainment they could get from Johnny Lexus.'

Buthelezi (2015) also outlines the influence parents have in their children when it comes to disrespecting elderly people. Poppie's actions and manner of speaking towards her helper influence how her son behaves towards the helper. This is evident in the following examples:

29. *'Ungasasho. Yayingidina kabi indaba ka-'yihlo' neka-'nyoko' yinhlamba Melly. Wasisiza umama wamkhuza ekusebenziseni leli gama. Khona ukumthethisa kukamama ngokusebenzisa ulimi oluqokeme uma exoxa nala maqaba akubo kwamgoba ugogo, wayazi indawo yakhe. Abantu bayakhohlwa kalula indawo yabo.'* (Buthelezi 2015:87)

'Don't mention it. This thing of 'yihlo' and 'nyoko' really irritates me because it is an insult, Melly. Thanks to mom for reprimanding her for using that word. Being

reprimanded by mom for using this lowly language she uses with her barbarian friends puts her in the right place. People tend to forget their place very easily.

30. *'Lento yakhe yokuba nguye ositshela ukuba senzeni, nini, kanjani kodwa ebe engazi lutho ngesikole kuyangicasula Melly. Angasitshelani ngezesikole gfv eumuntu ongazange aye esikoleni? (Buthelezi 2015:86). 'Uma mina ngiqoqa isitsha ebengidlela kuso, sizosebenzani isisebenzi salapha ekhaya? 'Sengisho kahle manje uma engithuma ngithi angiphumeleli ukwenza lokho' (Buthelezi 2015:88).*

'This thing of hers telling us what to do, when and how while she does not know anything about school really irritates me, Melly. What can a person who has never been to school tell us? If I collect the dishes what will the helper do? When she sends me somewhere I bluntly refuse and tell her no I can't'.

Poppie's manner of speaking towards her husband is disrespectful according to *Zulu culture*. A woman does not question or challenge the authority of her husband. Her behavior is illustrated in the example below:

31. *'Kahle ngobubaba bakho Bafana. Kade sadlula kuleyo ndawo yobubaba. Sikhathele ngabantu besilisa besigabisela ngobubaba babo. Kuleli khaya lethu siqhuba ngobuholi nokuphatha okwabelanayo. Angithi kunjalo Mbovu? Kubuza uMaMthimkhulu ebheka umyeni wakhe ngokweqisa amehlo ngaphezu kwezibuko' (Buthelezi 2015:182).*

'Stop with this manhood thing of yours Bafana. We have passed that era long time ago. We are tired of men who brag about their manhood. In this household we use the shared leadership style. Is it not so Mbovu? MaMthimkhulu asking her husband while rolling her eyes in her spectacles'.

Bafana's response shows that he is agitated by his wife disrespectful manner after their discussion about the car was bought without his permission.

32. *'Khona kunjalo kodwa lokhu akukuniki igunya lokuba uchanase' (Buthelezi 2015:182).*

'That is true, but that does not give you authority to do as you please'

Her response is:

33. *'Angidingi ukuba kube nomuntu onginika igunya mina. Ngiyazithathela amagunya ngokubona kwami'* (Buthelezi 2015:182).

'I do not want anyone to give me approval. I give myself approval as I see fit.

The following example is a strong indication that Poppie wants to do things on her own without the approval of her husband:

34. *"Ngicele ini Bafana?" Ucele ukuba uthengele izingane imoto" He-he-he! Musa ukungihlolela ukulanywa nomama esazifela Bafana. Ayi suka. Izingane zakho zizocela, nami futhi ngicele kuwe ukwenza into? Ngingafa nini nje ngilokhu ngeluswa, ngikhungwa yimithetho engu-101? Uthi bekufanele ngicele?* (Buthelezi 2015:183).

'What must I ask Bafana? "Ask to be bought a car" Huh-huh-huh! Stop patronising me Bafana. Get out of here. Your children will ask, and me too I must ask from you? I can die being entangled by 101 laws. You are saying I should have asked?'

Furthermore, Bafana separates with his wife and gets involved with MaMthunzi, a nurse who is a single parent and has three children. In this relationship, Bafana does not marry MaMthunzi but chooses to cohabit with her. Although they are cohabitation, their family life has many challenges that are caused by family instability which affects moral values. For example, MaMthunzi fails to discipline her three children and that strains her relationship with Bafana. However, Bafana tries to instil some discipline but to no avail. This is illustrated by the following passage:

35. *'Wabutha waqoqaqoqa okaMbomvu ezama ukungenisa lo muzi wakhe wesibili endleleni kodwa kwanhlanga zimuka nomoya. UMaMthunzi wayengeyena neze umuntu okwazi ukukhuza izingane. Noma into eyibona ukuthi ayilungile, wayenqena ukuzwisa izingane zakhe ubuhlungu, ikakhulu ngoba zazizwa ubuhlungu bokungabinababa'* (Buthelezi 2015:201).

'The Mbomvu man tried to assemble and put his second family in order, but it was all in vain. MaMthunzi was never a person who knew how to reprimand children. Even though she could see that something was wrong, she was hesitant in hurting them, especially since they were hurting from being fatherless.'



As a person who cohabits with their mother, he feels that he has no authority to discipline them, and this leads to the children disrespecting him. Mgwazeni who is the first born to MaMthunzi even calls Bafana by a derogatory title:

36. '*Baba ojola nomama.*' (Buthelezi 2015:205)

'The man who is dating my mother'.

Buthelezi (2015) uses the character of Bafana's life experiences to demonstrate how people that are close to one can exude morally unacceptable behaviours especially when someone has a low status in the community. Bafana starts by disrespecting, shaming his elderly uncle and the entire family. He shames some of the Zulu traditions. Later on, in life when he experiences problems in his marriage and loses his job, he becomes a victim of degradation and is made to taste his own medicine. His wife, children and later his romantic partners and their families degrade him as a person in a shameful way. He experiences disrespect and threats, is shamed.

#### **4.4.1.3 Lack of moral values in child upbringing**

Child-upbringing or parenting is the rearing of a child or children, in particular the care, love, and guidance given by a parent. It includes the methods, techniques and other activities that are used in the rearing of children (Saovakon *et al.*, 2011). According to Addai-Mensah (2020:96) upbringing refers to the treatment and instruction received by a child from its parents throughout its childhood. Upbringing is the way a child is raised or the lessons, instructions, and teachings that his or her parents' impact. In simple terms, it is the care and training of young ones. In the African traditional societies, it is the responsibility of the whole community to informally guide a child to a growing individual throughout of their existence. On the contrary, modern-day parents provide some informal guidance to their children (Saovakon *et al.*, 2011).

Gyekye (1996) mentions the following components as characteristics of child upbringing/parenting:

- Affectionate - showing fondness and love.
- Supportive - providing help when it is needed.
- Respectful - polite behaviour towards a person

- Teaching - passing knowledge from one person to the other.
- Responsible - accountability towards given responsibilities

In black societies, family values have changed from that were practised by traditional families where people used to have extended families as the main stronghold of family life where communal life prevailed to individualistic lifestyle where the individual is totally independent of his or lineage. The traditional life has changed because of factors affecting nuclear families. Challenges to the nuclear families have increased Pretorius (1998:56) and Giddens (1993:53) agree that the current disintegration of family life is because the modern family has become very vulnerable.

*Impi Yabomdabu Isethunjini* (2015) provides an ideal example of a disintegrated family and unpleasant child rearing methods in one household. The instability in the Ngubane family leads to a multiple of morally decaying values. Bafana who is the head of the family, his wife Poppie and their children Melody and Euthenasia do not know their roles in the family. Bafana as the head of the family fails to lead his family. Parenting is a process that requires interpersonal skills and makes emotional demands on all parties. Parents can learn parenting methods from their parents or guardians while choosing which methods work for their own family (Santrock, 2005). The children were affected by their family's lifestyle, and this leads them to be arrogant and audacious. Euthenasia displays his arrogancy and audacity. There is an incident where he steals a teacher's car and is very defiant when he is approached by his father. The following example illustrates his cockiness:

37. *'Uyithatheleni imoto kathisha ungayicelanga? Ubengeke anginike ukube ngiyicelile. Kodwa kungakuhluphi ukuthi ngihambe ngemoto kaMiss Hawkins. Phela bengiziholela. U-Miss Hawkins ungithuma njalo ukuba ngimenzele lokhu nalokhu okungathi mina ngiyisisebenzi sakhe. Namuhla ngithe make ngithathe ibhonasi ngalokhu kungithuma kwakhe. Futhi naye ngimtshelile ngenkathi ngibuya ukuthi ngiyithatheleni imoto yakhe'* (Buthelezi 2015:117).

'Why did you take the teacher's car without asking for it? She wouldn't give it to me even if I would have asked. Don't be bothered that I used Miss Hawkins car. It was a way of rewarding myself. Miss Hawkins likes sending me to do her

errands as if I'm his employee. I thought of rewarding myself today for all my troubles. I also told her why I took her car.'

His arrogance is also evident in his dealings with the Ngubane helpers. The two examples will illustrate his arrogancy. The first one is directed to MaXakushe:

38. *'Sengisho kahle manje uma engithuma ngithi angiphumeleli ukwenza lokho.'*  
(Buthelezi 2015:88)  
'I bluntly tell her no if she sends me to do anything.'

The second example is directed to the second helper MaNdebele:

39. *'Wayethi yena akakuboni ukuthi yini uMaNdebele angasale eseqedela ukugeza izitsha uma ekwazi ukuziqoqa. Uma kungenjalo, kwakusuka omkhulu umsindo kuphikiswana ngokuthi ngubani ozigeze izolo. Kwala ngisho uNgubane esenze uhlelo lokuba uMelly azigeze kusukela ngoLwesithathu, ngoLwesine, ngoLwesihlanu noMgqibelo, kwakuthi uma kuyizinsuku zika-Euthenasia abike ibuzi, acele ukuba enzelwe ngoba unethumba ozwaneni, noma uphethwe yikhanda'* (Buthelezi 2015:180).

