Social transformation through affirmation of human dignity:
a case study of 'Learn to Earn'

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Declaration

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Abstract

Given South Africa's humanitarian crisis, the intention was to explore a possible intervention to address the pervasive poverty and rapidly rising unemployment, by means of a practical theological study. The study aims to ascertain the contribution which spirituality in a Faith-Based Organisation ("FBO") makes towards attaining social transformation through affirming human dignity. Throughout the study, 'spirituality' was given the meaning of the personal and relational side of the Christian faith, which shapes daily life.

The evolution of the notion of 'development', as an undertaking intended to improve the lives of those experiencing material deprivation, was traced and it was noted how spirituality had long been excluded as a feature affecting the well-being of those to whom poverty upliftment was intended to be addressed. The study therefore argues in favour of a theological interpretation of development, known also as 'transformation', having its foundation in a kingdom of God theology with a focus on attaining '*shalom*'.

Positioned within the discipline of Theology and Development, this qualitative research study selected a case study as its methodology, within an interpretive paradigmatic perspective, which incorporated the notion of self-reflexivity as an additional dimension of the data interpretation.

The unit of analysis of the case study was the FBO, and an in-depth exploration was undertaken in order to understand the work of Learn to Earn ("LTE"), an FBO with an overtly Christian faith expression. LTE professes to focus on the whole person, including the spiritual dimension, in the course of providing skills training to formerly unemployed people in Khayelitsha, Cape Town and Zwelihle, Hermanus. Through empirical research, the integrated spirituality practices of LTE were explored in order to ascertain the extent of social transformation being experienced by its participants.

The study's findings were that the practice of spirituality within LTE resulted in the affirmation of human dignity of participants, in circumstances where there had been a focus on the *imago Dei* and where the kingdom of God was proclaimed holistically. The result was that 'marred identities' of impoverished people were healed as they recovered their true identity and vocation. As a consequence, the affirmation of human dignity through a recovery of vocation played a significant role in the participants

overcoming powerlessness, caused by structural injustice. Through their own agency, they were able to escape poverty's captivity and to progress towards *shalom*, whereby meaningful social transformation occurred.

Based on the empirical evidence relating to the case study of LTE, it can be suggested that this FBO empowers those who are economically deprived, by assisting them to overcome powerlessness, through activating their agency, as their human dignity is affirmed and vocation subsequently recovered. It is suggested that the significant role of the FBO in development work is thereby evident. Recent interest in inclusion of spirituality within development discourse is thus to be welcomed as a beneficial addition to attaining social transformation.

Opsomming

Gegewe Suid-Afrika se humanitêre krisis, is die doel van die navorsing om 'n moontlike intervensie te ondersoek om die heersende armoede en vinnig stygende werkloosheid aan te spreek deur middel van 'n praktiese teologiese studie. Die studie het ten doel om vas te stel watter bydrae spiritualiteit in 'n Geloofsgebaseerde Organisasie (FBO) lewer tot sosiale transformasie deur die versterking van menswaardigheid. In die studie word die betekenis van "spiritualiteit" beskou as die persoonlike en relasionele sy van die Christelike geloof, wat die daaglikse lewe vorm.

Die evolusie van die idee van "ontwikkeling" as onderneming met die doel om die lewens van diegene wat materiële ontbering ervaar, te verbeter, is nagevors. Dit was opmerklik dat spiritualiteit lank uitgesluit is as 'n aspek van ontwikkeling wat die wel-wees beïnvloed van diegene tot wie armoede-opheffing gerig word. Die studie pleit dus vir 'n teologiese interpretasie van ontwikkeling, ook bekend as "transformasie", met as grondslag 'n koninkryk van God-teologie met 'n fokus op die bereiking van *shalom*.

Hierdie studie, wat geposisioneer is in die dissipline van Teologie en Ontwikkeling, is 'n kwalitatiewe navorsingstudie, wat 'n gevallestudie as metodologie binne 'n interpretatiewe paradigmatiese perspektief gekies het. Die begrip van self-refleksie as 'n addisionele dimensie van die data-interpretasie, is geïnkorporeer.

Die eenheid van die gevallestudie wat ontleed is, is 'n FBO. 'n In-diepte verkenning is onderneem om die werk van Learn to Earn (LTE), 'n FBO met 'n openlike Christelike geloofsbenadering, te verstaan. LTE fokus op die hele mens, insluitend die geestelike dimensie, in die loop van die verskaffing van vaardigheidsopleiding aan voorheen werklose mense in Khayelitsha, Kaapstad, en Zwelihle, Hermanus. Deur empiriese navorsing is die geïntegreerde spiritualiteitspraktyke van LTE ondersoek ten einde die omvang van sosiale transformasie wat deur die deelnemers ervaar word, vas te stel.

Die studie se bevindinge is dat die beoefening van spiritualiteit binne LTE, waar gefokus is op die *imago Dei* en waar die koninkryk van God holisties verkondig is, tot die bevestiging van die menswaardigheid van deelnemers gelei het. Die gevolg was dat "geskende identiteite" van verarmde mense genees is namate hulle hul ware identiteit en roeping herwin het. Gevolglik het die bevestiging van menswaardigheid

deur 'n herstel van roeping 'n beduidende rol gespeel sodat die deelnemers magteloosheid, veroorsaak deur strukturele onreg, te bowe gekom het. Deur hul eie agentskap kon hulle uit armoede ontsnap en na *shalom* beweeg, waardeur betekenisvolle sosiale transformasie plaasgevind het.

Gebaseer op die empiriese bewyse wat verband hou met die gevallestudie van LTE, kan voorgestel word dat hierdie FBO diegene wat ekonomies benadeel is, bemagtig om magteloosheid te oorkom, deur die aktivering van hul agentskap, aangesien hul menswaardigheid bevestig word en roeping daarna herstel word. Daar word voorgestel dat die beduidende rol van die FBO in ontwikkelingswerk daardeur duidelik is. Die onlangse belangstelling in die insluiting van spiritualiteit in die ontwikkelings-diskoers moet dus verwelkom word as 'n voordelige toevoeging tot die bereiking van sosiale transformasie.

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I give thanks to our God of unfailing love, whose presence has been with me on every step of the journey. He has given me guidance and the strength I have needed to complete this undertaking to which he called me. I have personally experienced the truth of the words of the Lord Jesus, that "with God all things are possible" (Matt. 19: 26). God has blessed me beyond measure in my life, for which I am deeply grateful.

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Ad majorem Dei gloriam.

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B & B	Bed and Breakfast
CBD	Central Business District
CDO	Christian Development Organisation
CI	Compassion International
CTS	Continuous Traumatic Stress
CV	*Curriculum Vitae*
FBO	Faith-Based Organisation
LTE	Learn to Earn
BC	Black Consciousness
BCM	Black Consciousness Movement
GNP	Gross National Product
IMF	International Monetary Fund
M & E	Monitoring and Evaluation
NIEO	New International Economic Order
NT	New Testament
NGO	Non-governmental Organisation
OT	Old Testament
OTSR	Ongoing Traumatic Stress Response
PTSD	Posttraumatic Stress Disorder
SDGs	Sustainable Development Goals
TRC	Truth and Reconciliation Commission
UDHR	Universal Declaration of Human Rights
UK	United Kingdom
UN	United Nations

CHAPTER 1.
ORIENTATION TO THE STUDY

1.1 Introduction

The aim of the study is to explore the contribution which spirituality in a Faith-Based Organisation ("FBO") makes towards attaining social transformation through affirming human dignity. The intention is to explore the work of an FBO through a practical theological study, in addressing the chronic deprivation and social injustice evident in South Africa.

This chapter opens with the rationale for the study, based on South Africa's humanitarian crisis with regard to rampant poverty, together with a section on personal motivation, wherein I also position myself as researcher. The context of the study is then clarified, with a detailed description of the organisation known as 'Learn to Earn' ("LTE"), which will be the subject of a case study as the chosen methodology. The geographical and spatial context in which the study takes place is also elucidated in order to expose the vast disparity in wealth apparent in Cape Town, the city in which the study takes place. Thereafter, the temporal context is described, due to the highly unusual circumstances of the data collection having taken place during the midst of the coronavirus pandemic.

Next, in this chapter, is an exploration of prior study, commencing with the introduction of what is known as 'development', as an undertaking intended to improve the lives of the impoverished, and, from this discussion, a gap in academic literature is identified. Since LTE is an FBO, prior study relating to this entity is examined, in order to distinguish its characteristics from other social justice initiatives, in seeking to ascertain the contribution of FBOs to poverty alleviation. Measurable criteria for determining social transformation is thereafter discussed, followed by the restoration of human dignity as an indicator of social transformation, together with the part played by vocation.

The research question and research objectives are then detailed, and an introduction to the study's positioning within an interpretive paradigmatic tradition given. Thereafter, the study's theoretical framework as a practical theological study within the discipline of Theology and Development, as influenced by Missiology, is explained.

The chapter next contains a summary of the research design, methods, methodology and data collection methods. The study's conceptual framework, which was devised as an aid to focus the study and form a boundary, introducing key concepts used herein, which will facilitate understanding of the study's empirical findings, is introduced, with a fuller explanation presented in Chapter 4. The seven chapters are then listed, with a summary of their contents. Finally, the contribution of the study is presented, prior to the conclusion of this introductory chapter.

1.2 Rationale: South Africa's humanitarian crisis

South Africa's social inequality is of such a magnitude that a 2018 report of the World Bank ("the World Bank report")[1] reveals it to be amongst the most unequal societies, or possibly even the most unequal society, in the world (Hurlbut 2018: xv)[2]. August (2010: 17-18) attributes the poverty to apartheid, which caused people to be dispossessed of land, provided with inferior education and forced to travel long distances to school, as a result of which an overwhelming number became illiterate and were unable to earn a living wage. His view regarding the inability of many to earn a living wage is borne out by the alarming unemployment statistics, which stood at 34,4% in the second quarter of 2021, and which remain racially skewed partly owing to this legacy (Statssa 2021). Moreover, of deep concern, is that by 2015, poverty had gripped 40% of South Africa's population (Hurlbut 2018: 113). The situation is exacerbated by the fact that, for a staggering 76% of the population, poverty is "a constant threat in their daily lives" (Hurlbut 2018: xviii). Swart, Rocher, Green and Erasmus (2010: 62) record that "many South Africans remain outside the economic mainstream, trapped in a state of chronic deprivation".

The aforementioned data confirms that the legacy of the egregious apartheid regime is still evident. Bowers du Toit (2016: 5) observes the continuing inequality in terms of which the old white elite preserve their existing privilege, whilst the rise of the new black elite amass their personal wealth to the detriment of the deprived and vulnerable. It is accordingly arguable that studies which address pervasive poverty and

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[1] A collaborative research project of the World Bank with the South African Department of Planning, Monitoring and Evaluation and Statistics South Africa, released in March 2018 with the survey dates having commenced in 2006 and ended in 2015.

[2] "With a Gini-coefficient of 0,63 in 2015, South Africa is the most unequal country in the world" (Hurlbut 2018: 42). A consequence of the disparity of wealth is that the post-apartheid pattern of poverty reduction was interrupted in 2006 with an additional 3,1 million people slipping into poverty from 2006 to 2015 (Hurlbut 2018: 10).

unemployment, with a view to interrupting its escalating trend, are amongst the most pressing research needs in South Africa. A strong motivating factor for the present study, in the sphere of poverty and social injustice, would therefore be concern for the well-being and human dignity of fellow citizens.

A further rationale for the study is to be found in the gap identified in academic research in a particular sphere of social injustice. In the course of the discussion in Section 1.5 concerning prior study into poverty upliftment, the observation is made how spirituality has been ignored by development actors as a potential factor in contributing towards social transformation. Since spirituality, arguably beneficial in confronting poverty, has been excluded in development practice and in research, this exclusion gives rise to a gap in the literature, coupled with limited practical theological prior study into FBOs which do social justice- type work as an expression of a Christian faith understanding (Hancox 2019: 1). This observation suggests that a study such as the present one could be of value in understanding the contribution of the FBO, and more specifically the FBO aligned with the Christian faith, in addressing poverty from an angle whereby human dignity is highlighted.

1.3 Positioning of researcher and personal motivation for study

Linked to the rationale for the study being based on South Africa's humanitarian crisis and the scholarly gap in the contribution of FBOs, and more specifically the role of spirituality in development matters, is the researcher's personal motivation. This, in turn, ties in with positioning the researcher within the study, and these aspects will be addressed below.

Creswell (2009: 196) promotes the idea of the role of the researcher as primary data collector, necessitating the researcher's positioning of him- or herself at the outset of the study. He insists that assumptions and personal values giving rise to biases, whilst acknowledging that they are not necessarily detrimental and indeed can be beneficial, nevertheless need to be disclosed early on. In this regard, it is incumbent on me to present the position from which I undertake this study, acknowledging, as Creswell points out, that my perceptions have been shaped by my background.

My personal background is that of a white, South African woman in my late fifties, of a socio-economic standing which would be considered privileged. My theological stance as researcher is as a professing Christian, aligned with an evangelical position,

worshipping in a church in the Anglican tradition[3]. My close ties to the Anglican denomination are by virtue of my alignment with the Anglican Church's commitment, prior to South Africa's democracy in 1994, to oppose apartheid actively. This, in turn, relates to the values espoused and promoted by a member of the Anglican Church's clergy, for whom I hold the deepest respect, namely Archbishop *Emeritus* Desmond Tutu, who has been described, in an online newspaper's celebration of his ninetieth birthday, as 'diminutive in size but a skyscraper of moral conscience…among the world's justice seekers and peacemakers', [a] 'voice of healing, justice, faith and unconditional love' (Kotecha 2021: 1).

Regarding my personal motivation for the study, it seems trite to say that my concern for the vulnerable and marginalised of society ought to be a natural consequence of professing to be a follower of Christ. Perhaps August (2010: 47) expresses this more pertinently when he says that "…the Christian way of life is not only a spiritual action that is unrelated to the service of humanity but a practical mandate for social consciousness and concern for humanity". Likewise, de Gruchy (2003: 20) makes the testing statement that the "Christian faith is not just about intellectual assent, but about a life lived in compassionate service to others, especially the vulnerable". I am personally constantly challenged by these statements of August and de Gruchy.

My initial understanding of social injustice, and deep-rooted interest therein, was derived from some experience gained in human rights litigation during my years as a practising attorney from 1988 to 2004[4]. Whilst not central to my area of litigation practice, I nevertheless, on occasion, handled human rights violations for *pro bono* clients. Practising law under the final years of the apartheid regime, I can recall acting against the gross human rights abuses perpetrated by the security police, including representing individuals who had been unlawfully arrested and detained. Because of the flagrant disregard for human dignity of the case, I also have a clear recollection of representing an elderly domestic worker who had been brutally attacked by police dogs, after they were set upon congregants at a peaceful outdoor church gathering,

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[3] In using the term 'evangelical', I specifically distance myself from the fundamentalist Evangelicalism more usually associated recently with extremist right-wing politics. Instead, the term is used to denote a belief in Christ's saving role from the power of sin, personal acceptance of Christ by faith, the truth of the Bible and sharing of the 'good news' (Myers 2011: 48).

[4] Bless, Higson-Smith and Sithole (2013: 48) indicate that, where the choice of topic is one in which the researcher holds a significant interest, this lends some protection against a superficial or deficient research outcome occurring.

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declared to be illegal under State of Emergency Regulations. Having been personally arrested under the Emergency Regulations, I had not only acquired legal knowledge of the ultimate control this legislation conferred on the government, but had also developed a sense of moral outrage at the government's ruthlessness, and a keen awareness of the consequent social injustice.

Swart (2006: 16) provides a reminder of the foundational truth that those at the fringes of society, who are the victims of social injustice, are of momentous importance to God. He describes the church's participation in social injustice as "an inescapable *theological* imperative…that springs from the very heart of the Gospel message and affirms the poor as the heirs of the Kingdom of God" (author's emphasis). From a theological perspective, therefore, as followers of Christ, we are called to combat social injustice experienced by those in states of vulnerability.

In further support of personal motivation of exploring the work of the FBO known as LTE, in this study, I have had opportunities to observe LTE over the past fifteen years, albeit from a distance, through visits to the premises, attendance at its fundraising activities and following the organisation on social media platforms. From what was purely anecdotal evidence at this stage, it appeared to me that LTE's objectives in challenging social injustice were yielding results. Personal narratives posted on social media seemed to indicate positive change in the lives of the students, particularly in enabling previously unemployed individuals to enter the economic arena. If this were the case, then it warranted finding out what the organisation was doing and how they were attaining results.

In practical theological studies specifically, Bennett, Graham, Pattison and Walton (2018) call for the integration of the researcher and the research. With the researcher, they say, comes a particular historical and social context and the key to approaching a coherent whole is to be found in self-reflexivity (Bennett *et al*. 2018: 16). For instance, the incisive comment of McGarrah Sharp (2014: 425), "to participate fully [in identifying and opposing inequality] is to risk being told of my own complicity" is one which is uncomfortable for a researcher of my background to hear, which nevertheless operates positively in stimulating a determination for change to occur.

This mirrors the opinion of Bennett *et al.* (2018), that the connection to a research project usually has its roots in something inside the researcher, for example,

dissatisfaction with how things are, or a desire to find an alternative to the *status quo*. In my own instance, my motivation to research poverty and social transformation stems from a desire for change and hope that change is possible. As I reflect on the field work undertaken, it is abundantly evident that I have felt heartbroken at the lives of desperation of the participants, especially when faced with stories of students experiencing near starvation due to the impact of the coronavirus pandemic.

In my own historical and social context, as alluded to by Bennett *et al*. (2018: 16), my identity as a white researcher in a country bearing the scars of apartheid, renders pertinent the notion of whiteness[5]. Van Wyngaard (2016: 5) would concur, as he calls for white South Africans[6] to become conscious of their own whiteness and for white Christians to adopt new identities, which will be reflected on in Chapter 7[7]. In essence, it must be stated that the undertaking of the research project is thus accompanied by my heartfelt recognition of the destruction of human lives as the legacy of colonisation, and the study, reflecting McGarrah Sharp's (2014: 423-425) sentiments, accordingly aspires to transformation of relationships towards greater compassion, justice and liberation.

1.4 Context of research

1.4.1 Learn to Earn's work amongst the previously unemployed

The context in which the study was conducted is the FBO called LTE. The nature of the organisation, and the work it does in confronting poverty, is elaborated on in Sections 5.2.1, 5.2.2 and 5.2.3, but the following synopsis provides some background to introduce the context. LTE came into existence thirty-one years' ago, out of concern for social injustice, by providing skills training to previously unemployed people, in

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[5] Whiteness studies frame racial issues and explain these issues with reference to white people (de Villiers 2018: 8). De Villiers (2018: 7) notes a possible root of the notion of 'whiteness' and surrounding debate in leading intellectuals in the postcolonial movement, such as Frantz Fanon (1925-1961). However, he records that the first academic works in the field of whiteness emerged in the early nineteen-nineties, with author Toni Morrison attributed as a source of the concept. The author observed the impact of racism in American literature whereby African Americans, due to racialisation, were portrayed as 'different', whereas whites perpetuating the racism were portrayed as 'normal'.

[6] A leading expert on whiteness in the South African context, Melissa Steyn (referred to by de Villiers (2018: 8), believes that whiteness can be interpreted as "an ideologically supported social positionality" that has devolved to people of European descent resulting from economic advantage due to colonisation and apartheid policy. Race is a marker of this entitlement. For Steyn (2005: 121), whiteness can best be understood as "the shared social space in which the psychological, cultural, political and economic dimensions of this privileged positionality are normalized, and rendered unremarkable".

[7] He stresses that, without engaging with whiteness, can cause whites to withdraw into white enclaves, thereby preventing the possibility of a new humanity (Van Wyngaard 2016: 4).

order to curtail unemployment and poverty[8]. Roché van Wyk, co-founder and director, clarifies the purpose of LTE in explaining how unemployed people come to the organisation because they are feeling "powerless" and "have run out of options", with many feeling "desperate" (RvW48: 6).

It is noteworthy that skills development plays an undeniably essential role in alleviating poverty, according to the World Bank report (Hurlbut 2018: xxvi). This view is supported by Swart *et al*. (2010: 67), who comment that, whilst the government is able to provide social grants and free healthcare, which protect those experiencing deprivation from dying of hunger and illness, it has had minimal success with skills training[9]. Clearly, what is needed, therefore, is to look beyond government assistance. LTE, being an FBO which teaches skills necessary to earn an income, is therefore of *prima facie* interest in exploring how its processes shape social change, including tackling unemployment[10].

LTE is a local and community-based initiative[11] which operates a main campus in Khayelitsha, as well as subsidiary campuses in Hermanus and Claremont, all in the Western Cape, to provide skills training to facilitate employment in the economic sector and also to create ability for launching businesses through entrepreneurial skills[12]. Training is provided mainly in the areas of baking for profit, graphic design, office skills, basic computer literacy, woodwork and sewing. The graphic design course has an affiliation with Stellenbosch University and the Red and Yellow Creative School of

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[8] For its funding it is dependent on grants from individual donors, corporations and Christian organisations, local and international.

[9] The view is also supported by Chambers (1997: 210), who proposes empowerment of the economically deprived through gaining in skills, confidence and knowledge.

[10] Swart *et al*. (2010: 62-3) highlight race and gender as two of the dominant indicators of poverty, with black females most likely to lack access to income generation. The World Bank report also found that poverty is evident more amongst females than males (Hurlbut 2018: 16). Females are 11% less likely to find jobs than men and, when they do, are paid less (Hurlbut 2018: 87). LTE students are predominantly black females, a further indication of the organisation's relevance in combatting poverty, since it is attracting society's most vulnerable, and providing evidence of the intersectionality of poverty.

[11] Lunn speaks of "locally relevant" and "community-based" development initiatives as being more favourable initiatives. Speckman (2007: 37) too comments "If development is about transforming structures and lives locally, then it has to be contextual. A universal approach cannot work."

[12] People in material deprivation have a greatly reduced chance of finding formal employment but entrepreneurship and micro industries are shown to pave the way to employment in the absence of formal employment. Current levels of entrepreneurship and micro businesses in South Africa though are "disappointing" (Hurlbut 2018: 87-88).

Business ("the Red and Yellow School"). Students[13] are exposed to the university and to the Red and Yellow School by attending occasional lectures, and a bursary system to the latter allows successful applicants to apply to study further.

The Hermanus campus, situated in the coastal tourist town, focuses on tourism in the hotel, restaurant and B & B industry, with courses such as basic hospitality, as well as home maintenance of holiday homes, including courses such as the basic handyman's course, and also the retail industry, offering the basic cashier's course. In addition, LTE runs the Ground Up Barista Academy, which is situated at their head office in Claremont. The final division is known as 'Fashion for Change', which trains people in retail skills from their clothing store in Claremont, with some graduates placed in work vacancies at their Claremont or Bellville stores. Almost six hundred unemployed people register per year, for one of the market-relevant training courses at one of the campuses[14].

1.4.2 The spatial dimension

The spatial dimension of the study is located in Khayelitsha, within the Cape Town metropole, although a small number of participants within the study reside in Zwelihle outside the coastal town of Hermanus, one hundred and twenty kilometres from Cape Town. The residential area known as Khayelitsha was created in the 1980s during apartheid, when thousands of individuals were forcibly moved to inferior residences on the desolate Cape Flats, where limited economic opportunity existed, approximately thirty to thirty-five kilometres from the Cape Town CBD, making transport to places of employment expensive. The intention was to address overcrowding in the 'townships' nearby as well as the migration from rural areas of the Eastern Cape (Turok, Visagie and Scheba 2021: 74)[15]. Khayelitsha has experienced

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[13] Bragg (1987: 42) highlights how those who are most in need of their dignity being affirmed, are often demeaned by paternalistic terminology, such as 'recipients' or 'target groups', used by development practitioners. As a measure intended to counter such diminution of dignity, the students taking part in skills development programmes at LTE will be referred to in this study as 'participants' or 'students'.

[14] In the last available LTE Annual Report, the statistics listed are 662 individuals registering for the 2018 year, with 583 completing the course, representing an 88% completion rate. As an indication of the number of students on a course (each of which runs several times a year), in January 2020, the number of registered students at the Khayelitsha campus was as follows: Bake for Profit (18), graphic design (10), woodwork (12), office administration (10), basic computer skills (10) and sewing (18). At the Hermanus campus, the number of registered students was as follows: hospitality (10), home management (10), basic handyman (10), basic computer skills (8).

[15] The term 'township' has no formal definition but is generally understood to refer to the residential areas on the outskirts of towns and cities, established during apartheid, which are marked by poverty, unemployment and lack of facilities (treasury.gov.za 2021).

rapid growth due to rural to urban migration and consists of formal, government-provided housing, informal backyard dwellings and densely populated informal settlements with minimal sanitation infrastructure (Schotte & Zizzamia 2021: 5). The latest Census (2011) lists Khayelitsha's population at three hundred and ninety-one thousand seven hundred and forty-nine, as 99% black African, with fewer than half of the households living in formal dwellings[16]. Seventy-four percent of households have a monthly income of less than R3 200 per month (capetown.gov.za 2021).

The current population of Khayelitsha is over four hundred thousand, with the area marked by "high levels of food insecurity, hardship, crime and informal housing" (Turok *et al.* 2021: 74). Criminal activity is facilitated through inadequate public lighting and inaccessibility of law enforcement vehicles. Kiewit (2021)[17] highlights this in reporting systemic failures in governance and service delivery in Khayelitsha, together with a crumbling transport system.

 Indeed, the crime statistics released by the government confirm that Khayelitsha consistently records one of the highest crime rates in the country, with violent crimes, including murder, attempted murder, rape and robbery, particularly rife. During the period October to December 2020, during which field work for the study was being undertaken, statistics for 'contact crimes', which include murder, rape and robbery, record Khayelitsha as having the second highest cases countrywide (saps.gov.za 2021). During this same period associated with the pandemic's lockdown, Schotte & Zizzamia (2021: 18) noted an increase in extortion by gangsters, together with increased visibility of organised neighbourhood gangs. This fact becomes relevant for the discussion in Section 5.3.3 where it is argued that poverty is suitably interpreted through a lens of trauma, due to sustained exposure to high levels of crime and violence.

The background to Khayelitsha, described above, a mere twenty- minute drive from Cape Town's commercial centre, stands in startling contrast to Cape Town's reputation as one of the most desired tourist destinations, voted best city in the world for the seventh consecutive year by London's Telegraph newspaper readers, a city

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[16] Only 45% percent are recorded as living in formal dwellings and recent information suggests that the figure is likely to be considerably lower, particularly due to COVID-19's effect on residents' inability to pay rent and a greater number having to move to informal settlements in the vicinity (Wills, Patel, van der Berg and Mpeta 2020).

[17] In an article entitled 'Khayelitsha's people are still in the dangerous dark'.

renowned for its exceptional restaurants, world-class attractions and magnificent natural beauty[18].

In this regard, Turok *et al.* (2021) offer a lens on Cape Town's spatial differentiation and its relationship with glaringly disparate socio-economic statuses. In doing so, they highlight how Cape Town's "social composition and fractured spatial form bear the strong imprint of its colonial and apartheid history" (Turok *et al.* 2021: 72). The authors remark that, for three centuries, the region was intended to favour the minority white population, at the expense of the indigenous population[19]. From the introduction of apartheid as government's official policy in 1948, spatial usage was determined by skin colour, as different ethnic groups were separated into different residential areas under national policy of 'separate development', prioritising whites and disadvantaging blacks. Turok *et al.* (2021: 72) record that, whilst these odious policies were abolished with the replacement of apartheid by democratic rule in 1994, "many scars remain".