'He said that he did not see the reason why MaNdebele did not finish washing the dishes if she can collect them. When that did not happen, a huge argument will resume about who washed the dishes the previous day. Even when Ngubane tried to draw up a schedule so that Melly can wash the dishes from Wednesday, Thursday, Friday, Saturday, Euthenasia would come with excuses on his days like he has a boil in his finger, or a headache.'

Bafana and Poppie's inability to raise their children amicably leads to several arguments on how they should raise and discipline them. This behaviour causes a lot of tension between the parents. This is illustrated by the following incident:

40. *'Langalimbe ezibuyela emsebenzini uNgubane wathola imoto ayengayazi iphakathi egalaji. Wacabanga ukuthi mhlawumbe ngeyesivakashi yize izivakashi zakwaNgubane zazilala emahhotela'* (Buthelezi 2015:181).

'One day while he was coming from work, he discovered a car he did not recognise in the garage. He thought maybe it was from a visitor although he knew that the Ngubane visitors stayed in a hotel.'

Another aspect that Buthelezi (2015) uses to highlight the issue of moral decay is how the characters in the novel look down on those they consider backward or low in socioeconomic status.

Oakes & Rossi (2003:769) defines socio-economic status as a construct that reflects one's access to collectively desired resources, be they material goods, money, power, friendship networks, health care, leisure time, or educational opportunities. According to Smith & Kingston (1997:192) the following elements are the characteristics of low socio-economic status:

- Resources – resources that are not available or easily accessible to a poor person.
- Wealth – less money, income or from other resources.
- Health – no access or less access for health that cause one to frail.

In the novel, MaXakushe the domestic worker for the Ngubanes is introduced. She is a single woman supporting her children in uMzimkhulu. She is illiterate and relies on Euthenasia to write letters to her children back home. Euthenasia is the one who sends money by post office to the children of MaXakushe. For four years Euthenasia has been stealing money from her and writing incorrect information in the letters. MaXakushe had courage to report to Bafana about what Euthenasia did and how it affected her children back home. Bafana is sympathetic to her and wants the boy to pay for his actions. The problem begins when Poppie is informed of her son's actions. She is furious at MaXakushe for not personally informing her as the woman of the house. The following extract illustrates her anger towards MaXakushe:

41. *'Kuwe kulungile ukuba uMaXakushe angeqe mina nkosikazi yalapha ekhaya ayohleba ngezingane zami kuwe, besephuma nezindaba zalapha ekhaya eyozifafazela kuwonkewonke uMzimkhulu oseMlazi. Akabongi UMaXakushe ngakho konke engimenzele khona. Kimi uthi kuhle konke, kuwe uthi uEuthy ukhwabanisa imali yakhe... Wena njengamanje sale usuyoqoqa izingubo zakho. Ngizokuhambisa esiteshini eMgungundlovu. Isitimela sakho siphuma ngo 11:15'* (Buthelezi 2015:126).

'I see that it is okay with you that MaXakushe undermines me as the woman of the house and gossip about my children to you, then tells the whole of Mzimkhulu in eMlazi our family business. MaXakushe is ungrateful for everything I have done for her. She told me that that everything is okay, but she told you that Euthy

is swindling her money...Go and pack your bags right now. I'm going to take you to Mgungundlovu station. Your train leaves at 11:15'.

She unfairly dismisses the old lady from her job, tells her to pack her bags, and takes her to the train station. MaXakushe is like a second mother to Poppie's children, and she is not afforded the opportunity to say goodbye to Bafana and the children. The old lady needs the job to support her children back home. Firing her on the spot is morally wrong. One big challenge is that households that are headed by women often have more people to support especially children and have few resources to do so (Hindson ,2003).

Euthenasia is a character that has been used to heighten the failure by parents to instill moral values in their children. Nowhere in the novel do we come across a situation where Euthenasia's parents confront him over his on acts for violating their standards of behaviour. His mother always declares allegiance with his son. Their domestic worker even loses her employment because Poppie does not regard what Euthenasia did as malpractice.

#### **4.4.1.4 Theft**

Bernard (2020) defines theft as the physical removal of an object that is capable of being stolen without the consent of the owner and with the intention of depriving the owner of it permanently. Characteristics of theft are:

- Taking without permission or consent
- No intention of bringing back
- Removal of the property

In the novel the two young people, Prisca who is Bafana's partner's daughter connives with her boyfriend Nkebelele to steal Bafana's Lexus. The following highlights how their plan unfolds:

42. *'Behlukana oPrisca noNkebelele bethembisene nge-Lexus. Wayecula usuku lonke ngakusasa uNkebelele azi ukuthi namuhla uzogibela i-Lexus. Ingaphakathi lakhe lalithi "Fika ntambama Lexus". Lokhu kusasa kwamenza wanomusa epha onke amakhasimende amalahle igwaxaza nobhansela. Kwathi kusihlwa ngoLwesine, basondela ku-Lexus oPrisca nesoka lakhe. Wavula umnyango*

*wangaphambili uPrisca wasevula owangemuva ukuze angene uNkebelele'* (Buthelezi 2015:208).

'Both Prisca and Nkebelele parted ways while they promised each other about the Lexus. Deep down inside, Nkebelele was saying "come tomorrow evening". The following day he was generous towards his customers giving them more coal and extra coal. On that Thursday evening, Prisca and her boyfriend came closer to the Lexus. Prisca opened the front door and then opened the back door so that Nkebelele can get inside.'

Unfortunately, both the pregnant Prisca and Nkebelele were in a car accident which left them badly injured to an extent that Prisca was brain damaged. These characters, Prisca and Nkebelele effectively give a boost to the problem of theft and therefore intensify the issue of moral degeneration in the novel.

#### **4.4.1.5 Alcohol abuse**

Ringold *et al.* (2006:2100) define alcoholism (alcohol dependency) as a more severe pattern of drinking that includes the problems of alcohol abuse plus persistent drinking despite obvious physical, mental, and social problems caused by alcohol.

As described by Morse & Flavin (1992:1035) the characteristics of alcoholism include:

- Continuous or periodic impaired control over drinking
- Preoccupation with alcohol
- Use of alcohol despite adverse consequences
- Distortions in thinking, most notably denial.

Belcher & Benda (2006:148) posits that being intoxicated can lead to being involved in fights and other violent behaviours. In the novel, when Bafana's problems become too much, he resorts to alcohol which leads to alcohol addiction. In chapter 11 of the novel the Ngubanes stop going to the psychologist and 2 years after that they start arguing more and more and that leads to Bafana consuming more alcohol. This is exemplified by the following passage:

43. *'Ngemuva kweminyaka emibili abakwaNgubane bengasayi kuDkt Mdlalose zaya ngokuya zazinika amandla izingxabano lapha emzini wakwaNgubane.*

*noma mangithi emzini kaMthimkhulu N.kanye noJohn Mbhabhadisi Ngubane. Noma usokhaya nowakwakhe bekhona ekhaya, kwakuthulwa kungathi kufiwe, UMthimkhulu N. ezifundela izincwadi ezinkulu ethi uyazilungiselela azokufundisa noma wenza ama-assignments ase-UNISA. UNgubane yena wayehoba ngaphansi kwephephandaba nebhodlela lewayini noma likabhiya, amachalaha akhe edamame emkhotsha isandla’ (Buthelezi 2015:176).*

‘After not consulting Dr Mdlalose for two years, the Ngubanes started to argue more and more. Even when both the head of the family and his wife were at home, they stayed mute. Mthimkhulu N read her big books in preparations for her lessons, or she became busy with her UNISA assignments. Bafana became engulfed with his newspaper while drinking his bottle of wine and beer while the dogs were busy licking his hands.’

Their marital problems escalated, and Bafana found it difficult to deal with life challenges without the help of alcohol. Alcohol Consumption, use of tranquilliser, smoking and use of narcotics can often be caused by the inability to cope with stress, exhaustion, anxiety, and pressures of life (Van der Merwe, 2004: 21).

Colman (2001:22) in the Dictionary of Psychology defines *alcohol* abuse as “a form of substance abuse associated with drinking alcohol leading to serious problems of functioning at home, school, or work.” Just like any addiction, the results of alcohol abuse are direr and sometimes fatal. Ringold *et al.* (2006:2100) mentions the following consequences of alcohol abuse:

- Dereliction of work, school, or home responsibilities.
- Legal problems that are associated with alcohol.
- Drinking in situations that are physically dangerous.
- Social or relationship problems emanating from the effects of alcohol.

Bafana’s addiction leads him develop cirrhosis which is a chronic liver disease usually caused by alcohol or hepatitis. He is operated because of this problem and the doctors advise him to quit alcohol otherwise it will kill him. The following excerpt illustrates the severity of his condition:

44. *'Babesho kuzo zonke izibhedlela ukuthi isibindi sikaJohn Ngubane sase sivuthwa ngenxa yophuzo. Wayephethwe yisifo sesibindi, isifo sezidakwa. Wake wahlinzwa uNgubane ngoba kukhishwa amatshe esingcinanyongweni. Bonke odokotela babemeluleka ukuba ahlukane nezimbodlela, naye athembise. Ngenye inkathi wayebuziba utshwala amasontshwana. Wayebuyela kubo ngenkani uma eke wabuyeka. Futhi isimo sasike sibe sibi kangangoba uNgubane wayehluleka ukuphenduka isingenhla uma ehamba. Wayephendukisa okwebhasi lona liphenduka lonke uma lifuna ukubheka endaweni ethile. Abaluleki bezenhlalakahle babemtshela ukuthi uma engahlukani nophuzo, isibindi sakhe sobalukhuni njengetshe. Umzimba kaNgubane wawubokozela okwethanga elibolayo ngenxa yamanzi emzimbeni. Umlando wophuzo olunamandla wawugeleza kubo bonke ubuso'* (Buthelezi 2015:199-200).

'In every hospital they were saying Johnny's liver was damaged because of alcohol. He was suffering from a liver disease, an alcoholics disease. He was once operated so that his gallstones can be removed. All the doctors advised him to stop drinking alcohol and he would promise to quit. Sometimes he would stop drinking alcohol for a few weeks. He would resume drinking again once he has quit. His situation once became so bad in such a way that Ngubane could not turn his upper body when he walked. He would turn like a bus. The welfare advisors told him that if he does not stop drinking alcohol his liver will be so hard like a stone. Ngubane's body was so soft like a rotten pumpkin because of the water in his body. His alcohol abuse was evident in his face'.

Bafana's drinking addiction also hindered his matured parental decision-making skill. This is demonstrated in the following excerpt:

46. *'Ubuhlobo phakathi kukaNgubane noMgwazeni bandiswa ngukuthi uma esekhaya uMgwazeni, wayekuthanda ukuba aphuze noNgubane. Bobabili babechitha esiningi isikhathi ezinkantini kanye nasemajoyintini'* (Buthelezi 2015:205).

'The relationship between Ngubane and Mgwazeni became stronger when Mgwazeni was home, he loved drinking with Ngubane. Both spent a lot of time in tarvens and drinking spots.'



Bafana is not setting a good example by frequenting alcohol drinking joints with his partner's son. Bafana's alcohol abuse also disturbs his dealings with the new family at Madadeni. There is a lack of communication between him and the others even though they live in the same house. His coming back late at night exacerbates the problem of communication among the family members. The example below testifies to that situation:

46. '*Bebangakhulumisani nobaba uJohnny. Uphuzo lwanda kuJohnny waba ngumuntu obuya ngelesi-9 esezolala. Kwakuthi kushaya ele-10 abe kade ezilalele*' Buthelezi 2015:206).

'They were not speaking to each other with Uncle Johnny. His alcohol drinking increased, and Johnny became a person who came home at about 9 pm to sleep. At about 10pm he was asleep.'

In applying the symbolic interactionism perspective in the discussion of what takes place in the novel *Impi Yabomdabu Isethunjini* by JC Dlamini, it needs to be emphasised that the discussion looks at how individuals or rather characters in the story act within society and examine the meanings they derive from social their interactions. These meanings are managed and transformed through an interpretive process that people use to make sense of, and handle, the objects that constitute their social worlds. The characters are seen taking the various meanings of moral degeneration, such as lack *ubuntu*, lack of respect, lack of discipline, lack of moral values in child upbringing, theft, and alcohol abuse. These objects which have caused conflicts in the interactions drive the story from the beginning when Cele, who is the uncle of Bafana, the main character, comes to confront him about taking over the raising of his sister's children. The interaction between the various characters propels the story forward. Without the interaction, which has been constructed in a manner that it always heightens conflict when characters interact, there can be no story.

As indicated in the theory this meaning arises out of the social interactions of the characters in the story with one another. Bafana does not accede to his uncle's request because of his marital situation and the fact that their lifestyle is different from that of people like Cele who live in rural areas. Bafana's refusal to accede to the request exacerbates the conflict, which is heightened by Bafana's wife, Poppie not to have anything to do with her in-laws. For Blumer (1969), symbolic interactionism was simply

‘the peculiar and distinctive character of interaction as it takes place between human beings’ in the story.

In summarising Blumer’s premises and their application to this novel, it can be said that: (1) the characters in the story being acted toward the objects of moral degeneration based on the meanings that the objects of things have for them. Cele thought it is fitting for Bafana to raise his sister’s children whom she bore out of wedlock. This becomes a meaning from which all the aspects of moral degeneration arise; (2) the meaning of things is derived from, or arises out of, the social interaction that one has with others. Cele approaches Bafana to discuss the issue of his sister’s children only to be coldly received and for his wife also to show great disrespect for her in-laws; (3) meanings are handled in, and modified through, an interpretive process used by a person in dealing with the things they encounter. In interpreting their interaction, all the characters Buthelezi uses in his novel deal with the issues of moral degeneration in a manner which they find making sense to them.

#### **4.4.2 *Kudela Owaziyo (2009) by BP Maphumulo***

This play has 142 pages written by BP Maphumulo and was published in 2009. It can also be classed as a literary genre that appeared after the establishment of democracy. Maphumulo writes about urban family life affected by retrenchments, xenophobia, gender-based violence and other forms of crime.

Iwuchukwu (2008:5) defines a play/drama as literary work that can be read or performed and has created or recreated a situation, which is an articulation of reality through impersonation or re-enactment. Fielitz (1999) mentions that a good play must have these qualities: plot, acts, scenes characters, dialogue, conflict setting, spectacle, descriptions, detailed amount of information, themes, and a resolution.

The following section of the discussion focuses on the various issues of moral degeneration that are dealt within the play.

##### **4.4.2.1 *Xenophobia***

Ratele *et al.* (2008) defines xenophobia as an intense dislike, hatred or fear of others based on the perception that they are outsiders or foreigners to the community, society, or national identity.

The South African Human Rights Commission SAHRC (2008), cited in Bekker, 2010: 127). defines xenophobia as “the deep dislike of non-nationals by nationals of a recipient state.” Giving a warning about xenophobia Kollapan (1999) says that xenophobia cannot be separated from violence and physical abuse and cited the following as the characteristics of xenophobia:

- Disapproving to make friends with people who have a different skin colour, mode of dress, language, culture, or other external factors.
- Intolerant of people who fall into different ethnic groups.
- Steering clear areas or population.

Africa is a continent that comprises mostly of black nationalities with various languages and culture. What separates the nationalities is the language and tradition but not the colour of their skin. The notion of *ubuntu* is what unites Africans. According to Eyo & Etta (2020:39), *ubuntu* unequivocally presents an African world view of care for others, the affirmation of the existence of others and the participation of others. It encourages show of compassion, generosity, care and living with others.

*Ubuntu* is morally bound. The principle of *umuntu ngumuntu ngabantu* ‘a person is a person because of other people’ is at the heart of *ubuntu*. After 1994, South African borders welcomed Africans to form part of the integrated communities (Harris 2002:4). South Africa is one of the countries that has been affected by xenophobia for decades. South Africa firstly experienced xenophobic attacks shortly after the first democratic elections in 1994 (Duponchel, 2015:2). Unfortunately, the consequences have been fatal for both non-South Africans and South Africans who have lost their lives during these attacks. In his description of the term xenophobia, Harris (2002:2) argues that the term “xenophobia cannot be divorced from violence and physical abuse, since this does not involve an attitude only but also an action to act upon.

In the drama *Kudela Owaziyo*, one is introduced to Chivenga who is a Mozambican national who came to South Africa for a better life. Maphumulo (2009) introduces Chivenga in a derogatory and demeaning manner by using the word *kwerekwere*. This word is a dehumanising word used by South Africans to refer to foreigners. Throughout the book, every time Chivenga speaks, the writer uses the following phrase:

1. '*Usikhuluma ubukwerekwere Zulu.*' (Maphumulo 2009:16)

'He speaks Zulu like a foreigner'.

Mdaluli, the main character in the play, also uses the word *kwerekwere* when he refers to Chivenga. This is exemplified in the below extract:

2. '*Wuzwani ena sengifikela ezinyaweni zomlisa mumbe oyikwerekwere naye ongumeselandi obese ebiziwe ukuzokwakha?*' (Maphumulo 2009:50)

'When I arrived, I met a certain foreigner, who is also a builder who was called to build'.

Mdaluli expresses his anger for being replaced by Chivenga in a construction job that he was called to do. He did not honour his appointment hence the client ends up hiring Chivenga who even charges less for the job. This is illustrated in the following conversation between Mdaluli and Mbhebhezeli:

3. '*Uthena yena usebenza ngesikhathi. Ngokubona ngigejwa yisikhathi ebesivumelene ngaso ube esebiza ngokushesha umuntu obizwe maqedane wasabela ngoba esezitshela ukuthi angisezi mina sengize ngakhohlwa nayisivumelwano sethu....Ayibange isababikho nendlela yokumxozomela mngane kwazise phela ngifumanise nokuthi ikwerekwere ndini leli limbize imali engaphansi uma ngabe iqhathaniswa nalena ebengimbize yona njengenkokhelo yomsebenzi wokwakha*' (Maphumulo 2009:50-51).

'He told me that he is time conscious. After he realised that I was late for our appointment he called a person who was ready to work because he thought I was no longer coming. There was no way of begging him because I discovered that the foreigner charged him less money compared to what I charged him for building'.

Mdaluli does not stop at name calling only but physically attacks Chivenga with an intention to kill him. The attack is exacerbated by his hatred and financial frustration.

One of the reasons that Mdaluli give for attacking Chivenga is that he immigrated to South African to take their job opportunities. This example below exemplifies his belief:

4. *'Kanti usabuza wena ekubeni vele nje unayo impendulo? Usuka lena kwelakini eMozambikhwi uzongephuca isinkwa sami kuleli, ucabanga ukuthi ngizoyishayela ihlombe-ke mina into efana naleyo?'* (Maphumulo 2009:93).

'You are asking a question while you know the answer? You left your own country Mozambique to try and take my livelihood; do you think I can applaud something like this?'

Mdaluli even tries to bewitch Chivenga for 'taking' his job but fails Landau *et al.* (2005:7) states that in both local and global world, non-nationals are seen as a threat to employment, grants, and other services. One of the reasons that are cited by Mdaluli for attacking Chivenga is that he wants him to go back to his country forgetting that many immigrants come to South Africa for a better life, as illustrated by the following passage:

5. *'Ehhe! Awungizwe! E- (egalela) E- (egalela) Awungizwe lapho engihamba khona kwerekwere ndini. Yikhona uzophindela kwelakini lapho wavela khona ngoba sewucacelwe okwangempela ukuthi ngeke siphinde sizwane...(Athi noma ezama ukumhesha ngethilofolo likasemende uChivenga, avele abuyele eceleni uMdaluli maqedane aqhubeke ngokumgokloza umhlane uMdaluli. Aphelelwe ngamandla umlisa lona adiyazele abonakale esewa phansi'* (Maphumulo 2009:94).