Although the legal grounds for racial segregation are no longer in existence, sharp spatial divides in the city continue to exist, based on race, since socio-economic status remains synonymous with race, and black Africans remain the most disadvantaged (Turok *et al*. 2021: 72). The authors describe the stark spatial inequality in vivid language as follows:

> *Cape Town is a famously divided city, with affluent, leafy suburbs offering exceptional amenities and picturesque mountain and coastal settings, juxtaposed against austere, inhospitable dormitory settlements on the treeless sand-plains of the Cape Flats* (Turok *et al.* 2021: 73).

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[18] See eatout.co.za. '2 Cape Town restaurants in world's top 100', 23 September 2021, and telegraph.co.uk 'Why Cape Town is the best city in the world', 12 January 2020.

[19] Turok *et al*. (2021: 72) use the racial terminology common in South Africa: black Africans (or black), coloured, Indian (or Asian) and white. They use the term 'black' to refer to everyone not subject to the privilege of whites under apartheid. However, in doing so, they acknowledge the problems of using social constructs from a particular era. Likewise, in my usage of racial terminology in this study, which follows that of Turok *et al.* (2021), I agree with the problems noted by the authors, conscious of the divisiveness, wounding inflicted, and perpetuation of the vagaries of racial labelling, whereby apartheid officials "dipped into a potpourri of eugenicist myths, the popular residue of theories of scientific racism" (Posel 2001: 96). For this reason, Posel (2001: 109) identifies apartheid racial terminology as social constructs, arbitrarily founded on "a version of the idea of race which contributed directly to the enormous powers wielded by racial classifiers". In spite of my condemnation of the heinous practice of racial classification, and consciousness of its arbitrariness, as mentioned, references to race are made in this study for the sake of enhanced understanding of the contextual situation. My reasoning is a reflection of Posel's (2001: 109) observation that the residue of South Africa's apartheid past remains in that it is the norm to speak in racialised terms. In amplification of this comment, she notes how, paradoxically, one of the chief instruments of legislation intended to redress racial inequity, The Employment Equity Act (55 of 1988), uses the identical racial terms as the 1950 Population Registration Act, the basis for apartheid racial classification intended to preserve "racial purity".

A small number of the participants within the study, from the Hermanus campus, reside in Zwelihle, a township on the outskirts of the coastal town of Hermanus. Zwelihle is situated on the south-western coastline, and was founded in 1963 to house migrant labourers from the Eastern Cape (Cele, Alman & Fortuin 2014: 3). Described as similar to Khayelitsha, marked by poverty, overcrowding and unemployment, Zwelihle does not have the same high crime statistics of Khayelitsha (yomelelani.co.za 2021). Zwelihle has been undergoing enormous growth, whereby the population rose by 43% between 2001 and 2016, which brought with it social problems (Burger 2018: 1). These social problems include drug and alcohol abuse, increased crime, food insecurity and inadequate housing (Cele *et al.* 2014: 25). The township is marked by high unemployment, which at 42%, is significantly higher than the national average (Cele *et al.* 2014: 16). Zwelihle rose to prominence in 2018 due to residents taking to the streets on what was a main tourist highway to the famed Garden Route. There, violent service delivery[20] protests took place, in order to attract the attention of the authorities, who had failed to provide basic services for the township (politicsweb.co.za)[21].

1.4.3 The temporal dimension

The data collection for the study, which was undertaken from October to December 2020, took place during the coronavirus pandemic. Since the socio-economic and psychological impact of the pandemic was momentous, the temporal dimension of the study's context is relevant. On 26 March 2020, the South African government instituted a national lockdown, in the face of rising infections of COVID-19, described as a "balancing act between protecting public health and the economy" (Schotte & Zizzamia 2021: 3). The South African government's response to the coronavirus pandemic, and the different stages of lockdown, with corresponding regulations, is summarised in Table 1 in Addendum A[22].

The South African COVID-19 lockdown was one of the earliest and most stringent implemented globally (Gustafsson 2020) whereby, for thirty-five days, economic

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[20] The World Bank report found that only 21% of those in deprivation had access to basic services including electricity, flowing water, a flushable toilet and formal housing (Hurlbut 2018: 36).

[21] Reported in the article of 26 March 2018, 'Violence breaks out in Zwelihle, Hermanus'.

[22] The lockdown persists at the time of writing in October 2021. Owing to the second and third 'waves' of increasing infections, the stringency of the restrictions varied depending on number of new infections, with stringent measures implemented again under 'level 4 adjusted' from 28 June to 25 July 2021.

activity came to a complete standstill (Wills, Patel, van der Berg and Mpeta 2020: 6). The economic effects were felt immediately, with almost six hundred and fifty thousand jobs in the formal sector shed in the first quarter of lockdown (Statssa 2021). Schotte and Zizzamia (2021), in their investigation into township livelihood impacts of COVID-19, using Khayelitsha as the focus of their study, which took place between June and September 2020, report that those who were already vulnerable prior to the onset of the pandemic were the worst affected by the lockdown. Two out of every five households lost their primary source of income and almost every second household ran out of money to buy food during April 2020, with near 60% of adults in households that lost their main source of income going hungry in the seven days prior to being interviewed (Wills *et al*. 2020: 3). Turok and Visagie (2020) explain how, due to South Africa being one of the most unevenly developed countries in the world, some areas were buffeted from the effects of the COVID-19 lockdown, whilst others were severely impacted. In reporting that the pandemic "magnified pre-existing economic disparities between suburbs, townships and informal settlements within cities", the study noted predictably that "the suburbs proved to be more resilient to the lockdown", with townships being noticeably impacted and "shack dwellers being extremely vulnerable to the restrictions" (Turok & Visagie 2020: 2). For these reasons, the temporal dimension of context is important to the study, in that the participants are all township or informal settlement residents.

A COVID-19 Social Relief of Distress Grant ("the COVID grant") of R350 per month was introduced for persons who were unemployed and did not qualify for any other grant. However, Schotte and Zizzamia (2021: 4) reveal how infrastructure breakdowns and backlogs resulted in delays and early implementation failures of social relief. This was confirmed by Wills *et al.* (2020: 27), who record that the government's social assistance failed to reach large sectors of the population in informal employment, foreign nationals and others who similarly did not qualify for social relief. Furthermore, many respondents complained that the COVID grant was insufficient in the face of rising costs of basic items during lockdown due to shortages (Schotte & Zizzamia 2021: 16; Wills *et al.* 2020: 27).

In the study by Schotte and Zizzamia (2021: 2), they also discover psychological distress experienced by respondents, due to the uncontrollable environment of dis-

ease, increased economic vulnerability and crime[23]. This factor has relevance for the interpretation of the present study's findings and the potential for LTE to address the emotional needs of the students experiencing psychological distress under the pandemic's influence, as described in Section 5.3.2.

The LTE training programme was interrupted as a result of lockdown and, upon return to classes, the detrimental effect of the lockdown was immediately evident, as discussed fully in Section 5.3.2. In essence, household providers' jobs had been terminated and the COVID grant had not reached the intended recipients. The experience of the LTE students mirrors the observation of Bowers du Toit and Stewart (2020: 1) of the intersection of race, class and hunger during the COVID-19 pandemic, owing to the inequality in South Africa. This intersection, inclusive of gender, is highlighted by Odeku (2020), who notes that female-headed households in South Africa, where the female is also the sole breadwinner, have been the hardest hit by the COVID-19 lockdown. As LTE explained, the devastating consequence was that "…some of our students have been sitting hungry in our classes" (BL45: 2). LTE therefore responded to the immediate needs of their students by raising funds to provide them with food parcels. This initiative of LTE highlights the extent of deprivation experienced by many during the COVID-19 lockdown, which is a reflection of the temporal context of the study.

1.5 Prior study in development matters and spirituality's exclusion
1.5.1 Defining spirituality

Of importance to this study is that LTE professes to go beyond skills training to include a focus on spirituality, as follows: "Through a holistic approach to development we look at the whole person - *spiritually*, emotionally, socially and economically - so as to purposefully put right the injustices of apartheid" (learntoearn.org.za 2021) (personal emphasis). LTE's approach raises the question of the significance of spirituality integration in progressing towards social transformation. For clarity's sake, uniformity in terminology will be strived for herein with particular reference to 'religion', 'spirituality' and 'faith', although the terms are often used interchangeably, as Lunn

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[23] Whilst murder declined by 72% during the first three weeks of lockdown, six months into the lockdown, the national murder rate rose to an astonishing four times the pre-pandemic global average (Faull, Kelly & Dissel 2021: 2)

(2009: 937) notes. A fuller discussion will follow in Chapter 3 but, in brief, the following definitions will therefore be used:

'spirituality': *"a relationship with the supernatural or spiritual realm that provides meaning and a basis for personal and communal reflection, decisions and action"* and *"the personal and relational side of religious beliefs which shape daily life"* (Lunn 2009: 937; Ver Beek 2000: 32),

'religion': "*an institutionalised belief system concerning the supernatural realm around which its followers unite in certain practices*" (Deneulin & Rakodi, 2001: 461) and

'faith': "*the human trust or belief in a transcendent reality*" (Lunn 2009: 937)[24].

As the study is of a practical theological nature, the terms 'religion', 'spirituality' and 'faith' are used to denote the Christian faith, unless explicitly stated or otherwise is clear from the context. Whilst it is recognised that African indigenous spirituality is evident extensively in Cape Town, and, in adopting a postcolonial consciousness, discussed below, it could be contemplated that this facet of spirituality would feature in the study, African spirituality falls outside the definition selected and is accordingly beyond the scope of this particular study. The spirituality mentioned thus refers to the personal and relational side of the practice of the Christian faith, as compared with the Christian faith as an institutionalised belief system[25].

1.5.2 The advent of development

For decades spirituality was largely ignored as playing any role in alleviating extreme deprivation in communities, in what has been known as the field of 'development', the term used first to describe the effort to reconstruct Europe following the destruction caused by World War II[26] (Myers 2011: 26-27). The obvious reason for spirituality's exclusion is that development policy has been rooted in Enlightenment thinking with its renowned adherence to secularism. Development has indeed been called a "child

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[24] A faith can also be an alternative for a religion, where this is apparent from the context.

[25] Here, the following definition of Cochrane, de Gruchy and Peterson (1991: 75) will also be instructive: "Christian spirituality is a way of speaking about discipleship, the following of Jesus Christ as Lord, in relation to the resources of the Spirit and the means of grace which enable us to be disciples".

[26] Tomalin (2013: 5) says that understandings of development have evolved from the specific donor-led projects which were introduced following World War II to refer to "broad processes of social change".

of the European and American Enlightenment…based on the implicit belief that human society is inevitably progressing toward the attainment of a temporal, materialistic kingdom" (Sine 1987: 2). This statement, though, has been revealed over time to be manifestly untrue.

For contemporary research, it is important to understand the changing context of development theories and where spirituality fits in, in addressing poverty, which will be examined in Chapter 3 in detail. For introductory purposes, a brief overview suffices in order to demonstrate how spirituality, which has been suggested to be a valuable tool in confronting poverty, has been excluded in development practice and in research, which exclusion gives rise to a gap in the literature and in turn is a motivating factor in the perceived need for this study into the work of an FBO.

The starting point of development is that it supposes improvement of a society to a 'better' state. At one time it was considered to be an improved economic state, and modernisation theory was the reigning theory for three decades (Sine 1987: 3). Modernisation theory envisaged increased economic activity producing economic growth, which would then raise standards of living so that a "good life" was attained[27]. Pure economic development ignored other forms of development, which were necessary for well-being and human dignity, including spiritual, cultural and relational (Sine 1987: 7). The shortcomings of modernisation theory in development eventually became apparent (Bragg 1987: 22ff). Essentially, it failed to stimulate economic growth and instead created dependency and indebtedness (Speckman 2007: 16, 30).

1.5.3 Development's exclusion of spirituality

Once the weaknesses of modernisation theory became clear, other theories of development rose in prominence, as will be expanded on in Chapter 3, but the influence of spirituality on development has until recently been ignored and is even now "playing catch-up" (Rakodi 2012). Rakodi (2012: 635) comments as follows: "In mainstream development thinking, policy, and practice, religion has been generally neglected, despite its pervasiveness and importance". In this regard, Ver Beek (2000), one of the first scholars to draw attention critically to this omission, in the aptly titled article 'Religion: A development taboo', notes negligible reference in development

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[27] Having its origins in industrialisation, it promoted industry and technology as progress (Speckman 2007: 28).

journals on topics of spirituality amongst people in situations of deprivation[28]. Tomalin (2013: 17), too, bemoans the "distinct lack of literature" dealing specifically with religion and development. This, in spite of findings of spirituality being beneficial in a number of areas of development[29]. Whilst development practitioners advocated embracing certain new factors affecting decision-making, such as indigenous knowledge and social structures, spirituality was rejected out of hand as a factor (Ver Beek 2000: 31).

Numerous scholars have voiced their support of Ver Beek's condemnation of spirituality's exclusion from the development arena. Clarke (2011: 175) is one of them, criticising development's "long-held silence" on spirituality and its peripheral status. Lunn (2009: 937) is another of the scholars critical of spirituality having been "consistently marginalised or avoided in development theory, policy and practice". Since their value is finally being recognised, Lunn proceeds to argue that these factors need to be taken into account if development is to be undertaken optimally, convincingly advocating the place of the intangible notions in development, as follows: "…it is time that religion, spirituality and faith were taken seriously as factors shaping development and around which development can be shaped" (Lunn 2009: 948).

A decade after Ver Beek's observation about the scarcity of literature regarding development and religion, Deneulin and Rakodi (2011), acting on his observation, sought to explore the relationship between religion and development and the implications of the relationship. They describe as "deeply problematic" the fact that secularisation has been the sole analytical grid through which development studies across the disciplines have been structured (Deneulin & Rakodi 2011: 49). The authors conclude by persuading development practitioners to be open to dialogue with religious understandings, acknowledging spirituality as a noteworthy feature in communities in which development is targeted.

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[28] A key word search done by Ver Beek (2000) of three leading development journals from 1982 to 1998 revealed that they published 130 articles on the environment, 163 articles on gender and 170 articles on population issues. In contrast there were only 16 articles where the word 'religion' was mentioned and zero articles on spirituality. In the articles where the word 'religion' was mentioned, in not one of these was the central theme the relationship with development.

[29] For instance, in social action, Ver Beek (2000) observed how those who had adopted a spirituality were motivated to effect change for themselves. In his context, the spirituality consisted of the Catholic denomination as well as traditional religion of the Honduran Lenca people.

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1.5.4 Paucity of knowledge of spirituality practice benefits in FBOs

One would certainly expect spirituality to be a noteworthy feature in FBOs, but their contribution towards addressing poverty is thus far unclear, owing largely to the nebulous nature of the term 'FBO' and the difficulty of classifying the entity (Swart & van der Merwe 2010: 75-87)[30]. A single definition of the FBO continues to be elusive and, despite various suggestions having been put forward, they do not appear to provide much clarity. For instance, according to Clarke (2011: 14), an FBO is an entity which has a niche within the philanthropic or voluntary sector and 'faith-based' is a 'catch all' phrase used as a euphemism for 'religious'. In a similar vein, Hefferan (2015: 42) notes how the term 'FBO' is so broad, "capturing such a vast array of different organizations" that defining with any precision what an FBO is, proves problematic[31].

The extent of religiosity of FBOs provides no further clues as this can also vary enormously, with some "wearing their religious colours prominently" and others preferring to be more subtle in their religious identity (Clarke 2011: 18). For Tomalin (2013: 227)[32], the term 'FBO' may reflect a predominantly Christian view of the entity, and the characteristics attributed to them may not be exclusive and may be prevalent in other organisations. Van der Merwe and Swart (2010: 78), in grappling with the distinctiveness of FBOs, query whether an organisation would be classified as an FBO because it arose out of the social action of a religious group or merely because a social programme operates from the premises of a religious group[33]. They conclude by proposing a "more nuanced use of the term FBO" as scholars worldwide have found that it is not straightforward to settle on a single, generally recognised definition of an FBO (Swart 2010: 86-87)[34]. Similar to Swart's suggestion, and based on the same

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[30] Olson (2008: 402) too cautions about making assumptions about the religious doctrine of an FBO.

[31] The term 'FBO' can be applied to the whole range of entities, from an informal group based in a faith community to an international NGO (Occhipinti 2015: 334).

[32] Tomalin (2013: 227) expresses concern that the term may only capture a small sample of organisations engaging in welfare, advocacy, service delivery and disaster relief.

[33] They note from their research that some FBOs are clearly defined, such as certain organisations derived from large denominations. However, there are also instances where faith groups meet social welfare needs in their community without establishing organisations.

[34] They acknowledge that FBOs in the South African context may find it a challenge to retain their identities within their faith as they are seen to be carrying out their programmes in a secular environment whilst implementing policies as part of the social welfare and development sector.

reasoning, Occhipinti (2015) proposes thinking of FBOs in terms of typologies instead of definitions[35].

Hancox (2019: 1) observes how entities which do social justice- type work, specifically as a feature of their Christian faith, are described in the applicable literature using vague and inconsistent terminology and are generally simply included in the category of FBOs[36]. Hancox (2019: 3), however, highlights several limitations of the term 'FBO', especially the tendency to focus on similarities between entities at the expense of their complexity. She is accordingly of the opinion that these Christian organisational units involved in social justice undertakings ought to be distinguished from FBOs for the sake of greater clarity, in advancing research and in self-understanding. In identifying an organisation doing work of a developmental nature through the impetus of a Christian faith understanding, she seeks a rich and descriptive name, which is specific enough to avoid the vagueness of other terms, such as 'FBO' but broad enough to encompass diversity in different entities, and proposes the name 'Christian development organisation' ("CDO") (Hancox 2019: 4) [37].

The above authors' views reveal the lack of certainty about classifying an organisation as an FBO. In attempting to define the FBO, scholars such as Clarke (2006: 845) have identified FBOs as having a number of characteristics which distinguish them from their secular counterpart, the NGO[38]. For some, however, FBOs are understood as a subset of NGOs, whereas for others they are completely distinct from one another in civil society. FBOs may share some characteristics with NGOs, such as being 'not for profit', voluntary and focused on the same welfare activities, but are distinguishable from NGOs by their religious character and structure (Clarke 2011: 16)[39]. Using the abovementioned guidelines to classify FBOs, together with the FBOs' self-

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[35] She proposes characterising FBOs according to three dimensions, the intention being to aid practitioners and donors to understand better the field of the entity for the purposes of forming partnerships. These dimensions are the ways in which they are faith-based, the activities in which they engage and how their faith is expressed, as well as their organisation in relation to other faith and non-faith structures (Occhipinti 2015: 336).

[36] Since these entities also have characteristics which are distinctive to the practice of Christian faith groups, Hancox (2019: 5) argues that they should not be incorporated wholly within the parameters of an NGO.

[37] She does so through exploring five dimensions, including their purpose and the prominence of mission, historical nature of development activities and faith motivation.

[38] While FBOs have been perceived by some donors and scholars to be more effective than secular NGOs, there has been little by way of empirical evidence comparing them (Occhipinti 2015: 333).

[39] Clarke (2011: 17) nevertheless prefers to view FBOs as comprising elements of NGOs but being distinct from NGOs, having relationships with NGOs as well as other civil society organisations and religious organisations.

pronouncement on this issue, it has been recognised that FBOs play a significant role in helping the most disadvantaged people around the globe[40].

In further evaluating the nature of this contribution of FBOs, Bowers du Toit (2019), in her study of Christian FBOs' donor relationships in the Western Cape Metropole, observes a high degree of commitment of FBOs to their purposes of attaining social justice, recording how "… [a]lmost all FBOs interviewed noted that their first allegiance was to their mission and not to donor funding" (Bowers du Toit 2019: 6). Recent research has also drawn attention to the fact that FBOs are a major, if not the largest, contributor to social welfare in the Global South (Clarke 2006: 837, 841)[41].

It would be naïve to assume that all involvement by FBOs is beneficial and meaningful in poverty relief. For instance, some actors in this sphere are opposed to engagement with religion because of the potential for divisiveness and inequality (Occhipinti 2015). Of particular concern would also be the self-determination of the people themselves rather than the imposition of relief undertaken in a paternalistic fashion, as advocated by Manji and O'Coill (2002: 568), who are critical of the impediment which development NGOs pose to African people in attaining political, social and economic emancipation. In tracing the role played by development NGOs in post-colonialist African countries, they propose that they contribute only "marginally" to the alleviation of poverty, alleging that these organisations are the successors to the colonialist missionary societies, who, according to the authors, collaborated in Africa's colonisation.

Aside from certain criticisms, as expressed above, the significant value of FBOs has been recognised in addressing poverty (Deneulin & Rakodi 2011: 45; Clarke 2006: 841; Clarke 2011: 14). This has resulted in the greater openness from traditional

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[40] For instance, during a 2015 gathering of the United Nations ("UN") and members of the World Bank, with 140 FBO representatives, it was explicitly recognised by the former two organisations that FBOs had an essential role to play in working alongside development entities in realising the UN Sustainable Development Goals ("SDGs"). It was moreover acknowledged that FBOs have had extensive experience in addressing poverty and that the SDGs are usually already embedded in their very fabric (blogs.worldbank 2019). The purpose of the conference was to plan how strategic goals related to eradicating global poverty was to be implemented in the future leading up to 2030. At the event, faith leaders introduced a Faith-Based Action Framework to End Extreme Poverty based on three pillars: building the evidence of FBOs' contribution, engaging in advocacy groups intended to hold governments accountable for attainment of the SDGs as well as collaboration between FBOs and the World Bank, the UN and governments (blogs.worldbank 2019).

[41] In the Global North, Eurich (2019) provides numerous examples of FBOs, including churches, which have transformed their reason for existence, in effectively attending to the community needs. This is occurring even when the state would appear to have the resources but has neglected to care for the vulnerable in certain situations.

development actors to FBOs than in the past because of their potential contributions (Tomalin 2013: 234). However, the spheres in which the efforts of FBOs are beneficial, remain unclear. Moreover, Hancox (2019: 1) observes the limited theological research into FBOs carrying out social justice- type work as an expression of a Christian faith understanding. As mentioned, a gap in academic literature suggests that a study such as the present one could be of value in understanding the role of the FBO, and more specifically the CDO, as termed by Hancox, in addressing poverty. LTE has an overtly Christian ethos and, applying the scholars' guidelines for classification of an FBO discussed above, LTE would be classified as an FBO and, furthermore, it considers itself to be an FBO (Olson 2008)[42].

Most recently, Ware and Clarke, in their extensive 2016 study, attempt to delineate the way the element of faith in FBOs shapes development in FBOs' activities, outcomes and structures[43]. What Ware and Clarke (2016) seek to explore is how "everyday experience of religion", according to Rakodi's (2012) framework, determines FBO development policy and structures for undertaking development, together with ways in which they "do" development. Whilst Ware and Clarke have completed comprehensive research, as intended, it is nevertheless evident that, in contrast to the present study, their emphasis is not on FBOs' intended beneficiaries' experience of spirituality in so far as it influences personal and social transformation[44].

A scholarly lacuna is evident, since a key dimension of spirituality in development, namely the influence on the intended participants in development programmes of the overt practice of spirituality in an FBO, and the possibility of resultant social transformation, is omitted from Ware and Clarke's study. As the authors themselves state, "The current study does not seek to explore social change broadly" (Ware & Clarke 2016: 325). Ware and Clarke (2016: 324) accordingly conclude that, despite patterns emerging, further research is needed on the impact of faith in FBOs, due to

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[42] On Hancox's classification LTE would be a CDO.

[43] Applying Lincoln's (2003) four domains of influence framework- believing, behavioural changes, belonging and boundary keeping- they seek to determine the influence of faith. It is noteworthy that they do not attempt to gain greater understanding of these findings, only to categorise them for purposes of further research (Ware & Clarke 2016: 322).

[44] Specifically, the study of Ware and Clarke recognises the limitations of Lincoln's so-called element of "behavioural expectations" which does not extend to actual behaviour (Ware & Clarke 2016: 331). For instance, behavioural expectations deal with humanitarian relief and justice advocacy issues of the FBO as a unit, but do not extend to the taking into account of factors which may result in human dignity being affirmed and social transformation occurring.

complex and sometimes inconsistent findings. Other scholars, such as Tomalin (2013: 228), echo this call for further research into the faith element of FBOs, with Tomalin stressing, "There is undoubtedly a need to develop a wider knowledge of FBOs, given their previous neglect in development studies"[45]. In light of the gap in research identified, spirituality within the development discourse features prominently in the study. More specifically, the study sought understanding of the extent to which the integration of spirituality into the very fabric of LTE, as an FBO, plays a meaningful role in attaining social transformation through affirming human dignity, discussed in depth in Chapter 3.

1.5.5 Social transformation measurement[46]

Measurable criteria are frequently sought by development actors to determine the efficacy of programmes aimed at overcoming poverty in nations and communities. The Millennium Development Goals (2005-2015) and the more recently launched SDGs are examples of such measurable criteria, presented by the UN and promoted as issue-based indicators of the respective development of individual nations with the accompanying intention that, once these goals are attained, poverty will be overcome. However, these types of indicators, purportedly demonstrating poverty having been conquered, are flawed, as Bowers du Toit (2020: 314) notes, drawing attention to how measures such as these goals tend to impose Western ideas of what constitutes progress and development on a nation, grounded in modernity and colonialism[47].

What constitutes social transformation within development discourse is clearly not a simple matter of 'ticking the boxes' of the UN development goals or indeed any other Western-defined criteria. 'Social transformation' is a term with multiple definitions and in some ways its meaning cannot be defined with any precision. In the context of Practical Theology, however, its meaning is more easily ascertained. Here, Cochrane,

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[45] Myers (2011: 49) laments the limited evangelical thinking about development as follows: "There is very little, if any, serious research by Christian practitioners -very few Ph.D. studies and almost no evidence-based research into transformational development".

[46] Measurement and indicators are more usually applied in quantitative studies but the terminology is not used in this sense here, as appears from the context.

[47] Whilst not denying the value of goals such as the UN goals, she nevertheless highlights how these aims are imposed from the top down, disregarding dimensions of context and the worth of indigenous knowledge systems, all of which can impede a decolonial approach to development. Measurable criteria are frequently required to satisfy donors, and these criteria place Western knowledge systems at centre stage with the imposition of Western- determined development priorities, to the exclusion of local contexts and knowledge (Bowers du Toit 2020: 315).

de Gruchy and Peterson (1991: 3) describe a practical theological understanding of social transformation as a process whereby society develops closer affinity to the vision and values of the kingdom of God. The authors describe transformation as being symbolised by '*shalom*', which they state to be the biblical concept of "human and societal well-being and flourishing", which is ultimately what the kingdom of God is about (Cochrane *et al.* 1991: 67). In elaborating on this notion, Steve de Gruchy (2015: 26), describes '*shalom*' as "peace with justice", viewed as enjoyment of relationships, where one delights in serving God, being in a community and being a child of God. In other words, '*shalom*' is embracing all the fullness of life that God has brought into being. '*Shalom*' is evident in the Old Testament ("OT") as the reign of God within the people of Israel, and in the New Testament ("NT") church as the kingdom of God, which has both arrived and is yet to come in its fullness.