'Aha! Take this! E- (striking) E- (striking) see how I move you bloody foreigner. You will go back to your country because we will never understand each other. Even when Chivenga was trying to hit him with a cement shovel Mdaluli was ducking while he was continuing to hit him hard at his back. The man became powerless until he fell down.'

Most immigrants leave their countries, home, and way of life to escape fighting, war, violence, and other misfortunes (Harris, 2002:4). Maphumulo has used Mdaluli and Chivenga as the characters in the story to highlight the problem of xenophobia in South Africa. Mdaluli finds himself retrenched from his work. He is faced with family financial challenges which he cannot meet. When he is promised a construction job, to his discontent, he finds that it has been taken by Chivenga, the Mozambican national. To

try to understand reactions such as those of Mdaluli's, Eyo & Etta (2020:40) advocate that citizens of South Africa presume that the foreigners and immigrants are the sources of their misfortunes. This hypothesis further espouses that the majority democratic rule has promised better opportunities and lives for all South Africans, yet they remain in abject poverty and dehumanised state.

The following section of the discussion focuses on witchcraft as another factor that points to moral degeneration.

Bailey (2003) defines witchcraft as a set of actions, practices, and behaviours that certain people perform using sorcery, thus inflicting harm to the targeted victim and involves using of spells, medicines, and rituals.

Hutton (2017:376) mentions the following as the characteristics of witchcraft:

- Causing harm to others
- A harmful threat to the society
- Evil
- Can be resisted
- Works within tradition

In this drama, Mdaluli resorts to witchcraft to solve his unemployment problems. He tells his wife that he consulted a witchdoctor who gave him *muthi* to bewitch Chivenga. Mdaluli even lures his wife MaMlanduli to help him with his plans. This is exemplified by the following passage:

6. *'Kukhona umlisa lapha ongimise kabi nosengephuce isinkwa sezingane zami. Kafushane nje besengiziqalele ibhizinisi lokwakhela abantu izindlu, kuthe angangibona sengiphezu kwaleyo minyakazo lo mlisa oyikwerekwere wase esejoyina naye kuleli bhizinisi ngenhloso yokungibangisa. Nguye lona esevula elakhe naye maqedane wazikhangisa ngokushesha kumalungu omphakathi waze wathola ukwesekelaka okungangoba amaphupho ami asevele ashabalala nezifiso zami zaphenduka uthuli nomlotha nje ngenxa yokuthi azisoze zafezeka uma kuqhubeke kanje. Ukuze ngimkhinyabeze-ke ngibonane nenyanga-mthakathi yalena eNcotshane oPhongolo nokuyiyona engicobelele ngamakhathakhathana athile yangiyalela ukuthi ngizowasebenzisa kanjani*

*ukuze isheshe ifezeke le nhloso yami ngawo. Okumele ungenzele khona-ke wena mkami ukuba uyongihogelela ukuthi ngabe akukho moyana yini 2ovunguzayo ngalo mlisa obizo lakhe nguChivenga omaqondana nokuhlabeka agulele ukufa’* (Maphumulo 2009:74).

‘There is a gentleman who is threatening me, trying to take my children’s livelihood. In short, I have started a small business of building houses for people. When he saw that I have started the building he too joined in the construction business with the aim of bringing me down. There he was, opening his building business, advertising it to the members of the community members in such a way that all my dreams and wishes were in vain because they will never come true if things continue like this. I came up with a plan to disturb him by seeing a witchdoctor at Ncotshane in Phongolo, he gave me some traditional herbs and instructions on how to use them so that my wishes can come true. What I need from you my wife is to spy around and gather information about this man called Chivenga life threatening sickness when the herbs start working.’

To add to his hatred of Chivenga, Mdaluli’s anger is aggravated by Chivenga’s kind personality. This is evident in the following conversation he had with Mbhebezeli:

7. *‘Ngiyakuzwa nje sakhamuzi uyakhuluma kodwa angikuzwisisi kahle. Lilonke nje mina angiluboni neze ngalelo so lolu daba. Akulula ukuba sivele simxoshe kalula kanjalo nje lo muntu kule ndawo ikakhulukazi njengoba engumuntu wabo bonke abantu laba, enjalo nje engenalo udlame futhi engesona isigebengu. Ingani lo muntu usezakhele olukhulu ugazi lolu emakhosini nasezinduneni kanye nakumakhansela? Uze abaphakamele nangotshwala futhi enjalo nje. Angisayiphathi eyabefundisi esontweni. Uyilesi silomo esingaconsi neze phansi kubo* (Maphumulo 2009:58).

‘I totally hear you my friend, but I don’t understand you clearly. I don’t see this issue in that manner. It is not easy for us to chase this man from this place especially as he is a people’s person, he is not violent, and he is not a criminal. Had this person also not charmed the headman and councilors? He even gives them alcohol. Let alone the pastors in the church. He is a charmer and loved by them.’

The witchdoctor gave him tradition medicine as illustrated in the following excerpt:

8. *'Sengiyabathe ngiyakuzama ngenkwayindane kanye nangedelamagugu lutho angikutholi kwerekwere ndini, kodwa namhlanje ngikutholile.'* (Maphumulo 2009:93)

'I tried giving you medicinal herbs, but I failed so today is the day.'

Maphumulo introduces another strategy that of witchcraft in the play, to further Mdaluli's plans of eliminating Chivenga, but this strategy is not successful.

#### **4.4.2.2 Corruption**

Ekiyor (2005) defines corruption as an illicit use of power or influence by a government official or any official for their own unlawful gain at an expense of another person in contradiction with the oath they took. Meanwhile Ngwakwe (2009) defines corruption from an economic perspective as follows: the non-violent criminal and illicit activity committed with objectives of earning wealth illegally either individually or in a group or organised manner thereby violating existing legislation governing the economic activities of government and its administration. Luigi & Wilson (2007) mentions how the society is affected in his definition of corruption as an illegal use of power by a public official and private for the enrichment of the official at the expense of the public.

For an act to be regarded as corruption Rose-Ackerman (1999) acknowledges that it must have the following characteristics:

- Dishonesty
- Abuse of power or authority
- Private gain
- Extortion
- Recipient and payer

Societies all over the world are affected by corruption. Staats (1972:41) counts corruption as a social problem that comes in many forms and affects even the most primitive societies.

There are different types of corruption. They are bribery, embezzlement, theft, nepotism, networking, peddling, and blackmail (Johnston, 2005:18).



Loughman & Sibery (2011:9) assert that bribery is the most spread and dangerous corruption crime which undermines the foundations and authority of state power in the eyes of the population. Lindgren (1988:824) defines bribery as a corrupt benefit given or received to influence official action to afford the giver better than fair treatment. Both the person giving and the person receiving the benefit are guilty of bribery. Another definition of bribery given by the United Nations Conventions Against Corruption is that it is the solicitation or acceptance by a public official, directly or indirectly, of an undue advantage, for the official himself or herself or another or entity, in order that the official acts or refrains from acting in the exercise of his or her official duties. The major characteristic of bribery is that when it occurs, the payer usually makes a payment that is corrupt for him to make. Such a corrupt payment is one that unfairly distorts official decision-making.

In this drama, Heshane, a senior Home Affairs official is suspended for taking money from immigrants in exchange of the immigrants getting a permanent South African citizenship.

9. *‘Angazi noma ubusuzizwile yini lezi ezithi umlisa mumbé owaziwa ngokuthi nguHeshane Mnqayi obeyisikhulu esipheZulu ehhovisi loMnyango wezaseKhaya esebenzela KwaDukuza usamisiwe emsebenzini KwaDukuza kuze kuphothulwe uphenyo olushisa phansi ngalo mkhonyovu ovundululwe kuye kulandela izinsolo zokugwazisa izifiki kuleli ngenhloso yokuba zithenge ubuzwe bakuleli.’* (Maphumulo 2009:98)

‘I am not sure if you have heard that a gentleman by the name of Heshane Mnayi who was a high ranking official at the Home Affairs Department working at KwaDukuza has been suspended pending a vigorous investigation about his corruption following bribery allegations for selling citizenship to the foreigners.’

In his definition of corruption Nye (1967:416) agrees that corruption and bribery cannot be divorced because an illegal transaction occurs between an official and an individual. Not only do Heshane’s actions affect the immigrants, but they also tarnish the identity of the South Africa women whose identification documents are stolen to be married to the foreigners, as illustrated in the following example:

10. *‘Kuthiwa-ke lo mkhonyovu uvele emveni kwezikhalo eziqhamuke kwizakhamizi zakuleli ikakhulukazi okungabantu besifazane lapho kuye kubuye amapasi abo*

*esekhomba ukuthi bashadile kuleso sibongo esisuke sesivela kulelo nalelo pasi labo, nokunye kuthi uma sebebuzwa ngalokho kumbe bebika ngakho balandule kulanduleke ukuthi bashadile kumbe-ke ukuthi bukhona ubudlelwano nolwazi abanalo yini ngomaqondana babo balezo zibongo ezintsha ezisuke sezivela emapasini abo' (Maphumulo 2009:99).*

'It is said that this corruption surfaced after the female South African citizens who received their identity documents revealed that they are married to the surname that appears in their identity documents and that when they questioned or reported about this matter, they would deny having any knowledge of them being married to the people whose new surnames appeared in their identity documents'.

The characters of Heshane and Chivenga are used by Maphumulo (2009) to illustrate how corruption affects not only an individual but the whole system in a country. High ranking officials like Heshane use their status to corrupt a well running system because of greed. Their actions affect people's lives like we have seen how the women are married to people they do not know. Just like any foreigner running away from their country for a better life Chivenga benefitted in the corruption. Corruption affects the country's economy a lot because unqualified people can easily get benefits that they are not qualified to get.