Myers (2011) is another theological scholar who endorses this understanding of social transformation[48]. Having demonstrated the deficiency in modernisation theory, Myers' response is that the good life is the abundant and fruitful life of the kingdom of God as represented by the biblical concept of '*shalom*'. In further illustration of this definition, '*shalom*' is "just, peaceful, harmonious and enjoyable relationships with each other, ourselves, our environment and God" (Myers 2011: 175). Samuel and Sugden (1987: 38-39) endorse Myers' response, which attributes purpose to life of those in states of vulnerability. They declare God's purpose for humankind to be the *imago Dei* so that the marginalised and vulnerable live as the image of God and reflect God's justice and peace, as encompassed in the notion of '*shalom*'. Transformation is thus a change from a condition contrary to God's purposes to a condition in which human beings can enjoy harmonious and abundant lives with God in accordance with scriptural promises (Jn 10: 10; Col. 3: 8-15; Eph. 4: 13[49]) (Samuel & Sugden 1987: 257).

Harmonious and abundant lives can only occur when human beings turn to God as their help and are "a new creation in Christ" (2 Cor. 5: 17). Transformation therefore reflects God's ongoing work with the distorting effects of sin in his creation "to restore all creation to himself and to its rightful purposes and relationships" (Samuel & Sugden

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[48] In arguing the point, he reverts to the question raised above as to what better life it is to which the economically deprived are invited by proponents of development. As discussed above, modernisation theorists would state that a better life results from increased productivity and growth in the economy which would raise the standard of living (Samuel & Sugden 1987: 22).

[49] For abbreviations of books of the Bible, the guidelines of logos.com are followed.

1987: 39). Bowers du Toit (2010: 266ff), also presenting reasons for development to be interpreted as transformation, sees transformation as two-fold: restoration of a person's dignity or self-worth and fostering of harmonious and just relationships with God, others and the environment. According to her, it is the characteristics of spiritual transformation and hope which mark Christian transformation as opposed to development. Development is transformational when the power of the Holy Spirit is healing identities and restoring relationships, thereby bringing enduring transformation. In other words, human dignity is being affirmed as transformation is progressed towards.

1.5.6 Human dignity affirmation and vocation's role leading to social transformation

Christian (1999: 63) agrees with the need for healing of identities since, he notes amongst the features evident in poverty, loss of human dignity. Myers (2011: 17) also declares the notions of 'human dignity', together with 'vocation', to be central to the theological foundation of transformational development in the development discourse. Since Myers (2011: 178) contends that vocation is a powerful contributor towards recovery of human dignity, when impoverished people determine not only their true identity, but also their true purpose, the study seeks to determine whether vocation, related to affirmation of human dignity, leads to progression towards social transformation. Human dignity and vocation as theological constructs, as expanded upon in the discussion in Chapter 2, therefore feature prominently in the study and will be used as indicators of social transformation taking place.

Chapter 2 traces the concept of human dignity from its origins and demonstrates the failings of a secular, philosophical interpretation. Human dignity is then explored in the light of its theological interpretation, with the value of personhood founded in the *imago Dei* (Anderson 1982: 70). With its three biblical references to be found in Gen. 1: 26-27, Gen. 5: 1-3 and Gen. 9: 5-7, the authority for human dignity based on the *imago Dei* is further supplemented by other theological principles including the Incarnation and covenant. In this latter regard, Botman (2006: 84), observing, in the South African context, how threats to human dignity are still prevalent post-apartheid, resulting in the need for restorative discourses on human dignity, proposes, to this end, the theological hermeneutical tool of 'covenant'. As a result, human dignity as a special connection to God, is an undeserved gift as it was God who made a way.

Anderson (1982: 71) thus considers human dignity as a result of the *imago Dei* a "gift or endowment". In re-casting the *imago Dei* in trinitarian thinking, Moltmann (1984) stresses the role of the Holy Spirit in portraying the intimate relationship humanity has with God and, like Anderson, highlights the grace of God in imbuing humanity with human dignity[50].

Moltmann (1984: 17) therefore speaks of the "irreducible dignity of the human being", which must extend to every human being, including the marginalised of society. This means that, because human dignity is a gift from God, having its foundation in the *imago Dei*, it is not something which can be earned and equally cannot be diminished or withdrawn (Kilner 2015: 312). However, in the case of those in situations of deprivation, they believe human dignity to be a matter of subjective assessment. Their perception of their human dignity is generally lacking because of what Christian (1999: 121) terms "marring of identities". Christian argues that the non-poor cause de-humanising effects of powerlessness in the impoverished through their relationships of inequality, holding them captive within 'god-complexes', Moltmann's term conveying the image of humans and powers seeking to become gods (Christian 1999: 145 footnote). Powerlessness, due to systematic oppression, causes wounding in the vulnerable and marginalised, resulting in flawed identities, with the consequence being captivity in a 'web of lies' (Christian 1999: 161).

Scullion (1999: 25) therefore alludes to the need for those suffering from material deprivation actually to experience their human dignity, or, put differently, for their human dignity to be affirmed. Christian's (1999: 191) declaration is that the answer to restored appreciation of human dignity lies in a frame of reference of the understanding of power through the lens of the kingdom of God, as described further in Chapter 3. An understanding of the kingdom of God sets the captives free from the 'web of lies' by correcting their 'marred identities' and by revealing what their true purpose is. Here is where the notion of 'vocation' has an essential bearing on human dignity. Moltmann (1984: 23) describes the vocation of human beings as reflecting the *imago Dei* in all their relationships in life, and their true future in being destined for glory in God's kingdom. Migliore's (2014: 257) interpretation of vocation emphasises strongly a person's understanding of the love of God for him or her. A valid interpretation of

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[50] His model of the *imago Dei* is distinctively relational as it is the presence of the Holy Spirit in all created things which constitutes the presence of God with humanity (Robinson 2011: 134).

vocation therefore encompasses a person's identity as living in the love of God and reflecting the *imago Dei*. For this reason, Myers (1999: 114), identifies our "true identity and true vocation" as "being God's children journeying toward God's kingdom". In this study, therefore, it will be explored whether restored human dignity is apparent through a recovery of vocation amongst the LTE students, in circumstances where they may have perceived their dignity to be diminished, and these characteristics will be considered as indicators of social transformation. As such, the research question below can be posed in similar terms.

1.6 Research question and research objectives

The research question is the following:

> ### What role does the affirmation of human dignity through a recovery of vocation play in attaining meaningful social transformation? [51]

The research objectives are to:

1. discuss the role of spirituality in development
2. discuss human dignity and vocation as theological constructs as related to development as transformation
3. explore the work of LTE as a Faith- Based Organisational case study
4. develop an understanding of the extent to which a focus on spirituality at LTE affirms the human dignity of their students through a recovery of vocation and enables meaningful transformation to take place
5. make recommendations as to how the findings of the LTE case study could be utilised in assisting scholars to understand better the interplay between spirituality and development.

1.7 Paradigmatic perspective

Since Chapter 4 includes a detailed discussion of the paradigmatic influence relating to the study's positioning, together with reasons for decisions made concerning selection, it would be superfluous to provide anything further here other than an introduction to the paradigmatic perspective. Having considered the three dominant metatheoretical traditions in social science research, interpretivism is the paradigmatic

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[51] The recommendations of Bless *et al*. (2013: 47, 71), were followed in formulating the research question. According to them, the research question ought to be specific, not too narrow or trivial, usually expressed as the relationship between two variables or concepts, and ought to be empirically testable in such a way that it is answerable through the observation of reality.

perspective which is most suitable in the present study, since the study is a case study of LTE where the lived experiences of the students are explored. Of importance is that the ultimate aim of interpretivist research is to "offer a perspective of a situation and to analyse the situation under study to provide insight into the way in which a particular group of people make sense of their situation or the phenomena they encounter" (Maree 2007: 60).

Self-reflexivity, as a feature of the interpretive paradigm, is included for its capacity to enhance the richness of the study's findings, in adding another dimension, and in recognition that the researcher cannot stand apart from the study. According to May and Perry (2014: 110), where there is deepened self-awareness of the role of the researcher, there can be an increase in the value of the production of the information.

In undertaking self-reflexivity, I was alert to postcolonial consciousness, based on Chilisa's (2012: 13) insistence that research avoid perpetuation of the dominance of Western ideology. Such a stance was deemed essential for this study in recognition of South Africa's history of colonisation and apartheid dominance and as a necessary symbolic gesture of resistance thereto. Held (2019: 8), in support of my approach, insists that radical decolonising of research paradigms calls for collaborative efforts between indigenous *and* Western researchers, those who have been oppressed and marginalised and those who have not, which will then result in development of a new research framework altogether.

It must be stressed that the study in no way professes to adhere to a postcolonial paradigm, but merely seeks to endorse postcolonial research through maintaining consciousness of its characteristics and its rightful objection to Western hegemonic academy. It is moreover acknowledged from the outset that there are inevitable limitations attached to adopting postcolonial awareness in circumstances where the researcher has little personal experience of the country's history of oppression. This process will unavoidably be affected by 'blind spots' caused by my different background and personal life experiences (de Gruchy 2015: 108).

Despite my intentions to be influenced by postcolonial awareness, these 'blind spots' would have impeded my endeavours to some extent. For instance, 'blind spots' would cause me to be unconscious of the extent of power factors at play in my interaction with the participants, as alluded to by Mahilall (2021:172) in her personal experiences.

By way of example, it was pointed out to me by the manager of the Hermanus campus of LTE, who is a black woman, how the participants would be reluctant to call me by my first name owing to feeling the need to show deference to a white woman. Once she mentioned this, I recalled how, despite introducing myself by my first name, it was only seldom used by the respondents in the interviews.

Despite these obstacles, I am encouraged by the implied endorsement of my stance by Keikelame and Swartz (2019: 6) as follows, using the evocative metaphor of a tortoise: "We are therefore of the view that even White researchers in our context can conduct appropriate research among the marginalised and vulnerable populations if they turn the research to 'focus inward'... as when the tortoise retracts its neck back into its shell".

1.8 A practical theological theoretical framework

1.8.1. Practical Theology's role in ascribing meaning to situations

Since research is not undertaken in the abstract but is dependent on an epistemological basis, the present study is undertaken in the theoretical framework of a practical theological interpretation of social transformation. A theoretical framework is a place where the ideology of the researcher is articulated and the study is delineated (Henning 2004: 26) and, in this instance, my ideology as researcher has its foundation in the Christian faith[52]. In the study, in following my expressed ideology, I accordingly intend to integrate theory and *praxis* of the Christian faith to issues of life (Cochrane *et al.* 1991: 2). Viewed in this way, a theoretical framework can be equated to the lens through which I make sense of the world, so that the theoretical framework provides orientation to the study, according to Cassim (2017: 76)[53]. The lens through

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[52] The implication of this is that I endorse Practical Theology's goal of ensuring the faithful participation in the transformative Gospel of Jesus Christ, whilst taking human experience seriously in acknowledging that faith is experienced and lived out, more than simply a belief (Swinton & Mowat 2006: 5-7). Swinton and Mowat (2006: 11) pointedly classify Practical Theology as a "*theoretical* enquiry" (authors' emphasis) as it seeks to "understand practice, to evaluate, to criticize". Theological reflection is an intellectual exercise of using the mind and reason to understand one's faith, but it also interrogates action and behaviour in light of the foundational perspective, which is the Christian faith (Cochrane *et al.* 1991: 74). In the present instance, practical theological reflection and interpretation serves as a lens through which social transformation, occurring by means of affirming human dignity, is viewed, and in this way provides orientation to the study. The specifically theological focus is the adoption of theological constructs in the study and the extent to which social transformation is informed by a kingdom of God theology.

[53] By identifying biases, it compels the researcher to be explicit about point of entry to the research and how the researcher views the purpose of the research.

which the study is viewed is the academic discipline of Practical Theology[54], and Theology and Development, and the study is further rooted in the discipline of Missiology, which will be discussed and reasons provided for their applicability.

Practical Theology is a broad and flexible branch of Theology, which renders it beneficial for a diversity of research areas covering exploration of human relationships, such as the present study which examines human dignity (Swinton & Mowat 2006: 3). Practical Theology is also a critical and reflective theological activity which intends to relate the Christian faith to the world, to enable God's reconciling actions to be carried out (Swinton & Mowat 2006: 5-7)[55]. It is this implied meaning of Practical Theology which provides a match for the current study and which has thus guided it throughout the research process. Because Practical Theology has both theoretical and experiential facets, the study will entail engagement with salient theoretical, theological elements and their application to the experiences of the LTE students in so far as factors concerning their human dignity, and surrounding factors mitigating towards social transformation, is concerned[56].

It must be highlighted that Practical Theology is a critical discipline which not only captures and reflects on a situation, but also aims to challenge accepted practices and situations (Swinton & Mowat 2006: 7). Indeed, McGarrah Sharp (2014: 426) stresses

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[54] Since it is a form of human reasoning, it must be coherent and must take into account the norms of the Bible and church tradition. For the sake of completeness, Practical Theology ought to be juxtaposed with Theology. Plant and Weiss (2015: 54) offer a definition of 'Theology' as being the practice of reasoned reflection on God. This reasoned reflection is in pursuit of understanding, and arises out of practices and experience of a particular faith community.

[55] Practical Theology situates itself within human experience and the complexity of human relationships. The extensive range of methodologies and approaches within the discipline of Practical Theology reflects the numerous efforts to define this diversity and to capture the area covered by Practical Theology (Swinton & Mowat 2006: 3). For instance, Cochrane *et al*. (1991: 2) propose that, by 'Practical Theology' is meant "that disciplined, reflective theological activity which seeks to relate the faith of the Christian community to its life, mission and social *praxis*". Swinton and Mowat (2006: 6) also present a definition of Practical Theology (albeit "provisional") as "critical, theological reflection on the practices of the Church as they interact with the practices of the world, with a view to ensuring and enabling faithful participation in God's redemptive practices in, to and for the world".

[56] In this regard, a feature which broadens the scope of the discipline is that ideographic knowledge, or the presumption that meaningful knowledge can be captured in non-replicable experience, is implicit as an epistemological feature of Practical Theology. Ideographic knowledge can be contrasted with nomothetic knowledge which requires that knowledge be falsifiable, replicable and generalisable before it can be accepted as truth (Swinton & Mowat 2006: 40). Ideographic knowledge recognises that no two people experience something in the same way and this form of knowledge is integral to Practical Theology because it not only accords with the language of scripture and Christian tradition, but is also a central part of the experiences which Practical Theology seeks to reflect on (Swinton & Mowat 2006: 43). Thus knowledge which is produced from capturing the experiences of the students of LTE, is presumed to be meaningful knowledge which has value and can be utilised, despite the individual experiences not being replicable.

that Practical Theology has been established as well- aligned with a study into poverty and social injustice since it has a history of being attentive to complex situations of human suffering. Here again, Practical Theology's appropriateness is apparent due to this facet's pertinence to the present study where social injustice is challenged and a contribution towards the alleviation of poverty is sought.

1.8.2 Practical Theology's relationship with other research disciplines

Swinton and Mowat (2006: 72) explore how qualitative research can be used by the practical theologian in such a way that the two research disciplines do not become conflated[57]. One of the criticisms of Practical Theology, to the effect that it has lost its theological roots at times, as lamented by Balcomb (2012), whose investigation uncovers mere tangential theological references in theological studies on development matters, needs to be heeded in the present study. It is therefore important for the practical theologian to ensure that faith assumptions are not compromised, whereby the social sciences do not push theological reflection to the background as the varying sources of knowledge in a study compete with each other (Swinton & Mowat 2006: 7).

This remark is germane to the present study which refers to observations and trends from Development Studies. Whatever knowledge is derived from Development Studies, however, has had to defer to the dominant dimension of Theology. In this study's exploration of secular interpretations of human dignity in the literature review in Chapter 2, and with spirituality in Development Studies in the literature review in Chapter 3, there has been wide-spread engagement with perspectives offered by other disciplines. Here it is apparent how the social sciences can be useful critical dialogue partners in opening up opportunities to the practical theologian to deepen and even challenge understanding. However, because the social sciences do not deal with ultimate issues of life, death, God and the meaning of life, they do not occupy equal standing with Theology, but must, of necessity, remain subordinate, with Theology assuming logical precedence (Swinton & Mowat 2006: 86)[58].

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[57] The practical theological model which the authors develop is rooted in the interpretive paradigm and seeks to interpret a number of dimensions, including the situation, scripture and church tradition, as well as practices, in an endeavour to understand God and human experiences. The over-riding dimension, however, is Theology which presents a unique perspective on truth, knowledge and reality (Swinton & Mowat 2006: 75).

[58] This is then the relationship adopted in this study whereby the distinct voices of Theology and other disciplines will be kept in critical tension within the conversation, with Theology holding the position of ultimate significance. Qualitative research data is able to clarify and offer additional dimensions to the study under exploration but Theology's significance is wholly independent of the social sciences.

1.8.3 Application of practical theological reflection

Swinton and Mowat's developing model of aligning qualitative research methods with practical theological research consists of four stages, where the result is a dialectical conversation to develop new practices and transform the initial situation (Swinton & Mowat 2006: 97)[59]. In the present study, the practical theological model of Swinton and Mowat was referred to as a helpful conceptual tool for locating qualitative research within the process of doing Practical Theology, and aspects of the model were appropriated, but not in its entirety[60]. Since the present study concerns an alternative faith community of the FBO, Swinton and Mowat's model, with its emphasis on church practice, was less relevant. Instead it was found that Osmer's (2008) practical theological approach was more flexible, held a less prominent focus on church history and aligned neatly with the nature of research[61]. Osmer's (2008: 4-10) approach entails the following four-fold enquiry in the practical theological interpretation of a situation: the descriptive-empirical, the interpretive, the normative and the pragmatic. The descriptive-empirical task answers the question 'What is going on?', and entails

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[59] They do point out, however, that, in reality, the process is seldom followed through step by step as a linear process. In the first stage, which they label "the situation" and describe as the "intuitive, pre-reflective phase", the intention is to explore the nature of the situation and gain a preliminary understanding. It is not emphatic about what is going on but rather an attempt to make some sense of why things are the way they are (Swinton & Mowat 2006: 95). Stage two is the cultural/contextual analysis where other forms of knowledge are consulted to help in deepening understanding of the situation. The aim is to engage with the complexities of the situation so that new insights appear, some challenging the intuitive reflections and some confirming them. Thus a richer appreciation of what is taking place is acquired. In stage three, called "theological reflection" by Swinton and Mowat (2006: 96), intentional theological reflection on the data which has been obtained in stages one and two is undertaken. Stage four, titled "formulating revised forms of practice", entails drawing together the contextual/cultural analysis and the theological reflection whilst reverting to the initial impressions of the situation.

[60] For instance, as mentioned, in ensuring the position of prominence of Theology, and avoiding its absorption into Development Studies, this aspect of the theory elucidated by Swinton and Mowat (2006) was closely adhered to. In addition to this model, the authors also evaluate the practical theological method of mutual critical correlation, having its foundation in a modification of Paul Tillich's (1951) work whereby existential questions were raised and the answers extracted from correlation of human experience with Christian tradition (Swinton & Mowat 2006: 77). They pronounce Tillich's model to be useful in so far as it opens up dialogue between Theology and contemporary culture. However, its shortcomings include its uni-directional reflection which permits Christian truth to be applied to the world without permitting the world to question certain interpretations of that truth (Swinton & Mowat 2006: 78). Accordingly they prefer a modification of Tillich's model which introduces mutual critical conversation. Mutual critical conversation accepts perspectives offered by other disciplines and is prepared to assess the nature of this knowledge. This is where they identify the benefit of qualitative methods which can uncover meanings of a situation as regards participants' understanding of the world (Swinton & Mowat 2006: 81). This approach would appear to be similar to that adopted by Osmer (2008) whose "interpretive task" of a practical theological investigation intentionally seeks perspectives from the social sciences. Once this data is absorbed into conversation with scripture and church tradition, it is able to develop revised forms of practice which will transform the situation.

[61] It can be inferred from Dreyer's (2014: 512) discussion of practical theological models, that, in South Africa, there has not emerged a model of standard practice. He does observe, however, that a multi-disciplinary approach, in which the practical theologian generates his or her own empirical data, has gained favour. This would be a reflection of the approach in the present study, coupled with reference to Osmer's approach.

information gathering in order to discern patterns and dynamics in a situation. The interpretive task answers the question 'Why is this going on?', and entails drawing on theories from the arts and sciences to increase understanding. The normative task answers the question 'What ought to be going on?', and consists of referring to theological concepts to interpret the situation. Finally, the pragmatic task answers the question 'How might we respond?', where strategies are ascertained which will influence the situation in a constructive manner. These questions will be alluded to in the chapters which follow, to the extent to which portions of the chapter reflect Osmer's individual tasks.

Within an interpretive paradigm, selected as being the most apt for this study, it is recognised that human beings are creative agents who are constantly attributing meaning to situations and interpreting events (Swinton & Mowat 2006: 37)[62]. Practical Theology, which is a fundamentally interpretive discipline, therefore dove-tails with an interpretive paradigmatic perspective (Swinton & Mowat 2006: 76) in the present study. The study's practical theological interpretation of social transformation has entailed articulating principles of theological hermeneutics as a feature distinguishing the study from a social sciences approach. Practical theological interpretation is "deeply contextual" in that it "thinks in terms of interconnections, relationships, systems" (Osmer 2008: 17), which indicates vitality and adaptability, making practical theological interpretation well-suited for engaging with a multitude of different circumstances, including the circumstances surrounding aspects of poverty explored in the current study.

Because Practical Theology is not a systematic discipline, but instead offers perspectives and themes from particular situations, it is inherently connected to other disciplines. The study's missiological grounding is by virtue of the fact that Practical Theology is undertaken to enable the church to be faithful in fulfilling God's ongoing mission to the world (Swinton & Mowat 2006: 25). The field of Theology and Development, forming a backdrop to the study's exploration of human dignity and social transformation in those in economic distress, has also been classified as multi-disciplinary (Swart *et al.* 2010: 3; Cochrane *et al.* 1991: 27). It is therefore to be expected that, in the current study, a necessary conversation would arise between

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[62] The quest for this type of interpretation to ascribe deeper meaning to life situations forms a fundamental element of Practical Theology's intention to reflect critically on the nature of situations (Swinton & Mowat 2006: 38).

Practical Theology and other theological disciplines, as well as the social sciences and secular Development Studies (Swinton & Mowat 2006: 13; Osmer 2008: 240). It is the intention for the current research to be positioned as a study within the academic discipline of Practical Theology and the more recently recognised discipline of Theology and Development, together with influence from Missiology[63].

1.8.4 Missiology's influence on the study

Mission is "the result of God's initiative, rooted in God's purposes to restore and heal creation" (Guder 1998: 4). It would therefore be unthinkable to embark on a practical theological study concerning alleviation of poverty, with notions such as restoring of human dignity and healing of 'marred identities' under enquiry, without recognising the centrality of Missiology to the study.

With the demise of the era of Christendom, it is almost trite to say that there has been a theological awakening whereby the church has, in past decades, found itself in a wholly new situation regarding its role concerning mission. Instead of viewing mission as a church activity taking place in remote areas of the globe, it has reached an understanding of mission constituting the very essence of the church (Newbigin 1995). This assumption finds its theological basis in the *missio Dei*, in trinitarian doctrine whereby God reveals himself in the world through the person of Jesus as a "fountain of sending love" through the power of the Holy Spirit (Bosch 2014: 402; Migliore 2014: 276). Whereas theologians have in the past stated the hermeneutical task of Practical Theology to be to interpret a situation in the light of scripture and church tradition for the purpose of ensuring faithfulness to the triune God (Swinton & Mowat 2006: 12), Hendriks (2010: 277), convincingly persuades that a missional theology is necessary

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[63] Some authors treat a theological perspective on development as a sub-discipline of Development Studies (Bompani 2014: 312, 325, 329; Deneulin & Rakodi 2011). Swart and Nell (2016: 4), whilst concurring with Bompani (2014) about the transdisciplinary nature of studies into religion and development, go further and refute the claim that scholarly research into the influence of religion in development must be restricted to a sub-discipline within Development Studies. Noting a "broader transdisciplinary interest" with overlap of theological studies in the fields of economics, cultural studies, political studies and anthropology, for instance, they propose that the theological field of study has much more wide-spread appeal, and it is within this wider scholarly production that religion and theological studies have become fora for pursuing studies into religion and development. These divergent views on a theological perspective of development, demonstrate how categorisation of research within the disciplines mentioned should not be considered immutable but rather as a fluid exercise providing a general indication of the positioning of the research within a wider spectrum. In this respect, Hendriks (2010: 277) reasons that these academic fields are not static but focus on a contextual *praxis* in addressing issues of society. These reasons discussed, nevertheless demonstrate the considerable scope in positioning research of a theological and developmental nature. Given the broad scope, the researcher has some leeway in determining where his or her specific study has an academic fit.

in Theology and Development[64]. He argues that Practical Theology is no longer solely about analysing the faith tradition but is instead about faithful participation in God's missional *praxis*, in other words sharing in the *missio Dei*. Moreover, a missional theology in Theology and Development emphasises the triune God's communion of self-giving love to all human beings, including the vulnerable and marginalised (Migliore 2014: 276).

The "missional reorientation of our theology" is based on God's character and purpose as a sending God (Guder 1998: 4). The current study is obviously missiological in nature due to the intention of the FBO under examination, namely LTE, to participate in the *missio Dei*. Guder (1998: 102) describes carrying out mission in terms of the kingdom of God whereby the intention is "to represent God's reign as its community, its servant, its messenger". A missional theology lends support for proclaiming the kingdom of God in situations of powerlessness, oppression and alienation, following the example of Jesus (Guder 1998: 104). De Gruchy (2015: 29), states that those participating in the *missio Dei*, in bearing witness to the love of God, present to the world what the kingdom of God will look like in challenging injustice and poverty[65]. Guder and de Gruchy's descriptions of the transformative nature of mission (Guder 1998: 5) are pertinent, as will be elaborated on in Chapter 6, where the missional *praxis* of LTE's staff is highlighted and the influence of Missiology on the study becomes evident.

1.8.5 Positioning of the study within Theology and Development

A natural question which arises is whether a theological dimension to secular development is necessary or whether it may be superfluous. Swart (2010: 122) impliedly responds to this query by reasoning that the field of Theology and Development[66] has a valuable contribution to make, in addressing aspects of transformational development beyond the scope of secular development. This would include the emphasis placed by a theological stance, not only on the destructive effect

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[64] Equally, Swart (2009: 81) imposes a far higher missional demand, calling for a "profound reorientation" in terms of which he considers the authentic missional role of the church to be "one of conscientisation, value transformation, sensitisation, and changing the minds, attitudes and behaviour of people". In a similar vein, August (2010: 36) endorses the missional character of transformational development, as defined by the Wheaton Declaration 1983. These scholars delineate the missional ambit of a theological stance in development and, in this way, provide guidance for subsequent research endeavours.

[65] Participating in the *missio Dei*, says de Gruchy (2015: 32), is not "an optional extra", but is at the heart of every follower of Christ. The point of mission, therefore, is to share the love of Christ in word and deed.