The next discussion focuses on aggravated assault within xenophobic attacks.

Baker & Williams (2015) defines aggravated assault as an act of intentionally causing serious bodily harm in some instances using a weapon. This type of assault has aggravating results.

Characteristics of aggravated assault include:

- Physical harm
- Criminal prosecution

Another example is in the drama *Kudela Owaziyo* when Mdaluli attacks Chivenga because of jealousy. Chivenga is a builder, skilled and cheap. Mdaluli's jealousy starts when he is retrenched. He wants to try his hand in construction, but the competition is

very high, so he resorts to victimising Chivenga. The following examples show this aspect:

11. *'Ehhe! Awungizwe! E- (egalela) E- (egalela) Awungizwe lapho engihamba khona kwerekwere ndini. Yikhona uzophindela kwelakini lapho wavela khona ngoba sewucacelwe okwangempela ukuthi ngeke siphinde sizwane. (Athi noma ezama ukumhesha ngethilofolo likasemende uChivenga, avele abuyele eceleni uMdaluli maqedane aqhubeke ngokumgokloza umhlane uMdaluli. Aphelelwe ngamandla umlisa lona adiyazele abonakale esewa phansi'* (Maphumulo, 2009:94)

'Aha! Take this! E- (striking) E- (striking) see how I move you bloody foreigner. You will go back to your country because we will never understand each other. Even when Chivenga was trying to hit him with a cement shovel Mdaluli was ducking while he was continuing to hit him hard at his back. The man became powerless until he fell'.

While he is hitting him with a *sjambok*, Mdaluli utters the following words:

12. *'Libuke ulugcine ke namhlanje. Uya kwaGoqanyawo.'* (Maphumulo 2009:93)  
'Just know that this is your last day on earth, you are going to die today'.

In hitting Chivenga and uttering words illustrated in Example 12 above, Mdaluli do not want to kill him per se, but to intimidate him with threats and bullying behaviour so that he may decide to pack up and return to his home country. It is apparent that he just says the words because he understands the consequences of killing.

#### **4.4.2.3 Gender-based violence**

In a study by the World Health Organization (2013) it was discovered that there was an increase in the number of scholars exploring the scope of violence against women. In another study the WHO discovered that gender-based violence is an enormous epidemic (WHO, 2013). Gender-based violence is defined as any act of violence against women that results in physical, sexual, emotional, verbal, psychological, and economical abuse, by means including intimidation, harassment, stalking, damage to property, entry into the victim's residence without consent, and other behaviour that attempts to control the victim, coercion or arbitrary deprivation of liberty, whether occurring in public or private

(Ellsberg & Heise *et al.*, 2005; Wood & Jewkes, 2008). The characteristics of gender-based violence are:

- It does not differentiate between social, racial, educational, or economic status. Many studies have shown that there is also a high incidence of gender-based violence in the more prosperous communities (Gelles, 2003; Saunders, 2018).
- It comes in many forms like rape, sexual harassment, sexual violence, and abuse of women, trafficking of women for sexual exploitation, forced prostitution and domestic violence (Hayes, 2014).
- Women and children abuse - women and children abuse have become a norm globally. According to Watts & Zimmerman (2002:1232), abuse against women is a global phenomenon that affects women from all walks of life.

In this drama the aspect of violence against women is introduced when Mdaluli hits his wife MaMlanduli and daughter Londiwe. Not only does he use a clap to hit them, but he resorts to using fists on the harmless women who cannot defend themselves. His actions are evident in the following passage:

13. '*(Uyanxapha) Nx! (usebuyise izinhlonze, umdonsa ngesikwibhisi sempama umkakhe esiqhakazisa izinsensane ebusweni, ngokufutheka) Demed man! Yini indaba weyisa kangaka wena mfazi? Ngabe angishongo ukuthi ... (Khona manjalo kuqhume impama esheshayo ngokulandelanisa eduze ezihlathini zabo bobabili, abadukle ngesibhakela baze bawe babonakale sengathi baphelelwa ngumoya. Abakhahlele baze bawe bayothi fofoloji phansi. Kube wubugungqungqu betafula.*' (Maphumulo 2009:54)

'(Making a click noise) Nx! (Frowning, furious, he gave his wife a very hot clap,) Damn it man! Why are you so disrespectful woman? Did I not say... (a hot clap followed between the two women, he hit them with his fist until they were breathless. He kicked them until they laid flat on the ground. The table hit the ground.'

Another example of physical abuse in the drama is illustrated in the following example:

14. '*Khona manjalo ehle eseshwibeka embhedeni esalokhu egqoke amaphijama akhe lawo maqedane ahoshe insilane ngaphansi kombhede. Amhlubule ingubo*

*umkakhe amdonse ngengalo maqedane akhwele adilike ngayo emhlane, ezinqeni ayehlise nangamahlombe imbala.’* (Maphumulo 2009:61)

‘He strugglingly got out of the bed while he was still in his pyjamas and took out his *sjambok* underneath the bed. He stripped his wife of her clothes, and beat her especially in the back, buttocks and even on her shoulders.’

After his arrest, Mdaluli decides to chase Londiwe away from his house because he feels like Londiwe is now becoming the ‘man’ of the house as illustrated by the following passage:

15.‘*Osekumele kucace manje wukuthi iyiphi ngempela inkunzi ekhonyayo futhi enomhlwenga lapha ekhaya phakathi kwami nawe. Ngaleso sizathu-ke ngithi qoqa konke okungokwakho okukulo muzi Londiwe uphume uphele kuleli gceke uqcwale amathafa.’* (Maphumulo 2009:80)

‘It must be evident who the head of this family is between the two of us. With that reason I say pack all your bags and get out of my house Londiwe, get out and go wherever you want you want to go.’

Van Dyk (2012: 59) also states that African women are afraid of their husbands. In one of his violent episodes, Mdaluli draws a gun on Londiwe, Khombephi and Nenelezi his two other daughters for ‘disrespecting’ him. His action is evident in the following excerpt:

16.‘*Asuke khona manjalo evulandini esedlathuzela ehambela pheZulu eyothi tshobe endlini. Akekho osalinde ishwa ukuba liqale ngaye phakathi kukaLondiwe noKhombephi kanye noNenelezi. Baphume ngesivinini sebeyogudlana ngamahlombe esangweni kuyilowo nalowo ephuthuma ukuba aphume kuqala. UMdaluli aphume kamuva esebuya ekamelweni lakhe esekhokhe isibhamu esegqishelana esifubeni ebhodla umlilo ngenxa yentukuthelo’* (Maphumulo 2009:82).

‘He stood up on the veranda, brisk walked and disappeared into the house. Between Londiwe, Khombephi and Nenelezi none of them was waiting for the unfortunate, they quickly ran towards the door, hitting each other with their shoulders, each one of them struggling to exit first. In a short while Mdaluli exited the bedroom with his gun and went outside, livid with anger.’

Unfortunately, one the effects of women abuse in many women is tolerance to the violence. In the sub-Saharan communities' violence against women has become a potent issue that is socially tolerated because most of these communities believe in the patriarchal system that upholds the notion of women being subordinate to men (Karamagi *et al.*, 2006; Meherun *et al.*, 2017). Mdaluli hits his wife MaMlanduli for the second time for refusing to have sex with him. He clearly states that as a man who paid lobola he has a right to his wife's body. When Londiwe wants to help her mother to open a case against her husband, MaMlanduli tells the police that she did not want to open a case of domestic violence. This is highlighted by the following passage:

*17. 'Nizoke nilonqe-ke maphoyisa ngoba mina mnini wendaba angikaze ngimmangalele umyeni wami. Yikho lokhu nje okunguLondiwe okuphaphayo osekuzenza ungqaphambili njengensumpa odabeni olungaqondene nakho. Ubani lona obekujubile ukuba ubize laba bantu othi bayashesha, hhe? Wathi usha kancane umilo kodwa wena wawuchela ngophethiloli, ngabe ufuna ukuwubona sewubhebhetheka yini? (Maphumulo 2009:67)*

'Policeman, you will be disappointed because as a victim I have not laid any charge against my husband. It is this child Londiwe who is being forward by interfering in matters that are not hers. Who sent you to call the police, huh? Why are you exacerbating a situation that was minor, do you want to see it worse?'

MaMlanduli tolerates and condones her husband's behaviour and views any help or interference as disrespect to her husband who is the head of the family.

Maphumulo (2009) uses the character of Mdaluli to succeed in highlighting how gender-based violence escalates with societal problems. His anger and frustrations fast-track is rage and result in him using physical and emotional force to inflict harm in his victims. The women present the aspect of siding with the abuser or reporting the abuser. In many societies victims are afraid to report gender-based violence because of the power they feel their suspects possess and they are also afraid of not getting any support from their own families and law authorities.

Since the interactionism perspective contends that humans interpret and assign meaning to events via an elaborate set of symbols. The meanings of these symbols originate and evolve through human social interaction. In this play Mdaluli's problems

emanate from retrenchment, which of course was a result of his in a very negative manner, which of course is a result of his negative interaction with other characters in the play. His retrenchment leads to his xenophobic attack on Chivenga and his gender-based violence on his family. An element of moral degeneration also plays itself out when Heshane, the home affairs official accepts a bribe to render services which are unlawful. Thus, in the characters, the material world is being created and recreated from the interaction of characters. The dialogue between the characters also plays a very prominent role in the play. The interaction between the characters is enhanced by the dialogue of the characters.

#### **4.4.3 *Ngaze Ngazenza (1994) by MM Masondo***

This work is classified as a detective novel and was written by MM Masondo. It was first published in 1994 and has 102 pages. The main theme of this novel is homicide, and it also touches on infidelity and police injustice.