[66] Which at the time he simply referred to as "Community Development".

of sin on structures and relationships, but also on positive social change, such as the restoration of kingdom values which form the essence of mission and the working of the Spirit. Hancox (2020: 20) records engagement with the "global and local development agenda" as a distinguishing feature of Theology and Development, as well as the vocational equipping of Christians for engagement in development work. From the outset, it became apparent that the subject matter of the study, together with the research question and aims, anchored in issues concerning redressing social injustice, aligned the study within what Swart (2010: 207) refers to as a "newfound specialization" of Practical Theology, namely Community Development (later termed 'Theology and Development') (August 2010: 92)[67]. Community Development would, therefore, appear to provide a very necessary theological 'scaffolding' for development in post-apartheid South Africa, using the metaphor to suggest both supporting and enveloping development[68]. Knoetze (2019: 60) identifies how agents within the sphere of poverty alleviation use different terminology, such as, 'development', 'transformational development' and '*diakonia*' while dealing with the same issues, as it were[69]. It should, however, be noted that in this study, both transformational development and *diakonia* are used in places, with the more evangelical espousing of transformational development used most prominently. All action related to development, according to de Gruchy, is based on the call for action in James 2: 26 whereby "faith without works is dead". Commenting on de Gruchy's argument, Hancox (2020:) draws on the work of Myers (1999: 20-56) and Msabah (2016: 31-34) in

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[67] Swart (2010: 106) also describes the role played by Stellenbosch University in "giving momentum and a formal place" of Community Development as a field within Practical Theology, having observed with concern, the prior limited research into poverty and suffering within Practical Theology in South Africa. For completeness in clarifying the emergence onto the practical theological scene of Community Development, it is helpful to understand Swart's (2010: 109) historical insights into the South African context of Community Development, where the advent of democracy ushered in a need for a restorative, nation-building paradigm within Practical Theology, to juxtapose the apartheid-era political struggle paradigm. At the same time, the introduction of Community Development to the practical theological arena was a reflection of the global preoccupation with the secular 'development' agenda (Swart 2010: 110). In this respect, Klaasen (2019: 2) expresses concern about the hegemony of secular development in the government's initial adoption and later rejection of the church's role in the development discourse.

[68] De Gruchy (2003) takes this creative tension between secular development and theological reflection further by comparing inter-related characteristics of agency, assets (or resources) and the process of empowerment, whilst also stressing the necessary and distinctive theological characteristic of the recovery of vocation of those suffering deprivation.

[69] The term, 'Theology and Development', as employed from a South African theological perspective, is named differently depending on geographical location and denominational affiliation. Thus evangelicals in North America use the term 'transformational development', for example Bragg (1987), whereas those from an ecumenical background use '*diakonia*' and South American evangelicals prefer 'integral mission' (Msabah 2016: 37).

suggesting that a "robust biblical conceptualisation for Theology and Development" is to be found in the notion of seeking God's kingdom and its *shalom*.

The sub- discipline of Community Development within Practical Theology can also be seen to have its origins in *diakonia* as a biblical mandate of service and love of neighbour, as evident in God's solidarity with the oppressed, and God's liberating will (Chung 2014)[70]. It is also important to note that this sub- discipline takes seriously the striving for economic justice, which is an indispensable feature of the life of the church, based on Christ's example (Chung 2014: 103; Phiri 2019: 483). Chung (2014:308) further asserts that Christians seeking to address issues of poverty must tackle the political and economic evil, while Msabah and Bowers du Toit (2017: 196) contend that, without addressing issues of poverty and inequality, the church is stripped of its transformational characteristic as it engages with the vulnerable and marginalised of society.

The semantics of the biblical mandate underpinning the church's engagement with community development is as "a representative of God with a special mission from God and for God's glory" (Breed 2014). At the core of this is the belief of God's people that they have a mandate to participate in the *missio Dei* (Nordstokke 2014b: 265). This is where the missiological characteristic of Community Development becomes evident, in the struggle for justice for, and empowerment of, those who are in positions of vulnerability and deprivation. For these reasons, based on the missiological nature and social justice attainment motive of Community Development, the positioning of the current study into the economically vulnerable and marginalised of society is made within Practical Theology and Community Development and indeed intersects with the field of Missiology at certain points.

Of pertinence to the present study, where community development is undertaken, not by a church, but by an FBO, is Eurich's (2020) observation that, whilst *diakonia* is one of the church's five distinguishing features, it is being developed in institutions out of the church and alongside the church, and he advocates further collaboration[71]. Likewise, Swart (2010: 107) raises awareness of practical theological scholarship

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[70] Evidence is found throughout the OT, as well as in the life of Jesus and the mission of Paul (Chung 2014). *Diakonia* is viewed as service to others but primarily as service to God, and is an established facet of Practical Theology (Breed 2014). Chung (2014: 312) issues a timely reminder to the church of its commitment to *diakonia* as representing "God's collaborators for the sake of God's *shalom*, justice and the integrity of life".

[71] Of course others, such as Hancox (2020), argue that FBOs should be viewed as part of the church.

revealing how Community Development is not confined to the formal ecclesial domain, but also includes "a wider association of (Christian) faith-based organizational involvement". These comments lend support for the present study's orientation of Theology and Development, where it is not the local church's practice which is being explored, but the *diakonia* of LTE, as an FBO, as mentioned by both Eurich and Swart[72]. While there remains a creative tension between secular development and theological reflection, both Klaasen (2019:2)[73] and de Gruchy (2003) note the importance of this field's engagement with the inter-related characteristics of agency, assets (or resources) and the process of empowerment, whilst also stressing the necessary and distinctive theological characteristic of the recovery of vocation of those suffering deprivation, which is also a key focus of this study[74]. As such, it is clear that the prominence to the study of the exploration of LTE's role in their students overcoming the de-humanising effects of powerlessness renders Theology and Development an appropriate disciplinary position.

1.9 Research design, methodology, research methods and data collection

Since Chapter 4 is dedicated to explaining the research design[75], methodology, research methods and data collection methods, together with reasons for decisions made in this regard, it will suffice to provide a bare outline of these facets of the study

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[72] Phiri (2019: 486) also promotes faith-based initiatives of *diakonia* as the church providing "a distinctive, authentic, and unique voice in dialogue with civil society actors".

[73] Klaasen (2019: 2) argues pertinently that Community Development's theological dimension reinforces its agency characteristic. Because all humans have abilities and gifts, there is no unilateral giver and receiver in Community Development but rather a movement of transforming agency. It is instead a "process of mutual and reciprocal growth towards our God-given humanity".

[74] Parhiala and Simango (2014), too, view Community Development as a necessary theological intervention due to its relationship to human dignity, stating that conditions which perpetuate poverty and injustice need to be rejected by persons professing faith, on the basis of interference with inherent human dignity. Community Development is indispensable as action upholding human dignity as an inviolable feature of humanity. Particularly germane to the present study, with its focus on affirming human dignity, is how the authors reason that "transformational development draws from the theological principle that all persons are created in the image of God with the right and potential to live dignified lives in sustainable communities" (Parhiala & Simango 2014: 332).

[75] The research design can be thought of as "a plan or blueprint" of how I intended conducting the research (Babbie & Mouton (2001: 74-75). Their metaphor of building a house provides a valuable analogy. The research project i.e. the building of the house, entails the systematic and meticulous implementation of the research design i.e. the architect's design.

in the introduction. The research design is classified as an empirical study[76]. The study is qualitative in nature, corresponding with Swinton and Mowat's (2006: 28ff) interpretation of qualitative research as a "painstaking and complex process" of exploring how human beings understand the social world[77]. The primary goal is observing and understanding, where "the insider perspective on social action is taken" (Babbie & Mouton 2001: 270)[78]. The methodology[79] is a case study of LTE[80]. Case study research strives towards comprehensive understanding of how participants make meaning of a phenomenon under study (Maree 2007: 75)[81]. In the present study, the unit of analysis is the FBO and the case study research aims to understand how the participants in the study, namely the students at LTE, make meaning of their human dignity when spirituality is practised as an integral part of their skills development training.

Research methods included two literature reviews, one on human dignity and the other on spirituality within the development discourse[82]. In order to achieve a 'thick'[83] description, it was planned for multiple sources of information from various data collection methods to be obtained in the exploration of the case (de Vos *et al.* 2005: 272). Included in these planned methods were observational methods such as interviews, participant observation and focus groups. However, as will be explained

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[76] Classification is based on empiricist theory of knowledge to the effect that "the primary source of all knowledge is to be found in experience and observation". The predominant source of data in research, then, is by way of the senses. A fact needs to be verifiable through the senses in order to be valid scientifically (Babbie & Mouton 2001: 27).

[77] Acknowledging that qualitative research is a slippery concept, they nevertheless offer some helpful guidelines in defining it, as well as usefully exploring the interface between qualitative research methods and Practical Theology with the intention of offering insights to researchers for more effective work across disciplines (Swinton & Mowat 2006).

[78] Babbie and Mouton (2001: 270) approve of qualitative studies as being suitable for research into "those attitudes and behaviours best understood within their natural setting".

[79] In Babbie and Mouton's (2001: 74) helpful metaphor of building a house, where the architect's plans would be the research design, the methodology would be the tools and building methods used in the construction, such as the bricklaying and plastering. In other words, the process of research, with its techniques and procedures, is focused on.

[80] Maree (2007: 75), quotes Yin (1984), who defines case study research as investigating a phenomenon within its natural context using multiple sources of evidence.

[81] Babbie and Mouton (2001: 280) endorse the use of case studies in qualitative research, as do de Vos, Strydom, Fouché and Delport (2005: 106), as leading to a 'thicker' description in qualitative studies.

[82] The literature reviews provide a current context for the study by positioning it within the body of existing knowledge (Ridley 2008: 16-17), enabling me to become acquainted with problems and questions identified by scholars so that they could be taken into account (Bless *et al.* 2013: 49).

[83] The term 'thick' was first used by philosopher Gilbert Ryle and it means that the description gives more than simply the facts. It also interprets the information in the light of other empirical information and the theoretical framework which locates the study (Henning 2004: 6).

in Chapter 4, the observational methods were impacted negatively by COVID-19 regulations, restricting interaction, necessitating the desktop analysis of documentary records playing a more prominent role than originally intended.   Included in documentary analysis, the self-reflexivity element of the study relied on journal extracts.

1.10 Conceptual framework

The conceptual framework which I have used, and which is elaborated on in Chapter 4, provides a rationale for the study, and a reference and starting point for the analysis, according to Henning (2004: 26)[84]. In this way, a conceptual framework provides focus to the project in that it hones in on the area under study[85]. As appears from Figure 1.1 below, I have followed Bazely's (2013: 43) advice that the researcher visualise the conceptual framework by mapping it graphically, identifying key concepts and moving them around to identify relationships between them.

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[84] A conceptual definition must denote the characteristics of that which is being defined and a clear and unambiguous meaning must be attributed to the concepts (Bless *et al.* 2013: 81).

[85] Babbie and Mouton (2001: 111) offer a slightly different meaning of conceptualisation by describing it as the process through which we state what specific terms will mean. It can therefore readily be understood why de Vos (2002: 36) remarks that, although the term 'conceptual framework' is used traditionally in methodology textbooks, it is used without clarifying the term's exact meaning. His warning is heeded about qualitative research authors being "even more vague and confused" and using the term "loosely".
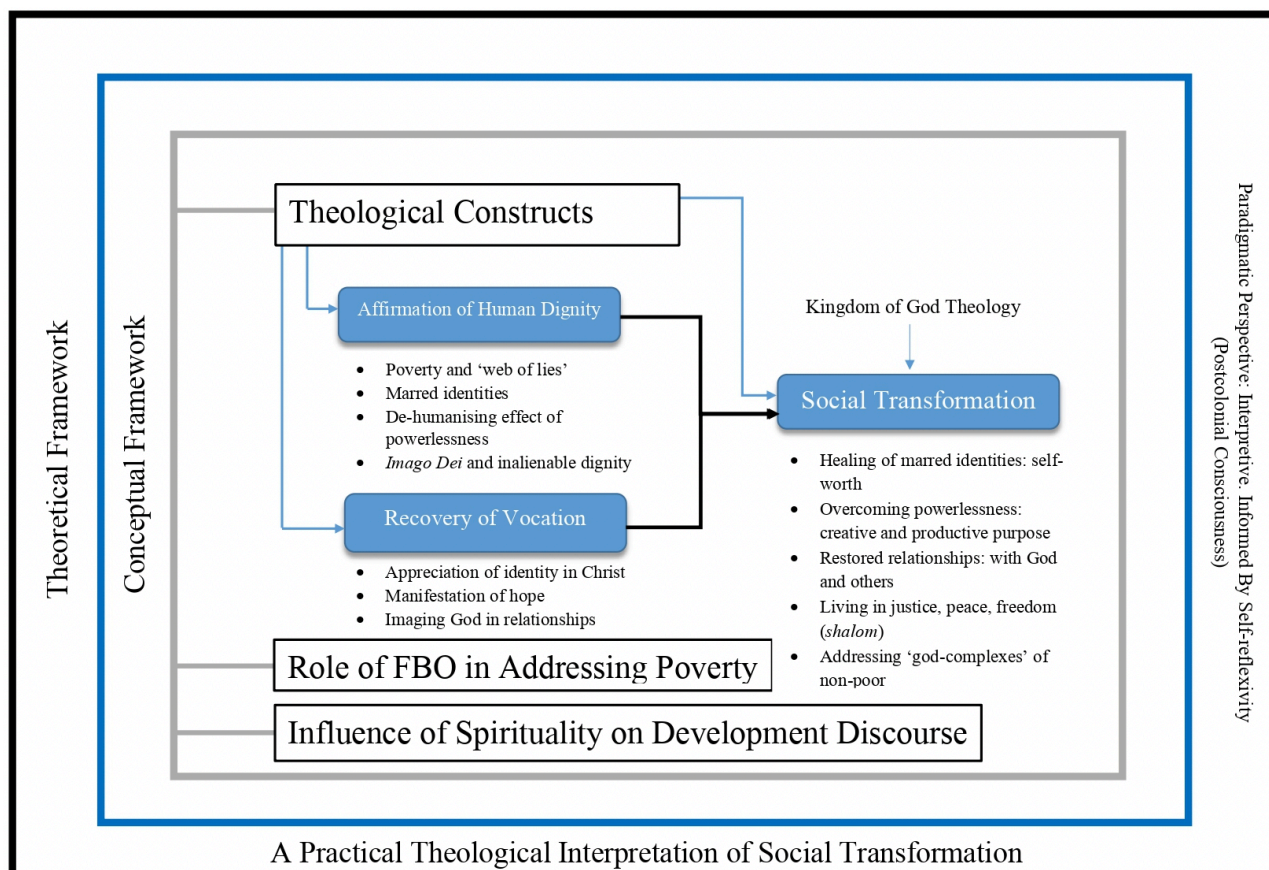
Figure 1. Elements of Theological Constructs within Conceptual Framework

1.11 Contribution of study

The study could be utilised in assisting scholars to understand better the interplay between spirituality and development, in line with Deneulin and Bano's (2009) call for "a re-writing of the secular script" of development studies. Given the acknowledged value of FBOs in addressing poverty[86], it is incumbent on researchers to explore ways in which the practice of spirituality shapes development processes and outcomes. Improving the lives of those in economic distress is a multi-faceted enterprise (Clarke 2011: 23). I would argue that Practical Theology has a valid position amongst the other disciplines and would hope that this practical theological interpretation would have value in deepening understanding of spirituality and development.

Swart and Nell (2016: 2), remark that a stage has been reached where development scholars are recognising the emerging, and even acceleration, of interest in the importance of religion in the lives of people globally, noting that increased academic interest is so recent for it to be deemed appropriate to refer to religion and development

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[86] such as Ver Beek (2000)

as a "new debate" (Ter Haar 2011), and as "an emerging new field" (Bompani 2014), which is not "well- mapped", according to Tomalin (2013: 11-12)[87]. With Swart and Nell (2016: 3) observing how gaps and shortcomings are being addressed, we can infer that, in this emerging new field, there are still noticeable gaps, with a consequent need for the field to be developed thematically and contextually. It is thus hoped that the present study would contribute to this purpose. Taking Ver Beek's beneficial findings of spirituality from his context of the Lenca people of Honduras, I am suggesting that it is equally worthwhile to discover the influence of spirituality in a local context amongst previously unemployed people within an FBO in Cape Town. As demonstrated, the literature shows that the academic work of development practitioners has a long history from the mid-twentieth century (Bragg 1987: 20-51). However, if the theory is given practical application, rather than remaining within the theoretical domain, its scope is extended and its value is tested, as intended in the present study.

1.12 Study's chapters

Chapter one. Rationale of the research, positioning of researcher and personal motivation, context, prior study in development, spirituality and human dignity matters, and scholarly gaps, research question and objectives, paradigmatic perspective and theoretical, practical theological framework, research design, methods, methodology and data collection, conceptual framework and contribution of study.

Chapter two. Literature review of human dignity and vocation as theological constructs as related to development as transformation.

Chapter three. Literature review consisting of presentation of spirituality in development.

Chapter four. Detailed description of paradigmatic perspective, conceptual framework, research design, methodology, research methods, methods of collection and analysis of data, including choice of instruments, and justification for decisions made on approaches, ethical considerations, limitations of study and validity.

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[87] For this reason, they consider the time to have come to produce a chronological bibliography reflecting the development of this new field.

Chapter five. Discussion on findings and interpretation thereof from empirical research conducted concerning the de-humanising effects of powerlessness.

Chapter six. Discussion on findings and interpretation thereof concerning the extent to which a focus on spirituality at LTE affirms the human dignity of students through a recovery of vocation and enables meaningful transformation to take place.

Chapter seven. Recommendations and reflections on study's outcomes.

1.13 Conclusion

I am aware of how the desire for the eradication of poverty and justice for the vulnerable and marginalised can appear naïve. Indeed, the problem seems insurmountable. Nevertheless, knowing that the disempowered on the periphery of society matter deeply to God, whose will is for justice and equality, our task as professing followers of Christ, is merely to be obedient to where the Holy Spirit is leading us to serve, and God will work through our actions[88]. As Koopman (2008: 41) astutely remarks, "Small and humble efforts are crucial steps towards a life of dignity for all." My attitude towards the study, which unfolds in the following chapters, is a reflection of the thinking of Myers (2011: 172), expressed hereunder:

> *We know we cannot bring the kingdom, and yet we are committed to work for its coming. Living and working in the sinful here and now, while believing in the coming of the sinless kingdom, is a uniquely Christian stance. Care needs to be taken that we understand that we are being asked of God to be obedient, not successful.*

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[88] Samuel and Sugden (1987: 41) reinforce God's desire for equality by using the argument of God's institution of the jubilee laws and prophetic teaching as well as the example of the early church. They state that "God has a special concern for the have-nots – the poor, the defenceless, the weak, the marginalised, the sick, and the hungry".

CHAPTER 2.

UNDERSTANDING HUMAN DIGNITY AND VOCATION AS THEOLOGICAL CONSTRUCTS

2.1 Introduction

As stated in Chapter 1, the present chapter's content comprises the first of the two literature reviews.   This literature review is necessary to acquire a deeper understanding of the theological constructs of 'human dignity' and 'vocation', in order to embark on an interpretation of social transformation in the empirical findings. Both the notions of 'human dignity' and 'vocation' are central to the theological foundation of transformational development in the development discourse (Myers 2011: 17). For this reason they are included in the conceptual framework (discussed in Section 4.4). Nevertheless, it should be noted that both concepts have some ambiguity attached to them, rendering it essential that they be explored further, prior to proceeding to the data analysis.

Broadly speaking, the notion of human dignity encompasses the idea that a human being is deserving of respect and special concern and is not to be treated as something to be used (Kraynak & Tinder 2003: 237). However, there has been a definite lack of clarity in what precisely is contemplated by human dignity.   This is inferred, for instance, from Ammicht-Quinn, Junker-Kenny and Tamez (2003: 7), who, in speaking of human dignity, note that "the connotations are widening and the confusion over this term is deepening".   Whilst it is universally recognised that dignity ought to be attributed to humankind, the essential enquiry is where the source of human dignity is reliably to be found. In its simplest terms: what is it about human beings that warrants special consideration and what form does that special consideration take?

A dialectical[89] consideration of human dignity will be undertaken in this chapter using an interdisciplinary approach, including the sometimes overlapping historical, anthropological, sociological, legal and philosophical disciplines. The intention of this chapter is therefore to focus on the extensive human dignity discourse commencing with an introduction of its complexity by tracing its roots to Enlightenment philosophy

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[89] Dialectical in relating to the logical discussion of ideas and opinions (oxfordlearnersdictionaries.com).

and demonstrating the weaknesses of this interpretation in the pervasive influence of Immanuel Kant. Thereafter a Southern African perspective on human dignity, using the notion of '*ubuntu*', is critically presented.

Since the theoretical framework of the study is a practical theological interpretation, emphasis will be placed on how human dignity has been interpreted from a theological standpoint[90]. It will be argued that a theological interpretation for attributing dignity to human beings has validity, given the weaknesses inherent in the secular philosophical reasoning. Accordingly, an alternative foundation for human dignity is proposed, within the Christian tradition as a theological construct and it is related how human dignity ties in with the theological construct of vocation. In this way, what will be undertaken is what Osmer (2008) would term the 'normative task' of Practical Theology (See Section 1.8.3). According to Osmer, the normative task entails drawing on theological concepts to interpret a context, including ethical norms and good practices.

2.2 Introduction to human dignity's ambiguity

Human dignity is highly topical given the present global political and socio-economic devastation of humankind, yet the term is a relatively recent one, and its meaning has not been consistent in usage over time. Even in the present time, the precise frame of reference is blurred. Judge Laurie Ackermann (2013: 4) deems the term 'human dignity' to be too narrow and prefers the Afrikaans derivative '*menswaardigheid*' and so he selects the phrase 'infinite human worth' to connote human dignity. Soulen and Woodhead (2006: 23) place stress on the multi-dimensional character of human dignity, working against anthropological reductionism and also reductionism within the Christian tradition. Recently Duwel, Braarvig, Brownsword and Mieth (2014: xx), in an implied endorsement of the aforementioned view concerning the blurring of the parameters of human dignity, state that:

> *It is not only timely to have an intense debate about human dignity, it is surely a matter of intellectual honesty to try to attain a more comprehensive understanding of this concept. Given that human dignity forms the basis of many legal frameworks…, that it is deeply interwoven with various moral and religious traditions, and that it functions as a reference point for a number of contemporary social and political debates, it should be carefully investigated*

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[90] As a starting point, in this regard, and of relevance to the present study is that Kraynak (2003: 82) includes social justice in his list of the ambit of human dignity from a theological perspective as "the rights of persons to recognition, respect and suitable standards of material well-being".

before we judge whether it is a useful, meaningful, vague or problematic concept.

2.3 Human dignity's scope and origins in Enlightenment philosophy

When seeking the origin of the notion of human dignity, we find its recognition first encountered in ancient Greece and Rome. Shell (2003: 53) explains that the term 'dignity' originates from the Latin '*dignitas*' meaning 'virtue' or 'worthiness', or alternatively 'honourable office'. In classical Greek and Roman culture, however, it did not carry the same meaning as in contemporary times in that dignity was not attributed to humankind in its entirety. Then, it denoted excellence in virtue, which was usually because of the social status of the aristocracy. Dignity was encapsulated in "decorum, decency, honour and honours" (Verspieren 2003: 18). It was this excellence which made one worthy of dignity. Aristotle, for instance, described dignity as the crown of virtue. Moltmann (1984: ix) interprets dignity in classical culture to be "nothing more than a privilege or prerogative or even simply a sense of decorum"[91]. Understood in this way, dignity was something deserving and was not shared by all human beings[92]. Meilaender (2009: 88), therefore, notes that the idea of equal dignity of all people, irrespective of character or abilities, does not have its roots in classical thought.

Numerous differing avenues of reasoning were followed in arguing for the universality of dignity disassociated from social status. Gradually the universality of dignity regardless of rank or character came to be recognised as having its roots in two traditions, namely those associated with philosophers and with theologians. The traditional source founded in philosophy attributed dignity to humankind because of its status as rational beings able to "contemplate nature and justify thereby the value of human existence" (Shell 2003: 54). The other traditional source was the Bible whereby human dignity had its foundation in the covenant relationship of God with humankind created in his image, and in the fact that Jesus Christ had taken on humanity, complete with humankind's weakness and vulnerability (Meilaender 2009: 88). Both the secular philosophical and the biblical avenues for attributing dignity will be discussed, commencing with the philosophical tradition.

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[91] Dignity associated with rank or authority was derived from the particular status and so, for instance, would pass from one monarch to the next.

[92] It was only the Stoics as a small minority who recognised the universality of dignity attributed to humankind aside from hierarchical factors or character (Meilaender 2009: 88).

During the Enlightenment, when reason was highly prized in culture, Immanuel Kant (1724-1804) was arguably the most influential philosopher in forming prevailing thought on universal human dignity based on intellectual autonomy[93]. The main themes of Kant's moral philosophy are that all persons, regardless of social class or character attributes, have an equal intrinsic worth or dignity. In striving to make our individual decisions worthy of this moral standing, through using our intellect, elevates us above animals and other animate objects (Hill 2014: 215). The idea that human beings should always be treated as ends in themselves and never as means or objects is central to the ethics of Kant (Ackermann 2013: 38).

According to Kant, humankind is exalted due to its self-subjection to an internal moral law, or what we would call our conscience. A person in the moral sense is an entity from whose conduct attributed to it freedom can be inferred. Freedom is the reason without which there would not be a moral law, and awareness of the moral law, or our conscience, is how we can recognise that we are free (Shell 2003: 55). By subjection to self-imposed law through our conscience, human beings are made morally accountable. Kant therefore finds that the quality which exhibits the universality of human dignity, and which gives incomparable worth to human beings, is that they are morally accountable through self-legislation (Shell 2003: 57).

Kant dismissed a biblical foundation for human dignity, commenting that it is only the unenlightened mind which feels more comfortable looking outside of and above oneself, towards God, in search of authority for human dignity. However, as Kant sees it, and in typical Enlightenment reasoning, there is no need to look towards God, as the unenlightened mind can be assisted by philosophy to dispel moral confusion in favour of accepting the awareness of humans' universal moral accountability (Shell 2003: 57).

2.4 Weakness in Enlightenment philosophical basis for human dignity

We are ultimately confronted with the question: what is it about human beings that make us deserving of respect and special consideration? There may be consensus about the *existence* of human dignity but there is no consensus about the *source* of that dignity (Kraynak & Tinder 2003: 238). Any attempt to obtain normative value on

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[93] Before and after that time philosophers such as Hegel, Descartes and Leibniz promoted reason in their philosophy and even as a way of understanding the image of God (Kilner 2015: 182).

issues from Enlightenment philosophy's classification of human dignity fails dismally. In support of this contention, several illustrations follow.

Hill's (2014) interpretation of Kant's philosophy echoes Shell's (2003), where he points out that human dignity is based on the moral law, which requires respect for all persons because all have the capacity of rational autonomy. Applying Kantian conception of human dignity, Hill suggests that we must act as if we were both law-makers and subjects of the law in an ideal moral commonwealth in which the members, as ends in themselves, have dignity as value rather than mere price. In following the moral principles of an ideal moral commonwealth in ensuring human dignity, we will be giving appropriate recognition to the autonomy of each person and shaping our lives by general policies that we can rationally regard as permissible for everyone to follow (Hill 2014: 215). However much the aforementioned idea may make sense in theory, it does not take account of evil and wrongdoing perpetrated by human beings who have elected not to subject themselves to the moral law. We undoubtedly do not exist in Kant's "ideal moral commonwealth", as humankind's capacity for evil is clear, irrespective of one's worldview. Here an obvious weakness of philosophy's basis for human dignity exists. A major shortcoming to Kant's thesis is therefore his inability to reconcile the existence of wrongdoing, or evil, with the moral law and human beings' universal moral accountability, as Shell (2003: 71) notes, observing further that Kant prefers to accept the mystery of evil than to acknowledge humankind's inherent sin.

Pointing further to what he terms Kant's "dubious argument", Kerstein (2014: 224) states that if you rationally believe that you have the ability to determine what end is good, it follows logically that you, yourself, consider yourself to be good. The question naturally arises as to who determines who is good and who is not, and a logical conundrum ensues. Kerstein (2014: 224) indicates that Kant's thesis also delivers implausible results in the case of self-sacrifice. Where a person chooses to sacrifice his or her own life to save the life of others, the person is arguably disregarding respect for the incomparable worth of his or her own humanity. Therefore the self-sacrificing action must be held to be wrong, not heroic, on the basis that it devalues the incomparable and unconditional worth of Kant's notion.

Equally lacking in reliability is Kant's optimistic contention, the epitome of Enlightenment thinking, that "mankind [*sic*] is in constant progress towards the better and will continue to be henceforth" (quoted in Shell 2003: 70). His argument has,

however, been condemned by two World Wars and repeated genocide in the twentieth century, observes Shell.

Aside from philosophical anomalies and inaccuracies, when we read Ackermann's (2013) concept of what human dignity encompasses, formulated in order for him, as a judge, to understand more fully the human rights protected in the Constitution of the Republic of South Africa, 1996 ("the Constitution"), what becomes apparent is how a formulation of human dignity based purely on secular philosophical grounds and excluding a theological basis, results in noticeable lack of clarity. His description of human dignity reads as follows:

> *I suggest that the human worth (dignity) of each and every person is the capacity for and the right to respect as a human being. This arises from all those aspects of the human personality that flow from human intellectual and moral capacity; which in turn separate humans from the impersonality of nature, enables them to exercise their own judgment, to have self-awareness and a sense of self-worth, to exercise self-determination, to shape themselves and nature, to develop their personalities and to strive for self-fulfilment in their lives. It also arises from the capacity of human beings to enter into meaningful relationship with others and thereby achieve self-fulfilment at least in part (Ackermann 2013: 23-24).*

Ackermann's denotation of human dignity as a criterion of reference for human rights is a logical proposition but it is noteworthy that Ackermann requires a lengthy description to ensure that the many facets of human dignity are encompassed in what is contemplated by the concept, and the completeness of his list is questionable. Indeed, as much as human dignity became a widely accepted notion in the decades after 1948, it has frequently been perceived to be conceptually unclear and too vague (Duwel *et al.* 2014: xviii). In this regard, what is evident is how Ackermann (2013: 26) intentionally refrains from *defining* human dignity, instead seeking to *describe* it, as he states that a definition "conveys the idea of having neatly and comprehensively captured all the essential components of a concept". He alludes to German jurisprudence which acknowledges that the meaning or content of human dignity cannot be "fully captured in any one given moment…[but] "will be extended as our knowledge of the human being increases, and as we view the human being in the context of the development of the modern natural sciences". This statement further muddies the waters around human dignity.

The pure philosophical conception of human dignity, as reflected in Enlightenment formulation, being based on a self-regulated moral law, whilst widely endorsed, is

controversial and subject to severe criticism on several further grounds. It can, for instance, be challenged in that it clearly devalues mentally challenged human adults with its emphasis on rationality. Valadier (2003) remarks that the "lofty evaluation" of the human person, based on Kant's emphasis on rational thinking, turns into the opposite when certain humans have lost these qualities or were not endowed with them in the first place. Thus a focus on rationalism causes the diminution of human dignity in the most vulnerable who do not display these characteristics, who are ironically the ones most in need of their dignity being acknowledged (Valadier 2003: 52)[94]. Rather than being enshrined in moral autonomy, Valadier says, in their distress and wretchedness, human beings still bear witness to their human condition and can appeal to their human dignity by their distress. The mutual responsibility of being delivered over to one another's care as a human task presupposes human dignity.

Challenges to the notion of human dignity brought about by contemporary debates in the field of bioethics reveal important deficiencies in the source of human dignity lying within the domain of secular thought. For example, there have been discussions about which beings – human embryos, comatose patients, and perhaps (at least some) animals – have dignity and what this entails. There has been lobbying for acceptance of assisted suicide and euthanasia with appeals for dying with dignity. Human dignity has also featured prominently in bioethics debates about cloning and genetic modification in reproduction (Duwel *et al.* 2014: xviii) and nothing makes the weakness in a philosophical foundation for human dignity more evident than the constantly shifting parameters of human dignity as revealed in bioethics debates[95].

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[94] Valadier (2003: 55-56) therefore elects to draw on the parable of the Good Samaritan for the source of human dignity instead of insisting on rationality. For him, the Gospel text presents the logical consequence of the duty of humanity as the Samaritan demonstrates his own human dignity in response to the wounded man's equal dignity.

[95] In this regard, Schwobel (2006) argues that it is crucial that all parties in biotechnological research should be able to appeal to the upliftment of human dignity based on the same reasoning. Currently, though, we are faced with moral ambiguity and a paradoxical situation. Critics of the cultivation of human embryos for medical research rely on the infringement of human dignity for their objections to the practice. Proponents of human embryo production, however, also appeal to human dignity as they point to the potential for curing diseases currently depriving a person of their human dignity and preventing the births of those who will have genetic conditions negatively impacting their human dignity. In contrast to Kant's basis for dignity being rooted in capacity for rationality, Meilaender (2009: 44) formulates an argument that all people have human dignity because all are equidistant from God, not because of their individual accomplishments or talents. As such, even if a person is so mentally challenged that he or she will never reach beyond the intellectual capacity of an infant, or if dementia has caused the intellect to diminish, that person's human dignity will remain unaffected. Meilaender (2009: 96) states that when the Christian foundation of human dignity is removed by society, it faces a crisis in its values and beliefs. He therefore contends that the belief in human dignity cannot be viewed other than as a theological statement.

In spite of its obvious shortcomings, as discussed, Kant's Enlightenment formulation of human dignity nevertheless led to growth in various intellectual philosophical movements[96]. From Kant's philosophy of freedom and human dignity, new terminology of personhood grew and the infinite worth of every human being was accepted. There was now a moral requirement to recognise fully the inalienable human rights of every person. As a natural progression, a moral duty evolved into a legal duty to protect human rights.

2.5 Human dignity giving rise to the related problem of human rights

The legal facet of human dignity was established in 1948 as a result of the atrocities of World War II as the foundation for the UN's Universal Declaration of Human Rights ("UDHR"). During the process, it was decided that the principal purpose of the UDHR was to record an emphatic affirmation of human dignity and consequential human rights. The preamble of the UDHR therefore opens with the following statement: "Whereas recognition of the inherent dignity and of the equal and inalienable rights of all members of the human family is the foundation of freedom, justice and peace in the world…". Article 1 then reads: "All human beings are created free and equal in dignity and rights. They are endowed with reason and conscience and should act towards one another in a spirit of brotherhood [sic]" (Duwel *et al*. 2014: xvii). The provisions quoted above are firmly linked to a set of ideas: namely, that each and every human being has inherent dignity; that it is this inherent dignity that gives rise to human rights; that these are inalienable rights; and that because all human beings have dignity, they hold these rights equally (Brownsword 2014: 3). However, weaknesses have been associated with the philosophical notion of inherent human dignity enshrined in the UDHR. Meilaender (2009: 89-90), for one, contends that Article 1 of the UDHR lacks a coherent basis for the recognition of human beings' inherent dignity[97]. According to him, the source of human dignity as being our relationship with God, has faded with

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[96] Whilst Hegelianism, phenomenology and existentialism all developed as movements out of Kant's thinking, the Kantian philosophy on freedom and human dignity was the most influential of philosophical trends (Kraynak 2003: 107).

[97] Brownsword describes the process of drafting the declaration when the UN convened a group of philosophers with diverse theories and ideologies to examine the theoretical bases of the proclamation about human dignity. While they were able to agree on the framing of various specific claims, they were not able to pronounce why human dignity is attributed to all human beings according to a common theoretical basis. Meilaender therefore argues that evidence for human dignity based on philosophical arguments cannot be convincingly adduced in contemporary times (Meilaender 2009: 89-90).

no obvious replacement as a reason for attributing equal dignity to all people. Inevitably a degree of obscurity thus develops surrounding the concept.

Whilst in some quarters human dignity has indeed been seen as an obscure concept, scholars from various traditions viewed it as the foundational basis of the entire human rights regime from which the whole set of human rights should be derived[98]. From this perspective, Duwel *et al.* (2014: xviii) emphasise that the concept is of such importance in that it offers more than merely a conceptual understanding of why human beings are so important that they should be ascribed inalienable rights. In South Africa too, human dignity is at the core of the rights encompassed in the Constitution. Section 1 of Chapter 1 provides as follows: "The Republic of South Africa is one, sovereign, democratic state founded on the following values: a) human dignity, the achievement of equality and the advancement of human rights and freedoms….". Section 10 further provides: "Everyone has inherent dignity and the right to have their dignity respected and protected".

Botman (2016: 74) explains that this commitment to human dignity was deemed necessary to address the de-humanising effects of institutionalised apartheid which broke the dignity of black people through systemic inequality and distorted the human dignity of white people through white supremacist indoctrination. In this regard, he notes that the Constitution marks human dignity as "foundational and its restitution as the country's crucial public responsibility" (Botman 2006: 73). Whilst this is indubitably a valid interpretation and the entrenchment of human rights within an esteemed legal framework is laudable, the question that arises once again relates to the Constitution's theoretical foundation for ascribing inalienable dignity to human beings, as alluded to by Brownsword (2014) and Meilander (2009).

2.6 Southern African perspective on human dignity

The Enlightenment formulation as a theoretical foundation of the proclamation of human dignity, as proposed by Kant, in spite of all its shortcomings, has become globally accepted. Some authors have, however, argued for a human dignity theory which is more aligned to the South African context. Ackermann (2013: 77), for instance, introduces '*ubuntu*' as a sub-Saharan concept to aid in understanding human

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[98] In the legal context, human dignity was implemented in various countries' constitutions and became a focal point of the legal systems in countries like Germany and Israel.

dignity in the context of the Constitution and other scholars have also appropriated *ubuntu* as an ethical concept. It is to be emphasised, however, that the adoption of *ubuntu* as an ethical concept on which to base human dignity, is similar to Enlightenment philosophy in its rejection of any theological reference. In the discussion below, reasons will be presented why a Southern African perspective on human dignity which excludes a dimension of the triune God, is materially flawed. As such, it will be shown how *ubuntu* on its own cannot assist in distilling a theoretical foundation for human dignity.

While the term '*ubuntu*' is generally acknowledged to be difficult to define with precision, Kumalo (2017: 23) ventures the following definition: "The term '*ubuntu*' is a Zulu and Xhosa word for 'humanness' meaning the positive attributes of being human such as the sense of belonging, selflessness, hospitality, sharing, humility and respect"[99]. Smit's (2007: 119) interpretation of *ubuntu* elucidates the concept as follows:

> *Human beings are only human in their interdependency on other human beings. Sociality, belonging, mutual responsibility and service, connectedness, solidarity, caring and sharing are all important values, constituting our very being.*

Metz (2014), too, seeks to articulate a theory of human dignity based on the *ubuntu* tradition, which he describes as a pre-colonial way of understanding humanity, literally meaning 'humanness' or 'personhood'. After considering spirituality and livelihood as foundations for human dignity in a specifically African context, Metz (2014: 315) prefers 'communal relationship' as a conception for human dignity with "a recognizably African pedigree"[100]. It is a matter of identity and solidarity whereby a person identifies with being in a community, rather than as primarily an individual and so one exhibits solidarity in the form of empathy for others' predicaments in the communal sphere (Metz 2014: 214-215).

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[99] Shutte (2001) is also a strong advocate of *ubuntu* as his aim is to foster a society guided by values in which all humanity can flourish. For Shutte (2001: 2), "*ubuntu* embodies an understanding of what it is to be human and what is necessary for human beings to grow and find fulfilment. It is an ethical concept and expresses a vision of what is valuable and worthwhile in life". His concern is for the 'moral vacuum' which has crept into South African society and he therefore seeks to develop a new ethic for South Africa through the concept of *ubuntu*.

[100] When it is stated that a person is a person through other persons, what is implied is communal relationship. In other words human personhood or virtue is developed in community and the personhood is derived from having the capacity to commune (Metz 2014: 315) .

Shutte's (2001: 65-66) description of *ubuntu* giving rise to human dignity is closely aligned to that of Metz as he states that I affirm my own existence as valuable when I extend that affirmation to my friend. Such knowledge of another person's value does not depend on my knowing any particular details of the person's circumstances. I know the most intimate details of my own character and circumstances and so I extend this familiarity to acquaintances and even to strangers. Genuine self-love is precisely what I share most closely with others, which is our humanity, and that, Shutte (2001: 66) avers, is the essence of humanity identified in *ubuntu*. Metz (2014: 216) would agree, with the essence of humanity slightly differently stated thus: "We are more special than anything else on the planet because we are capable of being part of a friendly or loving relationship in a way that nothing else is" [101]. Human rights violations, according to Metz 2014:216), are essentially the deprivation of these friendly or loving relationships[102].

With Kant's interpretation having acquired global acceptance, Metz (2014: 216-217) views the absence of universal acceptance as one of *ubuntu's* weaknesses as a common theoretical basis underpinning human dignity. Kumalo (2017: 24) highlights others, including questioning its relevance in a racially diverse society such as South Africa and expressing concern about its "space of betwixt" occupying a liminal position. For greater relevance in a rapidly globalised environment, *ubuntu* would be required to move from the margins as an ethical concept and to "excavate" it for insights into social change (Kumalo 2017: 31). Magezi's (2017: 112) reservations about the applicability of *ubuntu* in the current South African context are that "[c]olossal injustice and rampant corruption are in stark contrast to *ubuntu*". He observes that, despite the *ubuntu* rhetoric, both political leaders and ordinary members of society are disrespecting humanness with their indifference to those in deprivation and inhumane

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[101] Metz (2014: 216-217) labels this an 'Afro-communitarian' conception of dignity but he is hesitant, however, to prefer an Afro-communitarian conception of human dignity over a Kantian conception, instead finding them to be "on a par" on the basis that both do a fair job of identifying and explaining a variety of human rights that we instinctively have. He nevertheless recommends that a project be undertaken to do a more exhaustive comparison to determine whether human rights abuse is better understood as harm to our autonomous nature, as explained by Kant, or whether it is better encapsulated as degradation of our communal nature, in line with the *ubuntu* tradition interpretation. He comments that Kant's conception is not only followed closely by the West, where it had its origins, but is also projected globally with no thought of an alternative. By its nature, human dignity needs to have universal scope and so one must think carefully about which theoretical basis of human dignity would be more likely to attain consensus.

[102] So human trafficking, genocide, apartheid and the like, violate the human dignity of a person by grossly impairing their quality of life in undermining their abilities to pursue friendly and loving relationships (Metz 2014: 216).

attitudes including xenophobia (Magezi 2017: 113). Tucker and Masango's (2017) criticisms of *ubuntu* in a modern, multi-cultural country like South Africa, which is no longer a village, include its selective application which does not cross boundaries and its sanctioning of inefficiency and even criminality in its bias towards preserving social harmony. Chirongoma and Manda's (2008) criticism of the ethic of *ubuntu* is more muted than the abovementioned scholars, but is nevertheless evident. For them, in highlighting the struggles for impoverished women in gaining access to adequate healthcare in South Africa, they acknowledge the role of *ubuntu* in aiding women in their pursuits. Of particular importance in this regard are the prominent roles of communal solidarity, reciprocity and relationality. However, they note how colonisation and apartheid have altered gender relations in South Africa thus destroying the basis on which *ubuntu* is founded. The problem of 'who belongs to whom' has in many instances thwarted the positive influence of *ubuntu*, instead giving rise to patriarchy and oppression of women (Chirongoma & Manda 2008: 198-199).

Boesak (2011) is more vocal than Chirongoma and Manda in the following expression of *ubuntu's* limitations, whilst nevertheless having accepted its benefits as "an enormously powerful philosophy" (Boesak 2011: 581)[103]:

> Ubuntu *is based on the recognition of human worth and the interconnectedness of all persons, but it has scarcely offered an imperative for the restoration of worth and human integrity of women, and certainly not for homosexual persons, for example. It assumes an interdependent humanity, but it does not speak of the systemic inequalities that today prevail in the relationships, systemic, personal and communal, of women and men, rich and poor, threatening or obliterating human dignity in South Africa. It appeals to assumptions of solidarity but it does not speak of rights and wrongs, of oppression and liberation. Justice may be implied but it is not demanded.*

For different reasons, Naude (2011) is also dubious about *ubuntu* as a guiding principle in human dignity. He firstly describes *ubuntu* as "the unwritten social security" in "a deep culture of sharing" marked by displays of "compassion to those who cross

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[103] He makes reference to Archbishop *Emeritus* Desmond Tutu who repeatedly refers to *ubuntu* as the foundational principle driving the Truth and Reconciliation Commission ("TRC"). Tutu (quoted in Boesak 2011: 579) emphasises the aim of the TRC to be restorative justice where "the central concern is not retribution or punishment, but in the spirit of ubuntu, the healing of breaches, the redressing of imbalances, the restoration of broken relationships….Thus we would say that justice, restorative justice, is being served when efforts are being made to work for healing, for forgiveness and for reconciliation". Boesak (2011: 580) criticises Tutu's terminology as, for him, true reconciliation manifests in transformation of the individual and of communities where there is genuine and durable restoration of human dignity. The TRC, sadly, failed to give effect to these aspirations. In acknowledging that the "concept of *ubuntu* might doubtless have inspired some to forgive", Boesak emphatically denies that *ubuntu* succeeded in undoing systemic injustice (Boesak 2011: 582).

our path" (Naude 2011: 502). These noble principles are aimed at protecting the most vulnerable of society. However, he notes the distortion of *ubuntu* due to the widespread adoption of Enlightenment values of individualism, materialism and secularism. Naude (2011: 502) explains: "*Ubuntu* is corrupted when it loses its universal sense and is interpreted in a narrow nationalistic, ethnic or familial fashion".

Like the Enlightenment perspective therefore, *ubuntu* is also demonstrated to be fallible and cannot be viewed as unchallengeable. As widespread as Enlightenment thinking on human dignity is, even with modifications over time on Kant's formulation, a discussion on *ubuntu* reveals that there is at least one alternative conception which could potentially replace Enlightenment philosophy. Magezi (2017: 112) nevertheless emphasises the necessity of traditional *ubuntu* being informed by Christian values in order for it to provide a constructive approach to humanness. In this way, *ubuntu* would include a transcendent dimension whereby it would be Christ instead of family or geographical community relationships as the bonding factor (Magezi 2017: 117). In proposing an *ubuntu* "reinvigoration", Tucker and Masango (2017: 156) maintain that it is only when *ubuntu* flows from a heart of love towards God and each other that *ubuntu* can be effective in its practical application beyond philosophy. In his call for a restoration of humanity, Naude (2011: 505) too advocates a return to a Judeo-Christian view underpinning *ubuntu*, on the basis that, when we return to the Creator God, we see all people as image bearers of God, and, as such, as our brothers and sisters of whom we are keepers.

2.7 Argument in favour of human dignity as a theological construct

Given Enlightenment's philosophical failings, as discussed, it will be proposed hereunder that human dignity viewed through a theological lens, whereby the concept has its foundation in the biblical covenant relationship of God with his creation, provides the necessary human dignity foundation for relevant issues related to social justice. It will therefore be contended that the second traditionally recognised source of dignity, the domain of theologians rather than philosophers, is a valid source of the universality of human dignity.

The Christian tradition is one with a long history of providing human dignity with a clear reference point. Kilner (2015: 7), observing that many have turned to the Enlightenment and particularly to the writings of Kant as the primary source of present views on human dignity, dismisses such views on the basis that "these defences of

human dignity more plausibly constitute attempts to explain in nonreligious terms a persuasive concept that had long before come to light through biblical revelation". Soulen and Woodhead (2006: 11) remark that, although Kant famously echoed Psalm 8 in expressing wonder at the place of the human being within the universe, he grounds human dignity not within a relationship with the creator of the universe, but within humankind's capacity for autonomous rational agency. Instead of being derivative of and embedded in God's revelation, we find, on Kant's interpretation, that "the modern concept of human dignity stands remarkably exposed – and with it the human being, whose dignity now inheres solely in his or her own possessions and achievements" (Soulen & Woodhead 2006: 12). Their contention is that when human dignity is removed from its theological context, as has occurred due to the influence of modern philosophy, "it proves remarkably fragile – insufficient to sustain the ethical and metaphysical weight that modern rights-talk would place on it…[and] a blunting of its power to diagnose and resist contemporary endangerments of the very dignity it strives to secure" (Soulen & Woodhead 2006: 14-15)[104].

Grasso (2003) also comes out strongly in support of the view of human dignity being derivative of God's revelation, reasoning that "a full appreciation of the dignity, the greatness, of the human person, …only becomes possible in the light of divine revelation" (Grasso 2003: 224). Through God's revelation to humankind, we discover God's unique relationship with humans as his creation made in his likeness. As a result of Christ's sacrifice and humankind's calling, we have proof of God's exaltation of humanity's dignity[105]. From this perspective, human dignity goes beyond mere convention and becomes instead "the fundamental ontological fact from which human social and political life must take its bearings" (Grasso 2003: 227). In this way human dignity overcomes the moral ambiguity present in our time[106].

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[104] Soulen and Woodhead (2006), in response to the de-contextualisation of human dignity, argue for the re-contextualisation of the term which has lost its capacity to serve as a meaningful point of orientation for various contemporary issues. According to them, it is only by re-contextualising the concept, following the example of the early Christian tradition, within a broader theological and ecclesiastical framework, that human dignity provides a fixed point of reference. When placed in its early Christian context, it is evident that the early Christians believed that God conferred human dignity (Soulen & Woodhead 2006: 6).

[105] At the centre of that revelation is the person of Jesus Christ. God's love for humanity is revealed in Christ's saving action and the destiny to which humankind is called by virtue of it (Grasso 2003: 224). The appeal of this source of human dignity is that it allows for "an objective and universally binding moral order" (Grasso 2003: 226-227).

[106] Kraynak and Tinder (2003: 237) use as examples of "startling disdain for the human person" the cigarette industry advertising and gratuitous violence in film entertainment.

It becomes evident that the notion of human dignity rests on how the human being is viewed ontologically. The theological view presents a specific vision of what it means to be human, which is rooted in a view of reality in relation to God. Schwobel (2006: 46) believes that human dignity will lose much of its ambiguity once it is viewed in the theological context from which it originates. Its capacity to provide orientation and protection from violation and abuse will thus be restored. The ontological status of human beings is as created beings and their 'createdness' places them in a position of dependence on their creator, according to Schwobel (2006: 49)[107]. A theological perspective on human dignity will show enhanced sensitivity towards those who are most vulnerable to injustice, argues Smit (2007: 349), as he calls for human dignity to occupy a central position in social justice implementation. Since the message of the triune God is the affirmation of the dignity of humankind, the inalienable worth of humankind is the boundary which cannot be traversed as "the ultimate criterion to apply to social, political and economic life together (Smit 2007: 350-351)[108].

Another contributor to the human dignity conversation, Tinder (2003), expresses concern that the dignity recognised as inherent in every individual, irrespective of bodily, mental or character damage, is under threat (Tinder 2003: 11). Since he takes an unconventional yet persuasive philosophical stance in the human dignity conversation, his reasoning warrants elucidating. Tinder reasons convincingly in defence of inviolable human dignity, through a distinction between fate and destiny. Fate is manifested in world forces which dictate that an individual's life is meaningless and of minimal value. Tinder confronts the prominence of fate by introducing destiny as a contrasting concept signifying the life one is meant to live, enhancing meaning instead of meaninglessness. He argues that pride is the source of fate's prominence

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[107] The implication is that their human dignity is bestowed on them by their creator God as a gift (Schwobel 2006: 49).

[108] In what is an extension of the human dignity discourse, Smit (2007), argues for a change in the way the South African public views social justice. In his opinion, the way the public thinks and speaks about justice – "the prevailing dominant theoretical framework" - will have a material bearing on the implementation of social and economic measures. In motivating for a theological perspective on theories of social justice, Smit believes that a change in theoretical framework will overcome the delays and positively affect the urgency and prioritising of structural implementation (Smit 2007: 344). Smit (2007: 246) makes the following astute observation in favour of a theological perspective concerning a specific research project regarding the attainment of social and economic justice in South Africa: "Firstly, both Old and New Testament records can offer valuable orientation and perspective; secondly, the Christian tradition of interpretation can provide instructive developments and case studies; and thirdly, recent and contemporary ecumenical discussions may help to discern critical issues and insights. Research into all three of these fields of inquiry (biblical, historical, systematic) could play an important role in developing theology's own voice and particular contribution".

in that pride causes false understanding of the world around us in suggesting that human beings can know all reality[109]. Tinder (2003: 31) proposes that destiny is best seen as being given by something beyond nature or society which may be termed "transcendence". Of major significance is that transcendence shifts our relationship with reality from one of command to one of receptivity since human beings are no longer striving for ascendancy and dominance. Instead they exhibit a readiness to accept destiny instead of fate as soon as they acknowledge the possibility of reality consisting of more than they can know and control (Tinder 2003: 33)[110]. Tinder's argument culminates in the recognition that resisting fate and being open instead to destiny requires one to think and act like a member of the human race and not as an individual. In this regard, one lives one's destiny with an awareness of others' destinies as we are all part of humankind[111]. The consciousness of others' destinies is the fundamental distinguishing mark between humans and animals. As Tinder explains, a deer is able to live its life as a deer fully without being conscious of the lives of other deer or their problems. Our humanity, on the other hand, is realised fully by consciousness and responsibility. We must have an awareness of the extent to which humans the world over are experiencing suffering, and feel responsibility for their condition. One must be prepared to act not only for the survival and well-being of oneself but also of humans across the globe unknown to one (Tinder 2003: 48). Implicit in Tinder's argument and conclusion is that our consciousness of the destiny of all other human beings is what gives us our worth or value and what imbues us with human dignity[112].

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[109] This illusion is rooted in technological and scientific successes which cause human beings to trust in their own power and a failure to recognise that they are finite. Tinder (2003: 17) asserts: "Pride, in sum, is wilful blindness to human immanence, to the mystery of being, and to sin. It is a striving toward an ascendancy in which human beings possess the wisdom and righteousness of gods and have all reality at their disposal". Whilst self-confidence has been shaken by two world wars and global political and economic chaos, it has not been destroyed and human beings cling to their trust in humankind's power to command events.

[110] Tinder argues that the life of Jesus was pure destiny, in that, through his death and resurrection, the destinies of all human beings became accessible. This destiny of Jesus is the defining point in history, and through it, God redirects history and hence transforms the human situation. If it is God establishing his presence through Jesus, ushering in a "transfigured universe", then it must affect every human being, says Tinder (2003: 35). Destiny is therefore personal as each one of us has an individual destiny, as well as being universally human. On this basis we experience our personal destiny with others whilst in some sense experiencing the same destiny of friends, fellow citizens and even the human race (Tinder 2003: 47). Since the great moral command is to show love for one's neighbour, our destinies are intertwined.

[111] One can clearly discern overtones of *ubuntu*, although this terminology is not expressly used by Tinder.

[112] Tinder's personal standpoint is Christian, although he states that his argument is based on reason, not faith. This is indeed evident from his reasoning, although it is doubtful that he would be so persuasive without featuring Christ as the epitome of a life of destiny.

The concept of human dignity becomes problematic when one fails to see it as originating from the triune God in accordance with a theological interpretation. If the relationship with God no longer becomes the foundational element, then human dignity becomes constituted by human relationships and is relative rather than absolute. In this way human dignity is dependent on humans conferring or withdrawing that dignity (Schwobel 2006: 53).

2.8 Human dignity based on the *imago Dei*, the Incarnation and covenant

To move from a more general discussion to a specific identification of human dignity's theological interpretation, it becomes evident that human dignity founded on the biblical view of the value of human beings, has its roots in the '*imago Dei*'. This means that humankind, having been made in "the image and likeness of God", is the pinnacle of God's creation (Mays 2016). Developing the theological foundation, we find that the Incarnation and covenant also play key roles, as will be discussed.