Hugh (1992) defines a detective novel as a “short story in which a crime, usually a murder – the identity of the perpetrator unknown – is solved by a detective through a logical assembling and interpretation of palpable evidence, known as clues.” For a novel to qualify as a detective literature it must have these six qualities as mentioned by Hugh (1992):

- The crime in the novel must be notable and draw the attention of the reader.
- The detective who is the investigator of the crime committed must be quick-witted, observant, and extra-ordinary and brilliant.
- Additionally, the detective must be an adversary who makes the investigation very arduous.
- The suspects in the story must be introduced in the first chapters of the novel.
- The clues that the detective finds while investigating must be presented to the reader.
- At the end of the story the solution must be presented, and it must be convincing, possible, and clear.

Masondo deals with aspects of moral degeneration in his novel as follows:

#### 4.4.3.1 Intimidation

The South African Intimidation Act, 72. Of 1982 defines intimidation as an intention to compel or induce a particular person to do or abstain from doing any act or to assume or abandon a particular standpoint with the result of :*(a)* assaults, injures or causes damage to that person or any other person; or *(b)* in any manner threatens to kill, assault, injure or cause damage to that person or any other person.

Characteristics of intimidation are:

- Induced threats
- Intentional heavy-handedness towards a chosen victim

In this novel an unpleasant exchange of words takes place between Mginsa and Bhekani where Mginsa intimidates and insults. He further promises to kill him for not 'providing' the service that he paid him for as illustrated by the following extract:

1. *'Ngizoze ngikuthole wena Bhekani! Ucabanga ukuthi njengoba ucebile uyini? Awuyilutho lapha kimi! kuthatha uMginsa ngolaka. "Akuyimina engichayise idili lakho Mginsa! Musa ukulokhu ungisongela! Ngeke neze ngiyikhiphe imali yakho yezindleko! Musa ukube ulokhu ungifundekela. Mina ngikwenze konke okufanele! Hlukana nami ngo... "Ungathi ngihlukane nawe sengichithe imali yami engaka! Uma ngabe awuyikhokhi le mali ngizozikhokhela mina ngokuba ngichithe igazi lakho!"* (Masondo 1994:1).

'I will find you Bhekani. Who do you think you are because of your wealth? You are nothing to me! Mginsa speaking angrily. "I am not the one who made your function to fail Mginsa! Stop threatening me. I won't pay money for costs! Stop nagging me. I did what I was supposed to do! Leave me alone cos I will..... Don't tell me to leave you alone when I have spent so much money! If you don't pay my money, I find a way to pay myself by spilling your blood.'

The murder of Bhekani by an unknown person resulted in Mginsa being one of those who were suspected of the killing. This is illustrated by the following example:

2. *'Phela ophenyweni olwenziwe ngamaphoyisa ami kutholakele ukuthi uMginsa lona uke wathi ukuhilana noBhekani ngamazwi okugcine ngokuba aze asonge*



*uMginsa esongela uBhekani esho khona ukuthi uzochitha igazi'* (Masondo 1994:14).

'In the investigation that my detective conducted, it was discovered that Mginsa once exchanged unpleasant words which ended with up with him saying he will spill Bongani's blood.'

Mginsa as the prime suspect in the novel is introduced right at the beginning of the story. His threat to Bhekani influences all the events occurring in the story. It can therefore be construed that the use of this character in the novel has been purposeful. All the events that occur in the story, hub around his offensive encounter with Bhekani and the threats he made to Bhelani. Masondo has uses this incident as the motive for conflict in the novel.

#### **4.4.3.2 Deception**

Masip *et al.* (2012:148) give a brief definition of the term deception as the carefully planned effort, whether successful or not, to conceal, fabricate, and/or manipulate in any other way, factual and/or emotional information, by verbal and/or nonverbal means. To create or maintain in another or others a belief that the communicator himself or herself considers false.

The characteristics of deception by Masip *et al.* (2012) are:

- It is intentionally planned
- It is manipulation

In the following section incidences of deception as distinguished in the novel are discussed. Throughout the novel, Thoko is framed and deceived by people she trusted for Mginsa's murder. All evidence is pointing at her. This is exemplified by the following excerpt:

3. *'Uma ngilubhekisisa lolu daba ngingasho ngokungahlonizi ukuthi uThoko lona nguye obulele uBhekani. Uma ngithi ukuzikisa kancane umqondo kuyangikhanyela ukuthi bekungeyona inhloso kaThoko ukubulala kepha ubethunyiwe.'* (Masondo 1994:15)

‘As I looked closely on this matter, I do not doubt that Thoko murdered Mginsa. While I contemplate on the matter it becomes clear that it was not Thoko’s aim to kill but she was sent to kill.’

The police refuse to give Thoko bail because they believed that they had a strong case against her. This is illustrated by the following discourse:

4. *‘Kumanje Thoko ngiphezu kwemizamo yokuba uboshelwe ngaphandle. Bayala bayaphetha ukukudedela’* (Masondo 1994:58).

‘I am seeking ways to appeal so that you can be arrested outside of the jail. They are refusing to let you go’.

In the end of the story Mrs Ndlovu becomes the one who was deceitful in her marriage because she premeditates the murder of her husband who in the end is killed by an unknown hitman. This is exemplified by the following example:

5. *‘Ukukhuluma kwami amanga ngeke kusangisiza Nkosi yenkantolo. Unkosikazi kaNdlovu wangiye ngemali ukuze ngibulale umyeni wakhe. Kwathi lapho ngibuza isizathu wangitshela ukuthi kukhona owesimame ahlekisana naye umyeni wakhe ngasese. Waqhubeka wathi umyeni wakhe usenenhliziyo encane lapho ekhuluma naye futhi isikhathi esiningi usichitha ekuhambeni kunasekhaya’* (Masondo 1994:101).

‘I will not lie anymore my Lord. Mrs Ndlovu lured me with money so that I can kill her husband. When I asked her for a reason, she told me that her husband was seeing another woman privately. She continued to say that her husband is short tempered when speaking to her these days and he spends more time away from home’.

Thoko, Bhekani’s wife has been used in a way that is very remarkable in the story. She has been used to channel all the evidence away from the perpetrator but to herself. The fact that there is nothing that shows forced entry into the room where the deceased was found and that Thoko enters the room before the body is found, are events that make everyone believe that she has something to do with the murder of Bhekani.

#### **4.4.3.3 Infidelity**

Infidelity is an old predicament which has affected many couples throughout the years bringing many challenges (Whisman *et al.*, 1997:362). According to Blow & Hartnett (2005:186) infidelity is defined as an act that involves a myriad of ways and can consist of a number of activities like having an affair, extramarital relationship, cheating, sexual intercourse, oral sex, kissing, fondling, emotional connections that are beyond friendships, internet relationships, and others.

According to Weeks *et al.* (2003:316) the characteristics of infidelity are:

- Deception
- Unfaithfulness
- Secretiveness
- Behavioural change

In the following section incidences of infidelity as observed in the novel are discussed.

Bhekani's wife suspects that her husband is cheating on her. The main reason why Mpondlela is hired to kill Bhekani is that Mrs Ndlovu suspects that her husband has an affair with another woman. Mrs Ndlovu is also accused of having an affair with her husband's friend whom she went to see after the news of her husband's death.

Mrs Ndlovu and her husband Bhekani Ndlovu have an unhappy marriage that leads Bhekani to have a mistress. According to Mpondlela, Mrs Ndlovu acquired the services of a hitman because Bhekani Ndlovu is involved with someone else and this makes her unhappy in the marriage. The excerpt below gives information on the reason she cites to Mpondlela for her actions to kill her husband:

6. *'Ukukhuluma kwami amanga ngeke kusangisiza Nkosi yenkantolo. Unkosikazi kaNdlovu wangiye ngemali ukuze ngibulale umyeni wakhe. Kwathi lapho ngibuza isizathu wangitshela ukuthi kukhona owesimame ahlekisana naye umyeni wakhe ngasese.'* (Masondo 1994:101)

'Lying will not help me my Lord. When I asked her for a reason for killing her husband, she told me that her husband was seeing another woman privately.'

Before Mginsa is murdered, he moves out of the house because of the arguments he has with his wife. The following example increases the suspicion that Bhekani and his wife have marital problems:

7. *'Kuthiwa uNdlovu ubenesikhathi eside ehlala laphaya ngenxa yokuthi kunokungezwani okuthile phakathi kwakhe nomkakhe.'* (Masondo 1994:28)

'It is said that Ndlovu has been staying in that place for a long time because he had problems with his wife.'

Bhekani also wanted to have an extra-marital affair with Thoko as it is illustrated in the following example:

8. *'Ngiqonde ukuthi uBhekani nguyena owatholela uThoko umsebenzi. UBhekani lona kwabe kuyisesheli sikaThoko. Ebona ucu lungahlangani uBhekani, wabe esezama ukuphonsela impangela ummbila ngokuba atholele uThoko umsebenzi.'* (Masondo 1994:93)

'What I mean is that Bhekani is the one who got a job for Thoko. Bhekani was Thoko's suitor. When he realised that he was not winning Thoko's love he tried luring her by getting a job for her.'

Bhekani's wife, Mrs Ndlovu is introduced very late in the story. The writer is very deliberate in doing this so that the novel conforms to the characteristics of a detective novel. She is initially not considered a suspect because she is introduced very late in the story. Her plotting of the murder is not in the open until towards the end of the story when the investigator cracks the crime. Thoko plays a very important role character in the story as a character. Thoko may, without any shadow of doubt, be regarded/ considered as the character who initiates the story line.

#### **4.4.3.4 Crime / Lawlessness**

Sowmya (2014:196) defines crime as an act of offense which violates the law of the state, strongly by the society and can be punished by imprisonment or a fine. For example, robbery, murder, rape, drunken driving, and child neglect.