There has been much theological discourse in recent times in an endeavour to position the ancient doctrine of the *imago Dei* within a contemporary setting so that it contributes effectively to the discourse on human dignity. Robinson (2011), for instance, undertakes an ecumenical survey of prominent twentieth century theologians and developments which their thought brings to the *imago Dei* debate[113]. Magezi (2017: 118) also alludes to the *imago Dei* in his proposal that *ubuntu* be recast with Christian values as he discusses the problem of corruption and injustice in post-colonial Africa[114]. The starting point for the *imago Dei* is the three references to be found in Genesis, with the most well-known one occurring in the account of creation as follows:

> *Then God said, 'Let us make man in our image, after our likeness; and let them have dominion over the fish of the sea, and over the birds of the air, and over the cattle, and over all the earth, and over every creeping thing that creeps upon the earth.' So God created man in his own image, in the image of God he created him, male and female he created them (*Gen. 1: 26-27)*.

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[113] He discusses major themes and tensions in the history of the debate and aims to suggest its present and future application (Robinson 2011: 27).

[114] He envisages an *ubuntu* whereby humanity is bonded by Christ and a person's actions are informed by the *imago Dei* principle, being deserving of equal treatment regardless of being members of the same geographical community.

Gen. 5: 1-3 and Gen. 9: 5-7 are the two other references to *imago Dei*. Mays (2016: 38) describes as an "apparent anomaly" that 'image of God' recurs nowhere in the OT beyond Genesis. However, he is satisfied that it is a structural theme of the relation between God and humanity henceforth. Kilner (2015: 39), on the other hand, does not find it surprising that there are a limited number of references and without detail. His reason is that God is ineffable and so God's image would inevitably be difficult to describe. Kilner (2015: 40) views the *imago Dei* as a "placeholder" or a "hermeneutical lens" through which we can better understand God's intentions and the significance of how history unfolds for God's people.

Kraynak (2003: 84 ff) too brings to our attention the sparseness of explicit references to the *imago Dei* and that these are the only three references in the entire OT. It is these three references which are our primary source for understanding human dignity. He is struck by how unclear it is precisely what attributes constitute the divine image in humankind, although he is not perturbed by the ambiguity. He enquires "Is it reason, language, free will, soul, a physical trait (such as upright posture), immortality, or capacities for love, holiness, and justice (Kraynak 2003: 84)? According to Kraynak, the best possible inference is that it is immortal life which humankind alone had prior to the fall which confers special worth to humans. After the fall, humankind's dignity, in the sense of original immortality, is not absolute but is comparative and reveals humankind to be the peak of God's creation (Kraynak 2003: 87).

This interpretation would be in line with other references in the OT to human dignity, such as Psalm 8. Mays (2016: 28) alludes to the fact that nowhere in the Bible is there greater awareness of 'self' than in the Psalms and what it is to be human. Psalm 8 does not use the term 'human dignity' but its language is highly suggestive of it. What it does make clear is that humankind derives its significance and worth from its relationship with God (Mays 2006: 33). Humankind's exalted place in the universe is stated with awe and wonder, and human dignity is expressed as glory and honour. Kilner (2015: 39) indicates how being in the image and likeness of God has something to do with the reflection of God so that humanity reflects facets of who God is as the crowning glory of creation. Apart from its relationship with God, humankind is no different from any other creature. Mays (2016: 35) also notes the worth given to human beings designated by the term *imago Dei* which has been a central theme of

theological anthropology, without the biblical text necessarily elaborating on the concept.

It is nevertheless an over-simplification to assume that the Christian understanding of human dignity has its source and also ends with the explicit references to the *imago Dei* found in Genesis. The clearest evidence that the Bible provides of what it means for humans to be the image and likeness of God is to be found in Christ[115]. The worth attributed to human beings therefore does not rest with the *imago Dei* references in Genesis but is further derived from the Incarnation, the central tenet of faith whereby God became human in the person of Jesus Christ who is the true image of God (Col. 1: 15) (Kilner 2015: 43). As Scullion (1999: 15) remarks, "If creation in the divine image and likeness is the charter statement of human dignity then that charter has been renewed and intensified through the incarnation, God becoming a human being", thereby exalting humans to the highest beings.

The NT takes up the original language of the *imago Dei* from Genesis, with several references to the image, likeness, figure and form of God, as well as more indirect references such as children of God (Kraynak 2003: 89)[116]. Dignity is expressed in the language of likeness, image, form, children of God because it is a kind of reflected glory from a perfect being to a less perfect being. Glory, encompassing honour, reputation and appearance, Kraynak (2003: 93) notes, is the closest meaning to dignity in the NT. The NT affirms explicitly that Christ is the image of God (Col. 1: 15) and that God's intention is for humankind to be transformed into the image of Christ (Rom. 8: 29). Kilner (2015: 54 ff) explains that the Hebrew word for 'image' and its OT biblical usage make it clear that 'image' connotes a special connection and also involves reflection. Being in the image of God means having a special connection with God and being a meaningful reflection of God[117]. The doctrine of the *imago Dei* must be rooted in Christ as it is the presence of Jesus Christ in each human which bestows

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[115] In the course of Robinson's (2011: 27) abovementioned comprehensive survey on the theological nuances in the *imago Dei* to be found in contemporary Christian thought, with specific reference to Barth, von Balthasar and Moltmann, he found that the common thread was that the doctrine was firmly grounded in Christ and his action in our lives.

[116] Sometimes the language of the *imago Dei* is reserved for Christ (e.g. Phil. 2: 5-7; Col. 1: 15), but it is also applied in different ways for humans, unmistakeably invoking the Genesis language of image and likeness (Rom. 8: 13-30; 2 Pet. 1: 3-4; Gal. 3: 28).

[117] He explains that humanity was intended at creation to reflect God but, due to sin, lost much of its ability to reflect God. God's intentions would not be thwarted and so God made a way, through Christ, for humanity's intended likeness to be actual likeness (Kilner 2015: 131-132).

human dignity as being created in the image of God, according to Robinson (2011: 175). He effectively sums up the meaning of the *imago Dei* for contemporary application in a world yearning to connect with what ultimately defines us, as follows: "To be created in the *imago Dei* means above all that we are loved infinitely by Christ who draws us into a life of love ultimately fulfilled in our divine destiny".

Kilner (2015: 312) describes human dignity thus: "People cannot add to or subtract from this dignity in themselves or in others, since being in God's image is not an attribute that anyone or anything can cultivate or diminish". Whereas Kilner (2015) and Anderson (1982) view human dignity as a gift from God, Kraynak (2003), in a similar vein, emphasises God's election as a basis for human dignity. For Kraynak (2003: 113), in stark contrast to Kant, humankind's intelligence and rational thought is not the source of human dignity. Instead, human dignity depends primarily on God's mysterious election in which he chooses to favour humankind with his revelation and eternal life. Our rational soul, as deserving of human dignity, is only a secondary factor in the hierarchy of the divine creation.

Kraynak's emphasis on God's election and revelation as the source of human dignity is extended in Botman's (2006: 84) focus on God's covenant as his vantage point for human dignity, stating, "Seen in light of God's covenant, human dignity is both an irrevocable gift and a vocation to life in community with God and others". Why he argues that covenantal thinking is beneficial is because it takes human dignity beyond the ontological to the relational and therefore to the most vulnerable. It is about essence (being) but also about action, which, in the context of social justice and the vulnerable, is relevant, since Botman further stresses that God is God of the helpless, the father of orphans and the protector of widows. As such, God's favouritism of those in economic distress is rooted in the conceptual meaning and the practical outworking of the covenant.

Robinson (2011: 31-32) also views human dignity through covenant and he makes reference to Barth's appropriation of the concept of covenant in his restatement of the *imago Dei.* Barth preserves the dignity of the person through reference to the relationship between the persons in the Trinity as the basis for our relationships with each other. For him, the *imago Dei* is vital "to endorse an appropriate picture of our human dignity and vocation as relationship with others" (Barth 1957: 171-172, referred to in Robinson 2011: 31). As God gave himself to us in Christ, so we relate to other

human beings. Human dignity is encapsulated in the way that human beings made in God's image have a special relationship with him as "covenant partners". In Barth we therefore see the recognition of the need to develop a relational model of the *imago Dei* by means of covenant. Kilner (2015) too would endorse Botman's use of covenant as a hermeneutical tool. For Kilner (2015: 39), being in the image and likeness of God refers to humanity's 'connection' with God which he says, theologically, has frequently been referred to as 'calling' or 'covenant'. Covenantal thinking provides a significant complement to the concept of human beings having been made in the image of God, which has played a meaningful role in the development of Christian thought on human dignity. The doctrine came to recognise humanity's unique, God-endowed faculties and therefore became influential in the formation of the modern concept of human dignity. God's unilateral initiative founded on grace forms the basis of the covenant with humanity.

To complete the discussion of human dignity as a theological construct, it must be noted that other theologians have also contributed to the clarification and application of human dignity from a theological angle. Witte (2003), in observing how today "human dignity has become ubiquitous to the point of cliché"[118], calls for the definition of the appropriate ambit of the precept. In offering a distinctive Protestant understanding of the term, he alludes to its sixteenth century Protestant roots in Martin Luther's tract "Freedom of a Christian" (1520, quoted from Witte)[119]. All are priests before God (1 Pet. 2: 9) and all are one in Christ Jesus (Gal. 3: 28). As a redeemed saint, every Christian is called to serve as God's priests as it is this paradoxical status as both lord and servant which, for Luther, was the essence of human dignity (Witte 2003: 128)[120].

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[118] Witte (2003: 121) records that between 1970 and 2000, more than 1 200 books and 11 000 scholarly articles on the concept of human dignity were published in English alone.

[119] A defining document of the Reformation, the tract was dedicated to Pope Leo X as Luther was concerned about the pope's false sense of dignity. He criticised the church for its error in elevating priests and bishops over lay people declaring that each person is at once a saint and a sinner and that each person is both a free lord and a servant subject to everyone (Witte 2003: 125). Because of our sinful natures as human beings, we are deserving of eternal death. However, through faith in Christ, the sinner is freed from the bondage of sin and is made righteous before God.

[120] Witte suggests that Luther's distillation of the twofold nature of humanity as combining depravity and sanctity is necessary for shaping a theory of human dignity. By way of explanation, we cannot have too high or too low a view of humanity. Every Christian is by faith exalted above all things but the more he or she acts like a lord, the more he or she is called to be a servant.

In characterising human dignity as the essence of humanity, Moltmann (1984: 9) describes dignity as "the one indivisible, inalienable, and shared quality of the human being". Moltmann (1984: 16) locates the theological roots of human dignity in its OT foundation with the liberation of Israel from slavery and God's covenant with his chosen people, and in its NT foundation with the liberation from sin through Christ's sacrifice on the cross[121]. It is the grace of God which imbues human beings with dignity and Moltmann elucidates how Christ's sacrifice enabled human beings to become citizens of the kingdom of God and so to fulfil their destinies as the image of God to the world. Emphasising this point, Robinson (2011: 130) notes how, for Moltmann, "human dignity is so closely intertwined with the revelation of God that humanity may be said to represent God's presence on earth".

Because the biblical witness to the dignity of human beings reflects divine liberation and covenant, the corresponding praxis of the Christian world must encompass a commitment to the dignity to human beings. Moltmann (1984: 17) explains the theological perspective on human dignity as follows:

> In the designation of the human being to be the image of God, the right of God to all human beings is expressed. The human rights to life, freedom, community, and self-determination mirror God's right to the human being because the human being is destined to be God's image in all conditions and relationships of life…The destiny of the human being to be the image of God indicates the indivisible right of God to the human being and, therefore, the irreducible dignity of the human being.

The "irreducible dignity of the human being" as defined by Moltmann (1984: 17) must logically extend to each and every human being, including victims of poverty. Moltmann intends to show how our reflection of the *imago Dei* is not static but is instead dynamic as God's image on earth moves towards a transforming relationship with God and with each other. God's image mirrors the Trinity's relationship as it reflects the movement from suffering towards glory according to the narrative of the cross (Robinson 2011: 147). The doctrine of the *imago Dei*, if construed as God calling us into relationship, based on the highly relational characteristic of the Trinity, as Moltmann (1984) suggests, gives us a sense of the dignity of each individual which, "whilst recognising the uniqueness of each human being, looks outward towards the

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[121] Moltmann's grounding of his theology of the *imago Dei* in the cross enables him to express the intimacy of the relationship between God and humanity based on the suffering of Christ which gives us hope. The cross effectively defines God's solidarity with human suffering (Robinson 2011: 144).

community" (Robinson 2011: 139). This community includes the economically deprived and the marginalised of society.

2.9 Concluding comments on human dignity

It has been established that the *imago Dei*, amplified by God's covenant and the Incarnation, as the source of our human dignity, means that dignity is not dependent on individual circumstances or accomplishments, so it cannot be earned. Most importantly, it cannot be lost since the doctrine of the *imago Dei* is firmly grounded in Christ with the presence of Jesus Christ in each human bestowing human dignity as being created in the image of God (Robinson 2011: 175). It is the love of Christ which gives our lives meaning and divine purpose. However, when it comes to those in material deprivation, a person's *perception* of his or her dignity becomes a significant factor regardless of the clear theoretical basis for the existence of human dignity. Dignity comes to denote the capacity to decide and act for oneself, in the form of autonomy or independence. This has a bearing on the image one projects of oneself to the world. Where a person perceives that this projection of a positive image to the world is lacking from his or her life, his or her self-esteem is negatively affected (Verspieren 2003: 18).

Dignity then loses its inalienable value, or its irreducibility, as Moltmann (1984:17) would express it, and becomes a subjective estimation. It concerns how the individual looks upon him- or herself and not something which is attributed universally. Scullion (1999: 25) therefore alludes to the need for the impoverished and marginalised actually to experience their human dignity. Here is where the notion of 'vocation' has an essential bearing on human dignity. It will therefore be proposed that a recovery of vocation is required to affirm the human dignity of the materially deprived where they have perceived their dignity to be lacking.

2.10 Vocation as a theological construct

2.10.1 Introduction to vocation

Like human dignity, the notion of 'vocation' has been interpreted in differing ways from a theological perspective. It is noteworthy, however, that scholars in recent times have linked vocation with the *imago Dei*, thus forming an obvious connection with human dignity (Moltmann 1984; Sands 2010). It is intended here to indicate that vocation needs to be clarified as a theological construct so that it can be considered how a recovery of vocation relates to the affirmation of human dignity according to the

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research question. The origins of the term will be presented, together with how its meaning has evolved to reflect the *imago Dei*.

It is commonly known that vocation means literally 'calling', (from the Latin '*vocare*', 'to call') and that in the Bible the call is from God[122]. Calling has connotations of one's divine purpose and destiny. However, the notion of calling unfortunately loses some of its significance when becoming merged with the meaning of what a person does with his or her life by way of occupation (Badcock 1998: 3). It is important to clarify the nature and scope of vocation in order to identify the appropriate hermeneutical lens through which to view human dignity.

2.10.2 Development of the notion of vocation

Smit (2007) traces the use of the term 'vocation' within Protestantism from its origins in the NT where he records that it did not relate to 'work' involving our day- to- day tasks for which we are remunerated. The only possible exception is 1 Cor. 7: 17-24 where believers are urged to remain in the 'calling' from which they were first 'called' and to serve God in it. The root of the word is '*kaleo*' and instead of denoting 'work' as we would today know it, could be seen as 'condition', 'circumstances' or 'situation' or what the Revised Standard Version of the Bible translates as 'life' or 'state' (Smit 2007: 456). What is intended is the space and the moment when a believer is called to salvation and faith, and where they can worship God and serve their neighbour.

Until the time of Luther, 'calling' was regarded purely as a spiritual calling as when a believer came to faith. In time 'calling' become interpreted as a move away from the secular life towards serving God within an officially recognised spiritual institution. Therefore to receive a call meant giving up secular life for a dedicated life as a member of a religious order such as a monastery or a church (Smit 2007: 457). Luther was opposed to this perception that people could serve God better as clergy rather than as lay people. He wanted to correct this impression and he stated that people are not called out of the world to serve God but called *into* the world. Referring to 1 Cor. 7: 17-24, and placing an emphasis on the common priesthood of all believers, he urged believers to remain in the circumstances or occupation in which they are, based on the fact that all service provides opportunity for spiritual service. Luther distinguished

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[122] Drawing on the examples in the NT, Badcock (1998: 72) demonstrates how that calling originates with an encounter with Jesus Christ.

between a spiritual calling ('*vocatio spiritualis'*) and an outward calling ('*vocatio externa'*). All believers receive both the spiritual call to believe and be baptised and the call to serve God and neighbour in the circumstances in which the person finds him- or herself (Smit 2007: 458). This meant that everyday (economic) occupations in whatever social (public or political) class could all be experienced as opportunities to serve God.

One important development was that the *vocatio externa* became more and more important whilst the *vocatio spiritualis* increasingly receded into the background. During a process of secularisation over the decades, *professio* and *vocatio spiritualis* came to be clearly distinguished, with the former becoming the accepted expression for 'profession, work, job' and the latter denoting 'an inner urge, desire or endeavour' to go and perform a particular type of work, with religious overtones (Smit 2007: 461). The earlier meaning of a divine calling associated with a believer's call to salvation and faith had dissipated entirely.

Moltmann (1984: 45) makes reference to Luther having coined the term 'vocation' in relation to both the call to faith and to work in one's occupation. Moltmann, however, departs substantially from vocation's meaning of occupation and returns to a person's call to faith (Moltmann 1984: 21). He introduces the concept of vocation by relating it to the need for liberation of human beings from their "sinful godlessness and their deadly inhumanity". He thereafter alludes to the resultant realisation of their original destinies as a consequence of having been created in the image of God.

2.10.3 Relationship of vocation to human dignity and the *imago Dei*

Thus God's liberation of his creation and his ensuing covenant, both in the OT and through Christ's death and resurrection, constitute God's claim on humankind. Together these components of God's liberation and redemption provide decisive constituents of human dignity. Moltmann (1984: 22), on this basis, motivates for God's liberating and redeeming action in history revealing the reflection of the image of God as being the destiny of human beings. With Moltmann, it is evident that vocation and the *imago Dei* are inter-related. Expanding upon the aforementioned concept of the *imago Dei*, Moltmann (1984: 23) describes the destiny of human beings as reflecting the image of God in all their relationships in life, including personal, economic, social and the like. Their true future lies in their fulfilment of being destined for future glory in God's kingdom. Looking to the present, however, instead of the future glory, it is

recognised that the dignity of humans is God-given and is proclaimed through the Gospel of Christ (Moltmann 1984: 31).

Also focusing strongly on relationships in his interpretation of the *imago Dei* is Medley (2002: 2), who articulates the *imago Dei* in trinitarian terms as *imago Trinitatis* which he describes as "an actual orientation of our very becoming by which we image God in all our relationships". He elaborates on this idea by stating that it is in our relationships with God, with each other and with creation that we discover who we are. He therefore concludes that: "[t]hus bearing the image of the Triune God is the vocation of Christian life". A related facet of vocation, for Migliore (2014: 257), is living in preparation for God's reign marked by justice, peace and freedom. As human beings created in the image of God, our lives of participation in the relationships of the Trinity and of others is what constitutes us as human beings (Medley 2002: 159).

As well as imaging God in all our relationships, a heavenly call by means of the Gospel of Christ gives rise to hope as one of the most basic features of the doctrine of vocation, for example, Eph. 1: 18; 1 Pet. 5: 10 (Badcock 1998: 86). As Moltmann (1984: 48) observes, vocation can be described as "hope in action". This manifestation of hope is an important result of vocation's role in affirming human dignity. Hope, as a natural consequence of vocation, also appears in Migliore's (2014: 257) exposition of vocation whereby he sees Christians living by the promise of God which, he says, translates into "creative hope". Hope is an essential ingredient in vocation's task of affirming human dignity amongst those who are disempowered and marginalised. In ascertaining whether meaningful social transformation is taking place amongst victims of poverty, in the particular context of this study, an important indicator relating to vocation will therefore be the presence of hope.

In addition to hope, the feature most evident in the Christian calling is the call to the love of God (Badcock 1998: 123). In Migliore's (2014: 257) distinctive trinitarian thinking, vocation is therefore identified as "[u]niversal participation in the love of the triune God made known in Christ and effectively at work in the activity of the Holy Spirit…". From this statement, it can be inferred that, like Badcock, Migliore's interpretation of vocation emphasises strongly a person's understanding of the love of God for him or her. For this reason, it is possible to discern the notion of vocation encompassing a person's identity as living in the love of God and reflecting the *imago Dei*. Accordingly, it is possible to condense into the scope of the term 'vocation' Myers'

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(1999) separation of identity as a person's 'being' and vocation a person's 'doing'. It can therefore be suggested that *both* appreciation of one's identity in Christ *as well as* reflecting God's presence on earth as the *imago Dei* can be logically and rightly encompassed in the notion of vocation, which imparts dignity to a person regardless of circumstances. It is important to distil such an observation in order to lead to the theoretical conclusion that human dignity can be affirmed through a recovery of vocation.

This stance is indeed supported by Sands (2010) who presents a strong case for the *imago Dei* being interpreted as vocation. According to Sands (2010: 36), the *imago Dei* is best interpreted as a divine summons which confers dignity. Vocation simultaneously imposes responsibility as the language of Genesis 1 calls human beings to "mediate God's presence, power and rule[123] in the earth" (Sands 2010: 37). As God's representatives on earth, human beings are granted royal status, and in line with this status, are given stewardship over God's creation. When the NT speaks of Christ as the image of God, this is because he mediates God's presence, power and rule on earth. Sands (2010: 38) therefore connects human dignity firmly with vocation as he explains that "[h]uman beings thus image God as they fulfil their royal vocation to mediate God's rule in the earth. … the *imago Dei* is not lost in the fall but remains the basis for human dignity (Gen. 9:6; Jas 3:9)". Anderson (1982: 78) would be in agreement as he says that, even after the fall, in a state of alienation, humans continued to bear the *imago Dei* since their dignity was bestowed as an endowment of grace.

Sands' (2010) thinking, in his connection of vocation with the conferring of human dignity, is applied by Bowers du Toit (2017) in her exploration of how the re-orientation of identity or personhood leads to a recovery of vocation. She examines certain coloured (mixed race)[124] communities of South Africa, who, for historical reasons rooted in social trauma experienced by forced removals under apartheid, have

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[123] In light of the global environmental crisis, it is important to highlight here that "rule" is to be construed with its implicit meaning of responsibility to foster protection of God's creation, and not to encourage domination over it without a sense of duty. In other words, it is emphasised that "rule" encompasses a "sensitivity towards sustainable and ecological practices" (Swart 2010: 17).

[124] It is necessary to preface the following discussion with a comment emphasising an awareness of this highly nuanced and sensitive terminology used by the author quoted, about which there is no general agreement on appropriate usage. Reference is also made to Section 1.4.2 (footnote), and the comments made about racial terminology by Posel (2001) and Turok (2021).

struggled with a negative perception of their identity and with destructive stereotypes. In her discourse based on theological anthropology, she engages a localised, familiar phrase '*ma se kind'*, which is translated from the Afrikaans as 'mother's child'. The meaning imputed to the phrase is that one is considered to be part of the family, whether biologically or not, purely by virtue of being a member of what is a cohesive community (Bowers du Toit 2017: 55). Bowers du Toit explains how the extension of this metaphor to '*God se kinnes'*, a colloquial expression with a literal meaning 'God's children', can redress negative stereotypes[125]. Employing this term, '*God se kinnes*', re-envisioned with implied meaning of the recovery of vocation, Bowers du Toit (2017: 62) convincingly suggests that worth can be imputed to those who have previously believed themselves to be lacking human dignity through a renewal of their understanding of who they are in Christ. Their worth is therefore derived purely from being 'God's children' or the *imago Dei*. This re-development of identity enables people who are disempowered and marginalised to appreciate who they are and that they have value, and also to recognise their God-given agency which can enable them to contribute towards their communities (Bowers du Toit 2017: 64)[126].

Reference is made by Bowers du Toit (2017: 63) to "restoring marred identity" amongst the impoverished and it is this correction of marred identities which theologians have identified as an essential step towards recovery of vocation (Myers 2011: 178; Christian 1999). Christian (1999: 139), in dealing with marred identities in the context of India, reveals the destruction of identity in how those in economic distress explain their situation with direct reference to their caste and their family background. It is the caste system which shapes social norms so that they believe that they do not deserve to be treated as equals. The problem, according to those who are vulnerable and marginalised, is with their identity, and Christian (1999: 141), in the most sobering language, summarises the situation as follows: "Oppressive social norms of the community stunt the mind, retard reflective ability of the poor and reduce the poor to being mere objects, thus marring the identity of the poor". In such circumstances, individuals in economic deprivation are deceived into believing that their identity is not

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[125] In an endeavour to re-appropriate lost identity, '*God se kinnes*' was imaginatively and intentionally displayed on a social activist colleague's t-shirt to convey his message of human value to the coloured communities of his own heritage (Bowers du Toit 2017: 61).

[126] Bowers du Toit (2017: 63) gives the example of people of low socio-economic status in a coloured community whose fresh appreciation of their dignity, through a recognition of their vocation, become leaders in their church and share their gifts in the broader community.

in Christ, and they have no recognition of their vocation as reflecting the *imago Dei* on earth.

Christian's observations mirror the concerns of the Black Consciousness Movement ("BCM"), which originated as an anti-apartheid initiative in the 1970s, regarding the racist government having "imprisoned the mind of black people" (Pityana 2007: 5). The idea of Black Consciousness ("BC"), associated with, and as promoted by, Steve Biko, to decolonise the mind, was a response to a political and social condition which silenced the voice of black people into acquiescence[127]. Pityana (2007: 8) accordingly draws attention to the preoccupation of BC with "strategies necessary to bring about the revolution of the mind that leads to action" as a prerequisite to freedom. This liberation of the mind of oppressed people was a central feature of BC which declared "Black Consciousness…seeks to infuse the black community with a new-found pride in themselves, their efforts, their value-systems, their culture, their religion and their outlook to life" (Biko 1968: 63). Of significance is that it is not only historically that the apartheid government "imprisoned the mind of black people". Frantz Fanon (1986: 117) maintains that, in present day postcolonial societies, previously oppressed people unconsciously take on ideas about the power and superiority of whiteness where contact with white people causes inferiority complexes. This is indeed borne out by a study by Kessi (2013) across three previously colonised African states.

Myers (2011: 172) also elaborates on this theme of feelings of inferiority in oppressed individuals by commenting that they do not believe that they have the capacity to be "creative and productive stewards". He therefore remarks that the challenge is for them to recover their identity as children of God who have resources which enable them to contribute to the social well-being of their community (Myers 2011: 178). De Gruchy (2015: 70), endorses this opinion, through biblical authority, whereby the affirmation of identity as being made in God's image (Gen. 1:27) is immediately followed by the theme of vocation (Gen. 1:28; 2:15). With reference to translating faith into works, as called for in James 2: 26, de Gruchy (2003: 22-23) calls for impoverished people not simply to be beneficiaries of others' works, which he says merely mirrors the power dynamics at the root of poverty. Instead he argues that people experiencing poverty need to exercise agency over their poverty. This, he describes as recovering

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[127] Although others had leadership roles in the BCM, Steve Biko has come to be recognised as the "Father of the Black Consciousness Movement" (Pityana 2007: 3).

the theological vision of vocation "as a key element of a contemporary theology of development". In this way, de Gruchy (2003: 23) indicates that issues of identity would be integrated with an emphasis on agency. It is thus evident the prominence which de Gruchy places on vocation in overcoming poverty. This understanding of vocation is as a calling to be responsible actors in using our gifts and talents to be co-workers with God in the world. De Gruchy (2003: 24) therefore says that this is the message for those who have been marginalised by society, that they have been made in the image of God and called to be actors with God in the world .