Farmer (2008) describes the characteristics of crime as follows:

- Evidence of harm

- Prohibition of the harm
- Action that brings harmful results
- Presence of the criminal intent
- Lawful prescription of the crime

There is a burglary in Mginsa's office. This is exemplified by the following example:

9. *'Cha, mnumzane. Ngiye ehhovisi likaMginsa kuqala.' Wavuma ngekhandu uMthethwa wabe esebuza ethi, 'Umtholile uMginsa?' 'Angeke ungikholwe mnumzane. Ngithole ihhovisi ligqekeziwe lapeketulwa.'* (Masondo 1994:10)

'No Sir. I went to Mginsa's office first. Mthethwa nodded his head and asked, "Did you get Mginsa?" You won't believe me Sir. I found the office burgled and upside down.'

Mginsa's house was also burgled.

10. *'Laphaya endlini kaMginsa kukhona othile okade epequlula izimpahla. Lo muntu ungene ngaphandle kwemvume kaMginsa.'* (Masondo 1994:64)

'There was a person who was searching for something in Mginsa's house. This person entered the house without Mginsa's permission.'

Although the burglary has no direct link with the main theme of the story, in a detective story it does, however, draw attention away from the focal point and thereby heightens the conflict which moves the story forward.

#### **4.4.3.5 Murder**

Card (2006) defines murder as the wilful killing of any person with malice prepense or aforethought, either expressed or implied by law.

Murder is characterised by:

- Criminal /unlawful acts committed by people.
- Victim identified-this means that someone must be killed and identified as the Victim for the act to be called murder.

In this novel, the premeditated gruesome murder of Bhekani Ndlovu by Mpondlela is encountered. In the end, Mpondlela confesses to the murder and explains that he was hired to kill Bhekani Ndlovu by Mrs Ndlovu. His greed leads him to continue contemplating the murder until it is done. This is exemplified by the following extract:

11. *'Unkosikazi kaNdlovu wangiyenga ngemali ukuze ngibulale umyeni wakhe. Kwathi lapho ngibuza isizathu wangitshela ukuthi kukhona owesimame ahlekisana naye umyeni wakhe ngasese. Waqhubeka wathi umyeni wakhe usenenhliziyi encane lapho ekhuluma naye futhi isikhathi esiningi usichitha ekuhambeni kunasekhaya. ....Nempela savumelana ngokuthi kuzothi lapho ngingekho emsebenzini ngisebenze kuye uNxumalo. Ngahlala amalanga amaningi ngilinde ithuba. Ekugcineni ngalithola ithuba ngenkathi ngizwa uNdlovu noNxumalo behlanganisa isu lokuthi uThoko wabe ezohlanganiswa kanjani noNdlovu. Ngabe sengibhaca ngilinde ukufika kukaThoko. Ekugcineni wafika uThoko. Kwathi lapho sebelele ngokwehlukana ngambulala uNdlovu'* (Masondo 1994:101-102).

'Mrs. Ndlovu enticed me with money so that I can kill her husband. When I asked her for a reason, she told me that her husband was seeing another woman privately. She continued to say that her husband is short tempered when speaking to her and he spends more time away from home. We then made an agreement that I will work for Mr. Nxumalo on my day off days. I waited many days for that opportunity. At last, I got an opportunity when I heard Ndlovu and Nxumalo plotting how Thoko will be made to meet Ndlovu. While I was waiting for Thoko I hid myself. At last, Thoko arrived. When they were sleeping separately, I killed Ndlovu'.

Masondo (1994) portrays Mpondlela as a smart and wise character who at first is willing to assist whoever is investigating Bhekani's murder. As the person in charge of the huts, he assists Nxumalo by showing him all the details in the crime scene. As the story unfolds, he becomes hostile towards Mthethwa. He is a dedicated bodyguard to Mginsa. He tries to conceal all the evidence against him but in the end, he is found guilty of killing Bhekani.

Mthethwa is characterised as a skilful and smart detective who uses all the evidence he can to find Bhekani's murderer. He is observant in his investigation and uses small clues

that seem irrelevant at the time of investigation but in the end he becomes victorious. He is not easily intimidated by people who want to disturb his investigation. Masondo (1994) succeeds in using the characters to keep the story line enticing to the reader. The clues in the novel are clearly presented and these lead to an unexpected, interesting conclusion at the end of the novel.

When applying the interactionism perspective on Masondo's story *Ngaze ngazenza*, it is apparent that it addresses how society is created and maintained through repeated interactions among individuals. Mead, one of the proponents of symbolic interactionism, in instituting this perspective was driven by a desire to understand the relationship between individuals and societies, between a self and others. As simple as it might seem, one profound insight he had was that a person's sense of self emerges from interaction with others (social interaction/society) and that societies emerge from interactions among people's selves. In this story Mrs Ndlovu is being driven by her insecurities and jealousy to hire Mpondlela to kill her husband. As it can be seen in the story, it takes many interactions between individuals and between the self and others for the story to be resolved.

#### **4.5 Conclusion**

The main objective of this chapter was to present, discuss and analyse how the writers of the three selected literary works handle the issue of moral degeneration in their works. Literature is a powerful tool used by literary writers to convey their thoughts and feelings. It helps to enhance how society thinks about what is happening in their immediate surroundings. It acts as a mirror that reflects on the good and the bad that society does with a view for society to salute their actions or to look at them with disdain. The ultimate purpose of literature was accentuated in this chapter.

Looking at the three different literature works, one can conclude that the writers use literature to expose how society has shifted from the moral values which the African upheld during traditional times, values which contributed to the rock-solid, robust morals. Many factors could be ascribed to the decay of morals in African societies. The different occurrences of moral degeneration that have been isolated in the three selected literary works show that there is connectivity in the writers' thoughts and the need to write about

the current moral state of affairs in society. The different forms of moral generation that were discovered in the different genres are lack of ubuntu, lack of respect, ill-discipline, xenophobia, corruption, gender-based violence, infidelity, theft, murder, crime, alcohol, and substance abuse.

The characters used to highlight these issues of moral degeneration are effectively and purposefully chosen. The writers are highly successful in using their characters to portray their roles and bringing to light all the problems of moral degeneration that affect their communities.



## CHAPTER FIVE

### SUMMARY OF THE FINDINGS, RECOMMENDATIONS AND CONCLUSION

#### 5.1 Introduction

A comprehensive description of the analysis was provided in the preceding chapter. Data was presented, discussed, and interpreted. The study explored different themes in the three Zulu literary books which the findings are extracted from. These themes that emerged outlined the rationale, extent of moral degeneration and its consequences.

This chapter presents the summary of the findings and conclusions drawn on the treatment of moral degeneration in three Zulu literary works, namely *Kudela Owaziyo* (2009) a play by BP Maphumulo (2009), *Ngaze Ngazenza* (1994), a novel by MM Masondo, and a novel, *Impi Yabomdabu Isethunjini* (2015) by JC Buthelezi.

The study has established that the writers of the three selected Zulu literary works have been successful in bringing to light the various elements of moral degeneration in their works. The most common types of moral degeneration elements treated in these three selected literary works were also be specified. This was done through the correct role allocation to the characters in the literary works.

#### 5.2 Summary of the findings

In *Impi Yabomdabu Isethunjini* (2015), Buthelezi handles the following issues of moral degeneration lack of ubuntu 'humaneness', lack of respect, lack of moral values in child upbringing, the issue of children born out of wedlock/marriage, theft and abuse of alcohol. He has effectively used Bafana, as the main character in the story, who comes face-to-face with his uncle Cele from the rural area of Mpaphala to discuss the issue of Bafana taking over the raising of his sister's children. Lack of ubuntu emerges when Bafana treats his uncle in a hostile manner, and it does not go down well with his uncle. Bafana's treatment of his uncle comes as a surprise because he grew up in a community of people who lived and practised the philosophy of *ubuntu*. His family still holds Zulu traditional norms and values in high regard.

When Poppie, Bafana's wife shows lack of respect to Bafana, her husband, his family members, and his entire clan, this comes as no surprise. To Poppie, a city woman, *Zulu culture* which has regard for the patriarchal system, which sees men in authority over women, does not prevail. She talks to Bafana as she pleases and takes decisions that involve their children without even informing him about those. Besides that, Bafana is not accorded the respect he rightfully deserves by the other woman, Alice, who comes later into Bafana's life. The two women characters in Bafana's life, Poppie and Alice fail to display the respect that should be shown to Bafana as their male partner. They fail to act respectfully towards Bafana as a male, husband and/or partner. Their manner of speaking, attitude, and overall general behaviour reveals that they have no regard for the Zulu traditional values and no regard for the person who is supposed to be in the position of authority in the household. The consequences of such lack of respect results in arguments, separation, and divorce.

Children are more likely to simulate their parents' disrespectful conduct. Children learn by emulation, if the role models display negative behaviour, they are likely to also follow suite. This has been demonstrated by Bafana and Poppie son, Euthenasia who shows no respect to elderly people and their maidservants. Euthenasia responds in a disrespectful manner in most instances when dealing with the house helpers and his teacher. Mgwazeni, Alice's son also shows escapades of lack of respect on Bafana who, as his mother's adult live-in partner should be shown respect. Respect starts in the household and spirals down to the neighbours and then to the entire community. When people feel respected, they tend to perform their responsibilities better and are likely to return the respect back.

The theme of lack of moral values in child upbringing provides an insight on the challenges and consequences of raising children in an environment that does not encourage moral values. This issue of moral degeneration plays itself out when Bafana and Poppie's children, especially the son Euthenasia shows signs of taking MaXakushe's monies which he must send to her children back, but he doesn't. Instead, he uses the money for his own benefit. When the maidservant complains, she is dismissed immediately. The disintegration in the family exposes the negative consequences that result from the lack of moral teaching in the family. What transpires in this literary work is that if family members do not know their roles, they tend to overlap

their unpleasant behaviour where it is not expected. When two parents don't have one method of child upbringing this results in the children acting in a negative way. This lifestyle leads to the children acting arrogantly and audaciously. They may fail to treat other people fairly and respectfully. Children who lack role models are more likely fail in acknowledging their mistakes and accepting their consequences. Parents need to be consistent, be in agreement and firm.

Parents are tasked with the duty of being the carriers of good moral standards. Good behaviour must be modelled for their children. Children will emulate what they observe in the household. Parents must be united in instilling good morals to their children. If parents are in contention with each other concerning moral values, then positive child upbringing will be compromised. Buthelezi uses the issue of children born out of wedlock to arouse conflict between Bafana, his uncle Cele. He uses this issue to underpin all the other themes in the novel. Bafana's sister's children set the story in motion. This issue precipitates conflict between Bafana and his uncle, Bafana and his wife on the one hand and Bafana's family on the other.

Bafana's life is disorganised and muddled because if it was not for this issue of his sister's children, life would not have changed. Before his uncle's visit, his life is well-organised, and nothing disturbs his daily routine. However, his uncle's visit ruffles everything, his life at home, his life at work, his private life, and so on, and throws it off-balance. Bafana thinks that alcohol will solve his problems, but it worsens them.

Although there are such heightened conflicts in the story, as one continues to read, one is tempted to believe that Bafana's sister's children would have been unsuccessful in life with all the mishaps and failures they experienced in life. However, being brought up on true traditional values, they turn out to be successful. They are the ones who help their communities and family.

The following moral degeneration issues are addressed in the drama, *Kudela Owaziyo* (2009) by BP Maphumulo: xenophobia, gender-based violence and corruption.

The writer presents the theme of xenophobia very well. The characters demonstrate why people initiate xenophobia. The dislike, intolerance and hatred of outsiders or foreigners

in the drama emanates from job retrenchment. This behaviour starts when the main character, Mdaluli, loses his job in the company he is working at. As he is trying to find something else to substitute his salary, a foreigner, Chivenga poses as a threat to him. The foreigner has good social skills, and he charges less for the same service. This leads to conniving against the foreigner and eventually there is violence, name calling and physical abuse against the foreigner. Jealousy intensifies the hatred to a point where witchcraft is practised, and the foreigner is harmed. Blame shifting also makes one not to take responsibility for their actions.

Foreigners become a threat to citizens of a country because they possess good work ethics, punctuality and respect for their job and are hardworking. Sometimes the skills they possess are a threat also. People need to be tolerant and understanding about one another. In any given time, situations can change, and people may need to be foreigners in another country. The treatment they give to desperate foreigners must be the same treatment they would expect if they were to find themselves in the same situation.

The issue of corruption affects the society at large because people who abuse their power or authority while they are tasked with official duties that they must perform. The writer of this play outlines this theme skilfully. Heshane, a high-ranking home affairs official solicits bribes from powerless people for his own private monetary gain. The victims of corruption by an official are the helpless immigrants who seek better life and permanent residency in South Africa and the women they are illegally married to have no legal recourse to what the corruption that they are victims to. Unbeknownst to the women, they are married to men they don't know, and this affects their entire identification. Reversing the process of this identity theft is tedious. The women are affected financially and emotionally.

Regrettably, the outcome of corruption does not affect the victims only, but it also affects the whole legislation or government administration. The economic system is affected because premature registration of immigrants affects the budget of the country. People who are tasked to render service to the citizens must do that with zeal and honesty. Greed and abuse of power leads to poor service delivery. The penalty of corruption is not worth the illegal gains that one temporarily receives.

Gender-based violence is thoroughly presented in this literary work. What becomes discernible is the fact that life challenges like job losses propel other people to resort to gender-based violence. Women and children become powerless victims who cannot defend themselves. In the play, Mdaluli, becomes violent at his home because he cannot meet his financial obligations now that he is without a job. Perpetrators of gender-based violence can use different items like guns, fists, sjambok to execute their violent actions. They care less about harm they cause.

The patriarchal system has contributed to empowering some perpetrators of gender-based violence because they believe that as men or heads of families, they have the downright control over their women and children. They feel entitled to their partner's bodies and expect them to comply to any sexual act they impose. Mdaluli is a perfect example of such perpetrators. He wants control over his wife and children, although he does not provide for their financial welfare.

Tolerance and condonement to women and children abuse by the victims is highlighted in the play. Some women provide reasons on behalf of the perpetrator as to why they abuse them. They blame themselves and acknowledge that they may have triggered the violent behaviour from their partners. Any interference or offer for help from other family members and law enforcement is not welcome. This behaviour empowers the perpetrator to proceed and escalate the abuse.

Gender-based violence causes temporary or permanent physical and emotional damage. This type of abuse has created divided families, hatred, and disrespect. Some of the women and children that are abused grow up to be violent adults themselves. When this escalates, a community of abusers is bred. Gender based violence must cease at home and be reported. The victims of abuse must be willing to accept help when it is offered.

What transpires in the novel, *Ngaze ngazenza* (2004), by MM Masondo: moral degeneration takes effect when people resort to intimidation, using threats, insults, and hurtful words when they feel they are unable to handle a difficult situation. Threats become a weapon of conveying their frustration and differences. The use of threats as a strategy for constructing the story has been done excellently by Masondo. These

threats create the necessary conflict in the story to amplify conflict; it has also been used as a ploy to delay the unravelling of the murder. As the story takes shape, a reader would be convinced that the person who utters such threats would in the long run commit an act that would be verified by the words uttered. The use of threats in such a genre has the inclination to side-track and avert the investigations.

In this literary work the act of manipulation and fabrication of lies to harm other people becomes apparent. The framing of the main character in the story proves that people who do deceive others are impassive of the consequences of their action. The main character was going to spend time in jail for the crime she did not commit. This was going to change her entire life for the worst.

People will go to great lengths to tarnish and betray another person for their personal gain. This unsympathetic behaviour causes permanent damages if not detected. Many people have been arrested, lost their jobs and families, or have their reputation because of this kind of behaviour.

What becomes apparent in the story is how some married couples are not committed to the vows that they make when they sign the contract of marriage. Men are presented as the partners who are not entirely committed to their marriages; this is the case with Bhekani. They plot with their friends to be unfaithful to their female partners. The secrets that are kept in marriage lead to separation and communication breakdown. The patterns of any behavioural change are easily noticeable by the innocent partner, Thoko Ndlovu. Upon learning that her partner is unfaithful, she plans to hire a person to kill him. These changes may lead to the retaliation by the innocent partner. Unfortunately, the consequences of retaliation may become fatal. Masondo uses this incident to construct his detective story. It only dawns towards the end of the story that this is where everything starts.

The writer has been very ingenious in his architecture of the plot structure. Throughout the story all eyes are focusing on Mginsa's secretary as the murderer as all her actions do not remove her from any suspicion or guilt.

The novel also highlights the predicament of crime in society. Criminals commit crimes like burglary for different reasons. Criminals commit these crimes in different places as it is highlighted in the novel that they burgled an office and a house in search of items in those premises. The intent is to unlawfully take possession of property that does not belong to them. Crime causes negative long-term effects for the victims. It causes anxiety, distress, mistrust, anger, and trauma.

The writer uses the characters in the novel to accentuate how people can premeditate heinous acts like murder despite running the risk of being caught by the law enforcement personnel. The challenges that the couple experience in their marriage cause one partner to resolve to an unlawful act and a permanent solution. Mpondlela, plans and commits the murder of Bhekani Ndlovu in a manner that if the detective responsible for the case is not highly resourceful and competent, it would be difficult for him to crack the case.

Greed is another element that perpetuates people in deciding to accept money to kill people for other people. The character that ends up carrying the murder is deceived by the promise of monetary gain. It is easy for him to carefully plan and carry out the act of murder. Murder is a punishable and cruel act. The fate or life of another person is not tasked to any other person. Everyone has a right to life. Some people decide on this cruel act as a solution to their problems. Unfortunately, it is a punishable act and the murderer, or any other person involved must be convicted. People must discover ways to resolve their problems and respect life in general.

### **5.3 Recommendations**

In addition to the mentioned moral degeneration elements in this dissertation, the 21<sup>st</sup> century or modern societies are faced with new budding moral degeneration elements and trends which must be addressed by Zulu literature writers. It is a recommendation that as societies are quickly moving from traditional to modern, modern Zulu writers need to address and expose more of the recent moral degeneration elements and eccentric behaviour on people. The Zulu literature needs to address more of the new trends like cyber-crime, political corruption, bullying, fraud, prostitution and mob justice. Writing about these elements will give more expose and prepare societies to be more alert and

vigilant. The Zulu writers must include the consequences of these recent moral degeneration elements in their literary works so that the societies can learn about them.

## 5.4 Conclusion

This chapter presented the summary of what the researcher found when she looked at how the writers of the three selected Zulu literary works Buthelezi, Maphumulo and Masondo addressed the problems of moral degeneration in their works. The researcher discovered that Buthelezi, constructed fictional stories to address how presently people lack the spirit of *ubuntu*, lack respect, and moral values in bringing up children, theft, and alcohol abuse. She established that Maphumulo in his play addressed the problems of xenophobia, corruption, and gender-based violence. Additionally, Masondo addressed the problems of intimidation, deception, infidelity and murder.

The writers of these selected works chose to write different genres. Buthelezi's genre is a novel where he shows how the problems he is covers in his work manifest themselves in society. Maphumulo's genre is a play where what happens has to be enacted and performed. Masondo' genre is a detective story. The researcher chose different types of genres to show how the problems of moral degeneration have been handled in the different genres. The researcher chose the three literary works to confirm that literature mirrors the society.

As the researcher worked through the study, she established the aim of the study was achieved when the writers of the three selected literary works exposed the different themes of moral degeneration and used the different characters and settings to bring to the open the different problems of moral degeneration. The study has exceptionally demonstrated that Buthelezi, Maphumulo and Masondo have used their fictional works to communicate the problems of moral degeneration in their works. The research's objectives have also been accomplished. The study has shown how the writers of the three selected works treat the issues of moral degeneration; it has investigated the types of characters that have been used by the writers in dealing with the issue of moral degeneration in their works; it has established the types of settings that have been used by the writers in dealing with the issue of moral degeneration in



their works; and it has also indicated the most common types of moral degeneration problems treated in these three selected literary works.

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