2.10.4 Concluding comments on vocation

Vocation has a history of blurred meaning but scholars have, in recent times, made persuasive arguments for vocation to be interpreted as understanding one's identity in Christ and the love of God, exercising creative stewardship of God- given gifts, as well as mediating God's presence on earth as the *imago Dei* (Moltmann 1984; Sands 2010). When the anthropological concept of *imago Dei* is re-interpreted as *imago Trinitatis*, we see vocation as relational, with humankind transformed through participation in God's trinitarian life (Medley 2002: 125). Although the fall has not revoked vocation, it has damaged the way human beings pursue their vocation (Sands 2010). There is therefore a need to restore 'marred identities' amongst those experiencing material deprivation, through a renewal of their understanding of who they are in Christ (Christian 1999; Bowers du Toit 2017). Hence it is argued here that there is a need for the affirmation of human dignity through a recovery of vocation.

2.11 Conclusion

A dialectical discussion of the notion of human dignity has been undertaken in this chapter whereby a philosophical interpretation, based on Enlightenment thinking as encapsulated by Kant, has been found wanting. Its deficiencies include placing an undeservedly high priority on rationality and failing to explain phenomena such as self-sacrifice (Kerstein 2014; Valadier 2003). Moreover, Enlightenment thinking neglects the recognition of humankind's capacity for evil or sin (Shell 2003: 71). A philosophical foundation for human dignity furthermore does not adequately explain why human rights are to be protected (Meilaender 2009).

Having demonstrated the weaknesses in philosophical reasoning, based strongly on Kant's theorising, it was queried whether an alternative foundation for human dignity may be found in a Southern African perspective. However, a critical presentation of

the Southern African roots of human dignity found in the concept of 'ubuntu' revealed that this, too, displayed limitations. These would include its lack of universal application (Metz 2014: 216-217) as well as its tendency to community exclusivity, its failure to cross boundaries in a culturally diverse country such as South Africa and its indifference to those in material deprivation (Kumalo 2017; Magezi 2017; Tucker & Masango 2017). Boesak (2011: 582) is particularly vocal on the latter limitation of ubuntu where it has failed to address systemic injustice towards the marginalised.

Ubuntu's recognised limitations have caused some to propose that ubuntu can only be effective as a foundation for human dignity when informed by Christian values (Magezi 2017: 117; Tucker & Masango 2017: 156). This suggestion led to analysis of the second traditional source for attributing human dignity to human beings, which is the biblical source. The three Genesis references (Gen. 1: 26-27; 5: 1-3 and 9: 5-7) are the only explicit biblical references to the imago Dei and the point of departure of the divine image in humankind endowing human dignity. However, theologians are unperturbed by the relatively few express statements of imago Dei in the Bible (Kraynak 2003; Kilner 2015), since the fulfilment of imago Dei occurs with God's covenant and is ultimately fulfilled by Christ with the Incarnation (Scullion 1999: 15). Some scholars entrench human dignity in God's covenant and this has important consequences for social justice where human dignity becomes relational. Botman (2006: 84) makes the point which is particularly meaningful when dealing with those suffering deprivation, that with covenantal thinking, human dignity becomes a gift from God and introduces a vocation of life in communion with God and with others. The dignity of humankind based on being created in the image of God and on God's covenant does not depend on human attributes and cannot be diminished. Accordingly, it was proposed that human dignity interpreted and applied as a theological construct most satisfactorily provided a foundation for value attributed to human beings. Kilner (2015: 314) concurs with the following statement: "Creation in God's image arguably can provide a more solid basis for human significance than other historical attempts can, precisely because human limitations cannot weaken it. This dignity is as unshakable as God".

This "unshakable" dignity has far-reaching implications for people in economic distress whose material circumstances frequently cause them to believe that their dignity has diminished. It was demonstrated that, although human dignity was unshakable and

could not be lost, it was frequently perceived by those in material impoverishment to have been lost through the projection of the image of themselves which they portrayed to the world (Verspieren 2013). This occurred due to 'marred identity' amongst the vulnerable of society (Christian 1999). What is therefore needed is to recognise that human dignity needs to be affirmed through a recovery of vocation.

When it is appreciated that vocation ought to be interpreted as the *imago Dei* (Moltmann; 1984; Sands 2010), then a true perception of self is restored amongst those suffering from deprivation. Hope will be a strong feature of vocation and an indicator of the affirmation of human dignity. In addition to hope, a real understanding of the love of God is entrenched in the concept of vocation (Migliore 2014: 257). Vocation encompasses a person's understanding of his or her identity in Christ, living in the love of God and reflecting the *imago Dei*. A re-orientation of identity is frequently required amongst those in economic distress in order to appreciate their destiny fulfilled in Christ (Bowers du Toit 2017; Christian 1999). Such observations are central to the affirmation of human dignity through a recovery of vocation where a person has deemed him- or herself unworthy of human dignity. In the empirical research to be conducted in this study, one would therefore be seeking evidence of the affirmation of human dignity through a recovery of vocation consisting of an appreciation of God's love and healing of 'marred identities', manifestations of hope and reflecting the *imago Dei* in relationships.

The affirmation of human dignity and recovery of vocation, discussed in this chapter, are two of the theological constructs within the conceptual framework used in this study. The subsequent literature review in Chapter 3 discusses the influence of spirituality within the development debate, in so far as it relates to social transformation, as another of the elements within the conceptual framework. The parameters of the discussion incorporate the de-humanising effect of power on human dignity and the contribution of a kingdom of God theology to an understanding of social transformation. Once these facets of social transformation have been explored, then it would be timely to contextualise the study by conducting empirical research into the FBO known as LTE.

CHAPTER 3.

SPIRITUALITY, DEVELOPMENT AND TRANSFORMATION

3.1 Chapter introduction

In the chapter which follows, the influence of spirituality on the development discourse, as an element of the conceptual framework, is discussed. Thus, what will be explored is secular development's historical progression and spirituality's role in the debate surrounding what constitutes development. This will be conducted to include a theological perspective on development, given the study's theoretical framework. The intention of this practical theological study is to ascertain empirically the role played by affirming human dignity through recovered vocation in enabling meaningful transformation to take place amongst those experiencing poverty. As such, the role of spirituality in development matters, and must be examined theoretically prior to extracting its evidence in the data analysis.

What will emerge from the development conversation is that poverty has not always been viewed as the complex phenomenon that it is, and how poverty's nature is not only material paucity but is in essence structural and relational, in that relationships are fractured, dysfunctional and rooted in oppressive structures (Myers 2011: 143). It will therefore become apparent that what is required is a well-integrated framework for understanding and reacting to poverty which takes into account historical and current development discussion. During the discourse, as in Chapter 2, Osmer's (2008) 'normative task' of Practical Theology will be undertaken, whereby a context is interpreted through drawing on theological norms (See Section 1.8.3). Thus the normative task will entail bringing the discipline of Theology and Development into cross disciplinary dialogue with development studies dialogue so that spirituality within development is discussed (Osmer 2008: 131-132)[128]. In this way, a theological interpretation of development is explored in the form of what is termed 'transformation', coupled with a kingdom of God theology[129] (Myers 2011: 143).

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[128] Myers (2011:143) affirms the cross-disciplinary nature of poverty-related studies, stating that "understanding poverty requires that we be multi-disciplinary; we need the tools of anthropology, sociology, social and community psychology, spiritual discernment, and theology, all nicely integrated". Swart and Nell (2016: 3) also observe the "transdisciplinary" nature of poverty-related studies.

[129] It is nevertheless stressed that cross-disciplinary references should not result in a practical theological study being subsumed within social sciences, as discussed more fully in Section 1.8.2.

At the outset, owing to its centrality to the study, as well as its inherent ambiguity, it is necessary to commence with a discussion surrounding how the term 'spirituality' is understood in the study and to expand on the introduction of the term in Section 1.5.1. Thereafter, the structure of the chapter consists of two major sections. The first section traces the historical evolution of development conversation in the secular sphere, whereafter a critical examination is undertaken concerning the exclusion of spirituality from development discourse. The extensive criticism directed at the materialistic approach to poverty, which has its roots in modernity, is revealed, and alternative perspectives on poverty and well-being illuminated. Thereafter, the section explores the potential contribution to development rendered by recent interest in spirituality. Having highlighted the flaws in development's views on poverty and its means of remedying the predicament of those suffering from poverty, the section concludes that spirituality would appear to have a valuable role to play in effecting social change through restoring human dignity and identity, despite its potential role being under-explored currently. This conclusion then leads into the second section, which recommends that spirituality be removed from the outskirts of development matters. It is moreover recommended that a theological perspective be formulated and applied in the approach towards bringing about social change to those in economic distress.

The second section of the chapter pursues a cohesive theological framework for development. It commences by examining a major cause of the church's limited engagement in global discourse in development matters, namely the debate concerning social justice and evangelism, which has occurred over decades. The debate overlapped with liberation theology's voice being heard and the section reveals how liberation theology informs social justice. In seeking a well-integrated theological perspective on poverty and social upliftment, the de-humanising effect of powerlessness, materially affecting the human dignity of those in states of economic need, is highlighted. The assertion is therefore made that any theological perspective on development must satisfactorily seek a response to power inequality. Finally, what is advocated as a theological framework to restore human dignity and effect meaningful social change, what theologians have termed 'transformation', is explored, within the parameters of holistic mission and the centrality of a theology of the kingdom of God.

3.2 Motivation of how the terms 'religion' and 'spirituality' are employed in this study

The terms 'religion' and 'spirituality' are rather contentious ones, with no agreed upon definition and much depending on the perspective of the person using the term, which means that a theologian's intended meaning will differ from the perspective of a sociologist (Tomalin 2013: 52). In broad terms, however, 'religion' is frequently considered to be "the formal adherence to a belief system, the endorsement of the values, ethics and beliefs of a specific faith" (Kruger & Williams 2003: 347) or "organised expression and practices in search of spirituality, but not necessarily resulting in a spiritual experience". 'Spirituality', on the other hand, embraces less emphasis on the institution and greater emphasis on the personal experience, and can thus be considered as "the search for meaning in one's life and the response to the events in life over which a person has no control (Kruger & Williams 2003: 348). Tomalin (2013: 4) endorses this interpretation, believing that people use the term 'spiritual' rather than 'religion' when they wish to emphasise the aspects of religion which would not relate to doctrine but would capture the personal experience between the individual and the divine[130]. In delving further into the terminology, Hefferan (2015: 41) introduces the term 'faith'. He attempts to distinguish 'religion' from 'faith' by noting how some scholars associate 'religion' with established traditions, characterised by a supreme being and codified in sacred texts. By contrast, 'faith' captures a facet of religion that extends beyond the codification of values and practices so that 'faith' is "more nebulous and expansive". Tomalin (2013: 4) supports this view by describing 'faith' as an element of religion which is beyond codification of practices within a particular tradition.

There is, however, clearly overlap in the use of the terms 'religion', 'spirituality', as well as 'faith' (Kruger & Williams 2003: 347). 'Spirituality' is accepted as being a dimension

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[130] Wuthnow (1999) observes how Americans are entering an increasingly secular age whilst reshaping religious traditions in seeking a spirituality which is relevant to the new realities in their lives. Instead of spirituality receding, as one may expect with advancing secularism, it is evolving to maintain its relevance in people's lives.

of being religious, according to Tomalin (2013: 4)[131]. 'Religion' is often the source of spirituality but not all religious people are necessarily spiritual, just as all spiritual people are not necessarily religious, proposes Lunn (2009: 937). It is evident from the descriptions of these scholars that the terminology is complex and nuanced. Lunn (2009: 937) accordingly elects to use the terms as follows, whereby 'religion' is "an institutionalised system of beliefs and practices concerning the supernatural realm", 'spirituality' is "the personal beliefs by which an individual relates to and experiences the supernatural realm" and 'faith' is "the trust or belief in a transcendent reality". There is much overlap with Lunn from Ver Beek's (2000: 32) terminology where he defines 'spirituality' as "a relationship with the supernatural or spiritual realm that provides meaning and a basis for personal and communal reflection, decisions and action". Ver Beek contrasts 'religion' with 'spirituality' as follows:

> *Whilst religion is generally considered an institutionalised set of beliefs and practices regarding the spiritual realm, spirituality describes the personal and relational side of those beliefs, which shape daily life. So while one could be spiritual without being religious or* vice versa*, in practice the two are commonly intertwined as people experience and describe their spirituality through a religious perspective.*

Finally, attention must be drawn to the ways in which in current literature, 'religion' and 'spirituality' are used interchangeably, or 'religion' impliedly includes 'spirituality'. Ver Beek (2000: 32) remarks that "in practice, the two are commonly intertwined". For the same reasons, Lunn (2009: 936), when writing about the role of 'religion', 'spirituality' and 'faith' in development matters, chooses to use 'religion' when speaking of 'spirituality' or 'faith'. Tomalin (2013: 3) too observes that 'spirituality' and 'faith' are frequently used interchangeably and even arbitrarily with the word 'religion'.

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[131] In motivating how the terms are employed in this study, it is instructive to consider where, historically, 'religion' parted ways with 'spirituality'. Rakoczy (2012: 43), commenting on spirituality in the work of theology, identifies it as a relatively "new academic discipline". Rakoczy (2012: 45) maintains that spirituality is context specific so that: "… spirituality in the South African context includes Apartheid, the Struggle and the emergence of a free and democratic country after 1994, with all of its challenging problems". Reflecting on the prominence of the interface of theology and spirituality in the life of the late Steve de Gruchy, she explains that the development of scholastic theology from the twelfth century onward focused on both reason and the reflection on faith. However, change occurred as a result of the Enlightenment, as the scholarly emphasis was on the scientific, whereas spirituality was considered a personal experience and accordingly viewed with suspicion. Rakoczy notes how spirituality became separated from theology as religious experience and mysticism moved to the periphery of theology. Rakoczy (2012: 43-44) refers to Sandra Schneiders, a leading scholar in the field of spirituality, who has helped with the re-emergence of spirituality in theology, by developing a methodology of spirituality. She describes spirituality as "the experience of conscious involvement in the project of life-integration through self-transcendence toward the ultimate value one perceives (Schneiders 2005: 5-6). During the latter part of the twentieth century, spirituality experienced renewal as an essential element within theology in spite of its foundation in experience, and not theory (Rakoczy 2012: 44).

Therefore she intentionally elects to use the term 'religion' throughout her book, in place of 'spirituality' or 'faith', with the intention of the latter two being incorporated in 'religion', unless referring to other people's use of the different terms[132].

The complexity of the 'religion' and 'spirituality' terminology, together with their interchangeable scholarly usage, renders any definitive meaning unlikely. The quotations and remarks from the scholars discussed above provide broad parameters of intended meaning and justify the proposed interpretation of the terms to be employed hereafter in this study. As such, it is repeated from Section 1.5.1 that 'spirituality' will have the intended meaning of "*a relationship with the supernatural or spiritual realm that provides meaning and a basis for personal and communal reflection, decisions and action*" and "*the personal and relational side of those beliefs, which shape daily life*" and 'religion' will have the intended meaning of "*an institutionalised set of beliefs and practices regarding the spiritual realm*" (Lunn 2009: 937; Ver Beek 2000: 32). Following the examples of Ohajunwa (2019: 42), Ver Beek (2000: 32), Lunn (2009: 936) and Tomalin 2013: 3), 'religion' will by implication also include 'spirituality'. Since it is a practical theological study being undertaken, it is specifically Christian spirituality which is being referred to, unless otherwise indicated[133].

3.3 The historical exclusion of spirituality from development discourse

3.3.1 Reasons for spirituality's exclusion

The term 'development' was first used to describe the goal of improving the well-being of those suffering from poverty, and identified as a mainly economic concept in order to address the devastation and deprivation caused by World War II (Myers 2011: 27-28)[134]. Bragg (1987: 22) describes the ultimate goal as being to increase productivity so that living standards would be raised. It soon became apparent, however, that development which equated to economic wealth, with all its waste, environmental

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[132] She finds 'faith' particularly controversial as it has closer connotations of the Christian faith than others.

[133] In a Christian framework, spirituality is "essentially Trinitarian, Christocentric and ecclesial" (Schneiders 1996: 31).

[134] It is noteworthy that Cornwall (2020: 41), describes as a 'convenient fiction' the post World War II origins of development, making specific reference to the colonialist policies of the United Kingdom ("U.K.") already evident in 1929 in the Colonial Development Act of the same year.

destruction and pollution, did not actually represent 'the good life', not least of all to the intended recipients (Bragg 1987: 21).

Avoidance of religion and spirituality within development was underpinned by the strong commitment of development to secularism and this steadfast refusal to explore the potential contribution of religion and spirituality continued until the twenty-first century (Tomalin 2013: 80; Buijs 2008: 225). Rakodi (2015) presents a condensed background to the origin of ideas influencing the exclusion of religion and spirituality from development, whose roots were in the ideology of modernity, which ousted religion as a truth source (Rakodi 2015: 18)[135]. She notes how colonisation had produced impoverished nations lacking economies capable of supporting the population. Development therefore created a vision of an improved future with better infrastructure and economies. All facets of culture, of which religion was considered to be one, were deemed irrelevant to this vision. The aim was rather to achieve economic 'take-off' and the role of development was initially seen as promoting progress and industrialisation, largely to colonised nations whereby a form of what was euphemistically called 'trusteeship' was introduced. European-style education and new democratic political systems were patronisingly held up as models based on modernity for peoples of different cultures (Rakodi 2015: 19). The process of modernisation, which championed secularism, made religious beliefs redundant and this view was simply transferred to developing countries as an element of the drive to modernity. This approach prevailed regardless that religion frequently played a central role in the lives of those in developing countries (Clarke 2011: 8).

Religion and spirituality did not enter the development conversation until very recently (Myers 2011: 33), despite the position occupied by religion being complex, in that development was often aided by religion, especially Christian missions. It was modernity's tendency towards dualism[136] which resulted in religion being thought to be an impediment to progress and placed in the private sphere (Lunn 2009: 939). In

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[135] Rakodi (2015: 18) observes how 'modern', in usual language usage, means recent or contemporary, but in academic language it was implied as referring to the age of the Enlightenment when rationality was prominent and religion as a source of truth was challenged. Immediately, therefore, the exclusion of religion and spirituality from development discourse is obvious, due to its perceived incompatibility with modernity's prized ideal of reason.

[136] Dualism, a philosophical expression, relates to how the body and the spirit are viewed, and conveys the meaning of an "absolute distinction between spirit and matter, coupled with a considerable tendency to regard spirit as good and matter as positively evil or at best an encumbrance to spirit" (Marshall, Millard, Packer and Wiseman 2007: 283).

any event, as Tomalin (2013: 5) notes, it was assumed that, as societies modernised, religion would diminish in significance. Religion was seen as a "traditional and conservative force" destined to vanish as society progressed towards modernisation (Jones & Juul Petersen 2011: 1291). This was not the case at all as religion continues to manifest itself alongside modernisation and globalisation.

In addition, religion was viewed with suspicion, having been a tool of colonisation (Speckman 2007: 30). Manji and O'Coill (2002: 570) expand on this insight by noting that missionary societies and voluntary organisations became embroiled in the ideological war which arose between colonialist powers and self-determinist mobilisations. They contend that these benevolent organisations motivated by religion provided a cheap form of social welfare whilst subtly controlling the behaviour of the colonised. The care which the programmes offered were concerned more with remedying the behaviour of the recipients and 'civilising' them, than with providing social justice (Manji & O'Coill 2002: 571)[137].

Furthermore, a history of religious jostling for dominance in state control in Europe gave rise to a preference for church-state separation. This often strict separation between church and state in many countries played a role in the neglect of religion. Where government grants were obtained, religiously- orientated organisations were cautious about losing their grants through being perceived to be furthering religious causes and violating the divide between church and state (Buijs 2008: 226). Ver Beek (2000: 40) blames the Global North on the distrust of religion and spirituality in development due to the dichotomising of the sacred and the secular in Northern society[138].

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[137] Manji and O'Coill (2002: 570) moreover question the intentions of the charitable organisations as being genuinely rooted in compassion, stating that they were also motivated by revolutionary fears. The benevolence therefore was not only intended to help the impoverished, but also served to protect the rich from the likelihood of facing social unrest. In addition, in Kenya, charitable organisations were actively involved in government programmes which subverted resistance movements. With the advent of independence, Manji and O'Coill (2002: 582) indicate that missionary and other voluntary organisations often found themselves in a precarious position: if they intended to pursue humanitarian ends, it entailed aligning themselves with anti-colonialist resistance movements in challenging a subversive social system causing impoverishment, but if, on the other hand, they attempted to remain neutral in the continuance of their philanthropic work, they became complicit in the subjugation of the majority of the nation.

[138] This terminology is acknowledged to be contested, but it is used as it is the least confusing of the alternatives (Ver Beek 2000: 42). It is an imperfect classification with regard to degrees of development as the 'developing countries' are generally located in the Global South yet Australia and New Zealand as developed countries would fall within this group. Nevertheless, following the fall of communism with its references to 'East' and 'West', 'Global North' for developed countries and 'Global South' for developing countries, are the terms currently in use in development discourse (Tomalin 2013: 242).

Economic ideology was also instrumental in rejecting religion since the World Bank and International Monetary Fund ("IMF") were based on neo-liberalism which minimised the role of religion (Clarke 2011: 9). The influence of neo-Marxist economic ideology on development was also felt, with Marx's view that religion was man-made and served merely to make life bearable, giving rise to the aphorism "religion is the opium of the masses" (Lunn 2009: 939). It was claimed that religion had the capacity to console and to control but could not bring about liberation of the economically distressed (Tomalin 2013: 28). There was furthermore the problem of religion being perceived as an intangible value having its place in the irrational realm. Accordingly, a development worker would not be able to manage a person's religion as they managed other aspects of a programme aimed at achieving a desired end (Buijs 2008: 225). Buijs (2008: 226) therefore notes how development thinking tended to avoid religion, which was viewed as a 'value element', and to focus on development as a "technical affair, a mere application of tools".

For all of these reasons, government aid agencies were loath to appear to be proselytising or to be aligning themselves with a particular religion (Deneulin & Rakodi 2011: 45). Religion was therefore distanced from development as it evolved over several decades.

3.3.2 Progression of the development debate and the place of spirituality

'Development' has come to have an assortment of meanings, depending on various pre-determined assumptions (Bragg 1987: 38). It is undoubtedly a contentious term, understood differently by scholars and in the applied sector. However, the dominant notion of 'development' is influenced by modernisation theory whereby governmental institutions and voluntary organisations have sought to disperse the prosperity and technological advances of the industrial era to less technologically advanced parts of the world (Bragg 1987: 22). A society's traditional values, considered to be incompatible with economic growth, would be replaced by 'modern' values to facilitate economic growth (Myers 2011: 28).

Some have called for development's death on the basis that it has been a destructive force which has continued the exploitation of colonialism with a supposedly more benign form of oppression. Jones and Juul Petersen (2011: 1300) describe development as "part of the complex ideological landscape of postcolonial societies". Manji and O'Coill (2002: 574) agree that development perpetuates the exploitation of

colonialism, drawing attention to the very discourse of development which is not framed in language of emancipation and justice but in vocabulary of charity and paternalism. They liken development to colonialism, continuing to classify people according to their degree of divergence from Western culture. It has been suggested that the intention of development is not actually to offer a better future to the vulnerable but rather to maintain the *status quo* to the benefit of those purportedly doing the developing (Hefferan 2015: 43). In line with this view is the opinion which holds that the true motivation of development was to promote capitalism as a necessary defence against the rise of communism (Bragg 1987: 22).

Possibly the more idealistic view is that the origins of development were based on noble intentions to bring about radical transformation in impoverished societies whereby they would take advantage of the benefits of modernisation to eradicate poverty and adjust inequality[139]. However, early models of 'top down' development were immediately criticised for providing charity rather than engaging with people to carry out their own development. As such, development failed to be meaningful or sustainable and was often demeaning to the people to whom the aid was intended (Tomalin 2013: 19-20). The view of development, based on modernisation theory, prevailed in the 1950s and 1960s in development discourse (Tomalin 2013: 25). The primary goal was maximisation of Gross National Product ("GNP") and implicit in the concept of development at this stage was the adoption of Western values in traditional cultures (Sine 1987: 2-3)[140].

However, modernisation theory was based on several flawed assumptions, one of them being that traditional societies were in some way underdeveloped and therefore lacking something[141]. It also naïvely expects progress to occur in a linear fashion across diverse cultures in the same manner, neglecting to take account of different factors having a bearing on a society at a later stage in world history (Bragg 1987: 22). Furthermore, modernisation theory erroneously, and even patronisingly, assumes that

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[139] President Truman's inaugural address in 1949 (reproduced in Tomalin 2013: 19) is often identified as the commencement of donor-driven development. Truman declared that: "…we must embark on a bold new program for making the benefits of our scientific advances and industrial progress available for the improvement and growth of underdeveloped areas".

[140] At the core of modernisation theory is an assumption that traditional societies would all undergo industrialisation and urbanisation, which are key features of what sociologists characterise as 'modernity' (Tomalin 2013: 26).

[141] Bragg (1987: 23) highlights how, using one's own experience as a definitive measure, is the height of ethnocentrism.

a Western lifestyle is the way to a more satisfying life. Development's close association with modernity also gave rise to criticism on account of development being viewed as a "mechanistic pursuit of economic growth that tends to ignore the structural context of poverty and injustice and which increases dependency and inequality" (Samuel & Sugden 1999: 264). This view highlights the continuity of colonialism in development with the imposition of aid by the Global North on the Global South (Tomalin 2013: 21).

Modernisation theory came under attack in the early 1970s from a new approach called 'dependency theory' (Tomalin 2013: 27). Dependency theorists asserted that under-development was directly attributable to adverse trade agreements reached after colonisation, increasing dependency by the formerly colonised nations and obstructing their integration into the world economy (Rakodi 2015: 24). According to Bragg (1987), dependency theorists identified relationships between 'centres', which were the technologically developed countries, and 'peripheries', which were the satellite 'under-developed' countries. Ownership of a large percentage of industry in a 'periphery's' economy was frequently under foreign control and ownership, thus advancing the 'centre' at the expense of the 'periphery' (Bragg 1987: 30). Dependency theorists report how economic fluctuations at the centres would have a devastating effect on the peripheries. The grossly unequal relationships resulted in uneven growth patterns and exploitative labour practices (Bragg 1987: 28).

Dependency theory and the 'basic needs' approach, which encompassed purpose and meaning to life, for a time grew in popularity, but spiritual needs, which have relevance to giving meaning and purpose, were not explicitly included (Deneulin & Rakodi 2011: 46). As Bragg (1987: 30) observes, in mentioning the failures of this approach to development, dependency theory prioritises economics, whereas a genuinely developed society highlights moral and cultural needs as well as material ones[142].

Global Reformism and the New International Economic Order ("NIEO") was a reaction to the inadequacy of dependency theorists' emphasis on redressing exploitative economic relationships so that countries at the periphery of world markets are less influenced by those at the centre. The nationwide insistence on a more equitable

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[142] A further, major flaw of dependency theory, pointed out by Bragg (1987: 30), was its erroneous assumption that, once the dependent relationship with the centre nation was terminated, development of the periphery would automatically occur.

economic order demanded fair trade agreements to reduce the periphery-centre *status quo* of dependence (Bragg 1987: 31). However, the NIEO was not far-reaching enough, retaining many of modernisation's flaws, as it was merely an accelerated form of 'trickle-down' economics, despite the lack of evidence that 'trickle-down' works. It incorrectly assumed that the peripheries would grow through foreign aid and it failed to acknowledge the interdependence of states rather than the simplified view of one-way dependence (Bragg 1987: 30). A more significant failing of the NIEO, according to Bragg (1987: 33), quoting economist S.L. Parmar, is how it neglects to address the restoration of dignity and identity in people, needed to control their own destinies where poverty and injustice are main features of economic life. The assumption that only when an impoverished nation has increased wealth, and more closely resembles the rich nations, that its people regain their dignity, is manifestly untrue.

Bragg (1987: 33) also discusses Another Development, a new framework for development by a UN study group, intended as a substitute for Global Reformism, and based on the pillars of ending poverty, fostering autonomous development and ensuring ecological protection. Instead of aiming to produce more goods, this theory of development focused rather on re-distributing what already exists, from the elite minority to the impoverished majority. Unsurprisingly, political power structures proved to be a major impediment to self-reliance as it was impossible for any nation, especially a weak one, to insulate itself from the prevailing world economic forces. In addition, the promotion of a Western consumerist culture, portrayed as the ideal of human well-being, was too strong a force to resist (Bragg 1987: 38). The development discourse inevitably encompassed debate on what constitutes poverty.

3.3.3 Poverty as a feature of development

In searching for a meaning of poverty, Christian (1999: 3) alludes to various views, querying whether the notion is a combination of low per capita income, lack of basic needs and lack of access and control[143]. He agrees with the 'Lausanne Covenant', resulting from the Lausanne Congress (1974), which describes the context of poverty as marked by injustice, oppression, marring of human dignity, exploitation and evil (Christian 1999: 63). This condition, according to liberation theologians, is caused by

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[143] On the issue of power, Christian (1999: 72, 117) is critical of the fact that power as a central theme in poverty has been infrequently mentioned in the evangelical discourse with power's relationship with poverty remaining predominantly in the domain of secular development.

global and local political and economic systems which are designed to favour the rich and powerful but crush the vulnerable and marginalised (Christian 1999: 50). Robert Chambers' (1983: 112) contribution to the debate surrounding causes of poverty is meaningful, in that he distinguishes between poverty and powerlessness. His "deprivation trap", consisting of poverty, isolation, powerlessness, vulnerability and physical weakness, provides a useful tool for viewing poverty from the perspective of those conventionally considered to be experiencing poverty, as notes Christian (1999: 37). Taking all these views into account, Christian (1999: 17) therefore concludes that poverty is "a complex human phenomenon" which is "a value-loaded concept involving evaluative judgments regarding minimum standards, basic needs and desired levels of living".

August (2010: 1) concurs that poverty is a multi-dimensional concept which "eludes specific definition". He distinguishes between "absolute" and "relative" poverty, the former describing a more desperate level of basic human needs than the latter (August 2010: 2). However, he and other scholars deem it short-sighted to restrict the meaning of poverty to the absence of material wealth. Knoetze (2019: 151), for instance, declares "Poverty has many faces and is not one-dimensional". Mbaya (2012: 2) contributes to the debate by raising the issue of the Western idea of poverty perceived from a materialistic view of a lack of material possessions not taking account of the African view of a lack of spiritual resources. In line with Mbaya's contribution, Knoetze (2019: 150) draws a biblical conclusion that poverty affects the whole person.

Taking the multi-dimensional nature of poverty further, Swart (2010: 145-6) promotes an argument in favour of adding social exclusion, to facilitate a clearer understanding of the contemporary dynamics of the systemic nature of poverty, as a result of which people find themselves "reduced to a situation of permanent structural irrelevance". Dealing specifically with contextual factors in post-apartheid South Africa, Swart observes that these dynamics of exclusion give poverty a structural basis, rendering it a permanent social feature for a person, making it near impossible to escape its structural effects. From an evangelical standpoint, it is recognised that the cause of poverty is sin, which has corrupted humanity's heart and given rise to greed and selfishness (August 2010: 18). The result is oppression, poverty and injustice (August 2010: 36). Samuel (2020: 6), in fierce opposition to the condition of poverty, offers the following expanded interpretation:

> *Experience of poverty is not just economic deprivation and political marginalization. It is a daily experience of obnoxious behaviour that assaults one's sense of self, the bigotry that cuts deep, the generalised prejudice, negative attitudes, the discrimination and stereotyping.*

In the present study, it is accordingly acknowledged that the phenomenon known as poverty cannot be viewed simplistically and consists of many dimensions, which are not fully understood or defined. Based on this complexity, Section 5.3.3 employs a conceptualisation of poverty as trauma to gain enhanced understanding of the notion of poverty.

3.3.4 Development beyond pure economic factors

With respect to modernisation theory and its successors, discussed above, human worth is measured largely by one's contribution towards economic growth. In effect, a person's meaning and identity have been derived from one's ability to participate in the economic sphere. Thus, contemporary Western consumerist culture has been held up as the ideal of the good life and often the areas of "spiritual, cultural and relational development" have been ignored (Sine 1987: 7). As Swart (2006: 70) observes, development is not merely a process of the materially wealthy giving to the less wealthy but also has a relational facet.

Finally, in the 1990s, Amartya Sen began working on a new index to measure development which was not linked to GNP (Myers 2011: 29-30)[144]. Sen linked poverty to lack of human freedom and identified 'well-being' as being understood to include not simply the basics of adequate food and shelter, but also literacy, safety, good health, dignity and self-worth (Sen 1999: 4-5). A shift away from purely economic development occurred and, instead of defining 'well-being' as what people consume, it was viewed as what people are able to do and to become, such as being healthy, becoming educated and participating actively in community life (Myers 2011: 29). Sen called these "functionings" but he goes beyond mere functionings, which are evidence of nothing more than a person's existence, to argue that development ought to strive for attainment of "capabilities", which are "a person's ability to do valuable acts or reach valuable states of being" (Sen 1999: 30). In other words, capabilities are what people have the freedom to choose to do and the aim of development is to create an

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[144] For this work, Sen, a development economist, was the recipient of the Nobel Prize for development economics.

environment where people can have the better future which they envision (Myers 2011: 30).

Although non-pecuniary facets of well-being were introduced with Sen (and others below), as the emphasis on development veered away from purely economic growth, it is obvious that an acknowledgement of the spiritual experience of life was still neglected[145]. Within the post-modern framework, development theory evolved to focus on human development and needs. Korten (1990), in particular, argued for a "people-centred development", in which material assets featured less prominently, defined as "… a process by which members of a society increase their personal and institutional capacities to mobilize and manage resources to produce sustainable and justly distributed improvements in their quality of life consistent with their own aspirations" (Korten 1990: 67).

Korten's contribution to the development discussion is important for understanding development as a process, which needed to be sustainable, just and according to the people's own assessment of their needs, instead of perceived needs being addressed by outsiders. Nieman (2010: 40) remarks on the importance of the economically deprived being empowered rather than merely being recipients of aid. Nieman deems it essential for the disempowered to develop a sense of agency and for their lives to be improved through assuming control of their own lives and setting their own goals[146]. Through a process of 'conscientisation', people initiate endeavours to fulfil their potential in contributing towards their human and financial needs. The independence of those in need develops as external agents work alongside them supporting them (Bowers du Toit 2010: 263).

In Korten's theorising on development, he indirectly addresses the spiritual dimension. He acknowledges that values surrounding power, peace and harmonious relationships require changes and that those values are the domain of religion and the church (Korten 1990: 168). Unfortunately, as Myers (2011: 157) observes, whilst Korten unequivocally accepts the role of FBOs in the transformational process, he declines

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[145] Myers (2011: 31) comments that Sen's view of human freedoms reflects in some ways, but not completely, Christian anthropology, as God does not give us unfettered freedom. Myers also impliedly alludes to Sen's limited spirituality focus in his concept of well-being, by stating, "The development conversation may now be ready to join the other conversations on human flourishing, including religious conversations" (Myers 2011: 31).

[146] She claims that they become empowered when they become part of social development initiatives which lead to them recognising their own abilities. By way of example, she cites the African Indigenous Churches which emphasise self-sufficiency through practical means of burial societies and other shared credit associations.

to contend further for values rooted in faith. In the course of exploring perspectives on development, Myers (2011: 158) also makes reference to Friedmann, whose opinion is that individuals immersed in poverty are deprived of social power (which includes access to information, skills and financial resources). What would be required, is to organise them into civil associations, which would make it difficult for those in power to ignore the issues affecting them (Myers 2011: 28). Instead of considering development to consist of material wealth, he seeks to empower households, as the economic and social unit, and social organisations, in which the individual members of the household are involved, thereby expanding boundaries of social power. Friedmann believes in self-determination of the economically deprived in taking part in meeting their own needs. This approach to empowerment occurs at a local level rather than mediated by government or development agencies (Myers 2011: 158-159). Friedmann's proposal is helpful in diverting development's focus from pure economic growth initiated by governmental or institutional authorities to placing power firmly with the people and upscaling micro- development initiatives. However, it neglects to include the role of spirituality in effecting change[147].

Like Sen, Chambers (1997: 10) also has as his end goal of sustainable development the notion of "responsible well-being". This, he equates to quality of life, instead of development consisting of the acquisition of material wealth. Chambers (1997: 9-10), in articulating the objective of development to be well-being, includes in this term the vast spectrum of human experience, such as living standards, health, security, peace of mind and choice. Noteworthy is that, included with the material, are the social and mental, as well as the spiritual. For Chambers, poverty is classified as "entanglements" and his framework, based on equity, for attaining responsible well-being, focuses on "livelihood security" and on "capabilities"[148]. Chambers views responsible well-being as the goal of the non-poor too. He expects the non-poor to act with generosity and compassion so that well-being for all is achieved and he expresses confidence in humankind as follows:

> *People can choose how to behave and what to do. The assumption of pervasive selfishness and greed in neoliberal and male-dominated thought, policy and action supports a simplistic view of human nature. This overlooks*

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[147] As Myers (2011: 162) points out, spiritual power is as important to the vulnerable and marginalised as social or political power and this is borne out by the massive growth of Pentecostal churches in impoverished areas.

[148] "Livelihood security" is the uninterrupted flow of basic needs, such as food and cash, and "capabilities" is risk-averting contingencies to ensure that needs are met when severe hardship strikes (Chambers 1997: 10).

> *or under-estimates selflessness, generosity and commitment to others, and the fulfillment that these qualities bring* (Chambers 1997: 13).

However, Myers (2011: 166) is dubious of Chambers' confidence in humanity's willingness to act unselfishly. He suggests that Chambers neglects to take into account humankind's sinful nature. Chambers' framework is helpful in many respects and it focuses on value change and equity, which are consistent with the biblical narrative. However, Myers (2011:167) criticises Chambers' theory for ignoring the spiritual dimensions of powerlessness and for relying too heavily on Western liberalism's belief in the good in people.

It has therefore been demonstrated in the discussion above that there was a move away from a purely financial and materialistic view of development, towards a participatory and people-centred view which took into account factors such as local conditions and culture. Development was no longer characterised by structural change manifest in infrastructure and GNP. Instead the emphasis was on the transformation of life as a whole. Bowers du Toit (2010: 263) puts it succinctly thus: "Development is now more predominantly defined in terms of transformation of the existing economic, social and political structures, and relationships at the level of interpersonal, societal and international relationships". From various sources in the secular development debate, she discerns how the term 'transformation' has become part of the development rhetoric. Implicit is a growing interest in addressing the needs of the whole person when using 'development' as a concept. This would include matters of spirituality and the restoration of human dignity[149]. Reference to a place for spirituality in development finally enters the development discourse, albeit only on the periphery.

3.3.5 Recent interest in spirituality and religion and their potential contribution to social change

In only a decade and a half, there has been a noticeable shift in global interest in spirituality and religion, in their importance in contributing towards social change, and this has occurred for a number of reasons, as presented by scholars (Swart & Nell 2016: 2-3; Deneulin & Rakodi 2011: 46). For instance, in the development arena, it has been highlighted how a religious approach to poverty follows a similar path to

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[149] In this regard, she alludes to Edwards and Sen (2000: 610) who comment favourably on the positive effect of the moral teachings and attitude towards injustice of most faiths on attaining sustainable social transformation.

development in a significant manner. Deneulin and Bano (2009: 10-11) comment on how religious and secular traditions relating to development matters overlap in material ways, specifically as regards issues pertaining to human dignity, freedom, social justice and related areas[150]. In a similar vein, Clarke (2011: 7) observes the wide acceptance of "the intrinsic goal of development […] to advance human dignity, freedom, social equity and self-determination". He notes further that religion has much to say about these issues and so, for development to be effective, it requires an understanding of what adherents to religious beliefs understand about poverty and inequality[151].

Buijs (2008: 225) describes the noticeable openness globally to the potential influence of spirituality and religion in development matters a paradigm shift in development, whereby the focus has moved from structure to culture. The shift towards religion he ascribes largely to the change in the global scenario, whereby international institutions such as the World Bank and the IMF called for a focus on culture in implementing their programmes. Religion was an obvious dimension of culture[152]. Aside from identifying their overlapping areas, another reason for the incorporation of the notions of religion and spirituality more directly into development studies has been caused by changes in perception. Rakodi (2015: 31), for instance, observes an interpretive stream in orthodox development theory which has evolved in recent times and which seeks to "increase understanding of the ways in which religious ideas, practices and organizations interact with aspirations for development and modernity and determine the role religion plays in the public and private spheres…".

Tomalin (2013: 3) poses the rhetorical question why it matters if development actors ignore religion. Her answers include the perpetuation of the perception of development as a "western, colonialist imposition" as well as interventions needing to be appropriate for a particular context, since it has been found that religion shapes people's values and views. Ver Beek's (2000) response as to why it matters is that

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[150] They advocate inter-faith dialogue as an appropriate means of harnessing the potential of religious traditions to contribute towards development perspectives.

[151] Clarke (2011: 6) views religion as having "an inherent dynamism that informs both people's perception of the concept of development and their response to circumstances of poverty or deprivation". In this way, religion operates as a lens through which sense is made of the world as well as providing the impetus to effect change.

[152] Other factors noted by Buijs (2008: 227-228) included the rise of Islam and Pentecostalism to such an obvious extent that a resurgence of interest in religion occurred.

spirituality is an integral component of a person's identity[153]. The failure to recognise the contribution which spirituality can make to a person deprives them of determination of their own values and even strips them of part of their identity. Ver Beek (2000: 32) maintains "Spirituality is a powerful factor in shaping many people's decisions and actions and often gives them a sense of power and hope"[154]. Consequently, he concludes that avoidance of spirituality in the development sphere would result in less accurate scholarship and inadequate interventions. Lunn (2009: 940) supports Ver Beek, declaring "The systematic omission or devaluing of religion in scholarship is a form of cultural imperialism which could result in reduced effectiveness of development research and potentially damaging interventions".

Related to changes in perception, as referred to by Rakodi (2015), the latest interest in religion has also been the result of shifts in dominant development theories, whereby modernisation has been superseded by post-modern theoretical frameworks (Lunn 2009: 941). Various societal trends have also brought religion into development studies. These include a recognition of the inseparability of religion and politics with the increased prominence of Islam, as well as the discovery of the *de facto* importance of religion in people's lives, regardless of what Richard Dawkins[155] may have been contending (Deneulin & Rakodi 2011: 46; Lunn 2009: 942; Jones & Juul Petersen 2011: 1293).

The growing interest in religion has also been the result of far-reaching agreement having emerged in contemporary development thinking, that development must be based on a concept of 'well-being' (Rakodi 2012: 637-638). It became evident that practising religion was a major component in people's conception of what constitutes living a good life and what shapes their values (Deneulin & Rakodi 2011: 48). Religion is seen as challenging mainstream development thinking so that well-being encompasses not merely the material but "can combine with 'spiritual insights about

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[153] In support of this averment, Clarke (2011: 21) alludes to the largest survey of the views of the economically deprived, which reveals the important tie which spirituality and religious observance have with a sense of well-being. Ver Beek (2000) is therefore critical of development agents' failure to provide occasions for dialogue so that people can explore how development programmes will affect their spirituality and, in turn, their society.

[154] His investigations revealed that spirituality meaningfully influenced people's decisions relating to development issues and social action affecting them, both for and against change (Ver Beek 2000: 36).

[155] Richard Dawkins is a world-renowned author of *The God Delusion* in which he argues against theism and states that religious faith is incompatible with science (richarddawkins.net. 2021).

the meaning of human life' to help the whole person" (Jones & Juul Petersen 2011: 1299).

The critique against religion cannot, however, be ignored. For example, religion has been accused of exacerbating poverty by perpetuating gender inequality and spending scarce resources on religious temples. Its negative impact in world conflict must also be acknowledged (Clarke 2011: 4-5). Nevertheless, whilst not turning a blind eye to these and other potential problems, the meaningful potential contribution of religion has become recognised widely and there is interest in its application to the development arena[156].

Buijs (2008: 229) explores what is gained by recognising the role that religion plays, and notes that there is little doubt that religion plays a significant role in the lives of those at whom development is aimed. In many instances it functions as an 'identity marker' providing an essential element of people's cultural identity. 'Lived religion', which is the practice of everyday religion and impliedly another term for 'spirituality', furthermore moulds basic attitudes and has a bearing on self-esteem, which can be important in the development context. Development programmes have limits and cannot shape the hearts and minds of people the way lived religion does (Buijs 2008: 229). Buijs (2008: 239) therefore concludes as follows:

> *Nothing can empower people so much as something at the heart of their identity. Usually worldviews or religions articulate just that. This is a reservoir of tremendous power, of true social capital. If this reservoir is opened up now, as Pentecostal and African Indigenous Churches seem to be able to do right*

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[156] In recent scholarly publications, for instance, whereas religion was previously shied away from, now it is being applied to existing development theory. So, for example, Deneulin and Davies (2016) seek to explore how theological insights such as structural sin can aid in deepening understanding of what is hampering human flourishing in the capabilities approach to human development. They demonstrate the usefulness of applying a biblical narrative of justice to an Argentinian labour context of human development, using the NT parable of the workers in the vineyard from Matt. 20: 1-16. In this instance the structural sin referred to was the failure of corporations to provide minimum labour protection for their workers and the lack of sanctions for non-compliance (Deneulin & Davies 2016: 5). The authors, relying on the theological notion of structural sin, proposed that human flourishing could be promoted when agency is exercised without self-interest and with a focus on the well-being of others. Given the historical avoidance of religion in development, manifest in publications up to a decade and a half ago, as systematically set out by Swart and Nell (2016), this approach, reliant as it is on theological concepts as an analytical framework, is novel and clear evidence of a new interest in religion in relation to development matters.

now, more could happen than a thousand well-designed development programmes would be able to achieve[157].

3.4 Sub-Saharan Africa's conversation on spirituality and development

Bompani (2015) initiates conversation relating to religion and development in a specifically sub-Saharan context. In this regard, she highlights the two flawed assumptions about religion and development. The first is that religion will fade as progress takes place and the second is that religion is incompatible with progress, in that it impedes development's effectiveness. Both assumptions, she points out, have been demonstrated to be untrue and this has had meaningful implications for religion and development and how they relate to one another in sub-Saharan Africa (Bompani 2015: 101)[158]. Bompani contends that there is a danger or "delusion" in refusing to acknowledge the enduring role of religion in society. She states her case persuasively as follows:

> *Engagement with and acknowledgement of faith and belief seem a more productive and appropriate way of understanding and framing societies and people's lives, rather than a simple negation of an important dimension through which people understand the world and through which the fabric of society is bound. This is more true in Africa, with its growing spirituality and enduring poverty, than anywhere else* (Bompani 2015: 110).

Implicit, albeit not overtly concentrated on spirituality and development, is Masango's (2014) criticism of global economic systems and structures such as the IMF and the World Bank for their tendency to "crush the poor", keeping them in poverty instead of eradicating poverty[159]. Current economic systems operate in such a way that the rich are motivated by self-interest so that economic and personal relations are marked by competition rather than collaboration with those experiencing impoverishment

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[157] This potential "reservoir of tremendous power" of religious faith is borne out in a recent study conducted by Tirrel, Geldhof, King, Dowling, Sim, Williams, Iraheta, Lerner and Lerner (2019) into the work of Compassion International ("CI"), an FBO which focuses on the alleviation of child poverty. The study measured the effectiveness of a "positive youth development perspective" which emphasises the importance of religious faith as an asset in the lives of youth living in poverty in El Salvador. In an extensive assessment of 888 Salvadoran youth with a predominantly Protestant Christian background, they compared those enrolled with CI with those not enrolled with the FBO (Tirrel *et al.* 2019: 242). They explored the inter-relationship between spirituality, hope and thriving amongst the youth living in poverty (Tirrel *et al.* 2019: 243). They record that their preliminary findings are that youth supported by CI displayed greater spirituality, which translated into greater hopeful future expectations and thriving in spite of their deprivation (Tirrel *et al.* 2019: 259).

[158] African Independent Churches in South Africa have made important contributions towards development in the community values which they espouse, such as generation of social capital and the running of traditional financial schemes of assistance, such as *stokvels* (informal savings funds) in poor economic situations (Bompani 2015: 106).

[159] He concedes that the UN has taken steps to formulate a new national order but bemoans that this is not done in collaboration with those suffering from poverty (Masango 2014: 2).

(Masango 2014: 3). Poverty must be approached from the standpoint of justice, which will result in the restoration of human dignity[160]. In his recommendations, it is suggested that Masango advocates cohesion of spirituality and development.

In a practical theological study into holistic, people-centred healthcare amidst South Africa's healthcare system in a state of crisis, De la Porte (2016: 3) reveals dramatically increased studies into the integration of spirituality with healthcare, which was previously considered beyond the scope of the provision of health services. He reveals how these studies have established "robust" links between spirituality, spiritual and pastoral work and holistic, people-centred healthcare. Moreover, De la Porte (2016: 7) demonstrates how spirituality has been found to have a positive influence on healthcare workers, instilling a sense of calling and enforcing resilience in a stressful environment.

Within the discipline of social work, Kruger and Williams (2003), observe how social workers in the past would shy away from spirituality in counselling sessions due to spiritual needs being seen as exposing weakness, in clutching onto "quaint traditions" (Ver Beek 2000: 39). During their investigation into the survival strategies of women in poverty- ravished townships, they explore the value of spirituality in the lives of disadvantaged people in South Africa. Kruger and Williams (2003: 349) observe the feeling of strength derived from spirituality, which is thus an important influence on people's well-being in the midst of "bleak circumstances". Of importance is that they also refer to research which attributes other positive characteristics to spirituality, namely resilience, confidence in coping, life satisfaction and feelings of empowerment, and they record how their own study reveals the presence of a number of these characteristics (Kruger & Williams 2003: 352ff).

Their study therefore supports the emphasis on spirituality in social work assessments, concluding that "spirituality fosters a sense of meaning, purpose and mission in life" and that "[s]ocial workers' tendency to ignore the relevance of spirituality in the lives of people might cause them to overlook a vital source of strength (Kruger & Williams 2003: 356). Their conclusion endorses Ver Beek's opinion (2000: 31), that "…the

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[160] What he maintains is necessary is for the rich to yearn for justice on behalf of others which will aid them in seeing all as made in the image of God. Unjust economic structures which crush the vulnerable will not be accepted and economies will thus be founded on "God's gift to improve the life of all human beings" (Masango 2014: 5).

failure to recognize the centrality of spirituality ultimately robs the poor of opportunities to tap into whatever strength, power and hope that this dimension gives them…".

3.5 Concluding comments on spirituality's influence on development

Lunn (2009: 947-948) concludes that, despite religion having had a detrimental effect on development in the past in some respects noted by scholars (for instance by Ver Beek 2000: 32, 39), such as causing discord in communities due to polarisation, as well as manipulation and aggressive proselytising, it nevertheless has the potential to have a positive influence on development in the future. This, she identifies as being due to a variety of factors, such as religion's universal values of care for humankind, as well as acknowledgement of previous positive influences of religion evident in development.

Myers (2019: 13), in an article exploring current trends in the overlap of religion and secular development studies, uses the following most telling title: "The Secular Development Community Is Suspicious Yet Curious"[161]. Myers (2019: 18) is certain that religion can play a dominant role in the current development conversation and he confidently proclaims so thus:

> *We are facing a new opportunity. The so-called secular development conversation is rediscovering religion and its importance to the idea of human well-being and social change. This product of postmodernity may mean that people of faith and their religious perspectives on development are positioned to make a fresh contribution to the development discourse, provided that they are willing to take our development practice and thinking into the larger development community.*

Since development discourse has displayed an openness to the integration of spirituality in generating social change, it creates an opportunity for an integrated theology of development to be formulated and applied.

3.6 Towards a cohesive theological framework for development

3.6.1 Introduction

From a theological perspective, the inadequacies of secular development theory gave rise to a process of exploring a theology of development to address social concerns. The process, which overlapped with discussions on evangelism and social justice as mission, culminated in the widely accepted biblical basis for development

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[161] Myers claims that the few Christians who work within the secular development studies field do not always bring a theological perspective into the field, but that things are changing.

encapsulated in the term 'transformation' (Samuel & Sugden 1999: ix). The purpose of this second section of the chapter is to argue for the adoption of transformation, coupled with a strong theology of the kingdom of God, as an appropriate and well-integrated theological framework for development. In order for the human dignity of the marginalised of society to be affirmed, social change must take place within the notion of 'development as transformation' so that the social change can be meaningful and sustainable.

The section will follow the following structure: The starting point will be an exploration of liberation theology, since a theological framework would be influenced by liberation theology, as will be illustrated. Liberation theological analysis draws attention to what has been a complicating factor in the church's engagement in development matters, namely the debate in the church about the extent to which issues of social justice warrant equal prominence with evangelism in church mission. It is necessary to highlight how the ongoing deliberation on this issue sowed confusion and delayed Christian engagement in the global conversation on social injustice. Eventually advances were made in the evangelical arena towards classifying development as 'transformation' as a fitting biblical reflection and this framework will be considered and endorsed herein. Theologians have, however, observed the de-humanising role of power on the those experiencing material deprivation, caused by its abuse, and have identified this as an important factor preventing social change. In the circumstances, the subsequent discussion on power as a destructive agent hampering change, is pertinent, given that any theological perspective on poverty will need to address the influence of power inequality. In this regard, finally, the chapter is drawn to a close following the analysis of the kingdom of God as a necessary biblical image, linked to transformation, for addressing the de-humanising effect of power on those in economic distress and the affirmation of human dignity.

3.6.2 Liberation theology's foundational role in formulating a theological perspective on development

Liberation theology has asserted an important influence on the church's perspective on development, leading Swart (2006: 200) to state that, for the church, engaging with issues of development theologically, "there can be no other point of departure but the

theology of liberation" [162]. The reason for Swart's bold statement is obvious in that a key feature of this theology is "the preferential option for the poor" in terms of which Christians should prioritise the marginalised in obedience to God's commandment (Tomalin 2013: 117). The value of liberation theology in engaging in development theologically has indubitably been recognised and Newbigin (1995: 91-120) discusses this approach, noting at the outset, that "[t]he Exodus is the central paradigm for liberation" (Newbigin 1995: 98)[163]. From God's response to Israel's oppression, by God's deliverance, we can infer that God is on the side of the oppressed (Newbigin 1995: 96)[164].

Plant and Weiss (2015: 61) demonstrate how liberation theologies appeared as a necessary reaction to oppression, inequality and injustice, making use of Marxist economic and political analytical tools[165]. In the contemporary South African context, Bowers du Toit (2018) proposes that black liberation theology, with its roots in the BCM (discussed in Section 2.10.3), retains its value for engaging with social injustice. She poses the question what role BC can play in disrupting established *praxis* with regard to obstacles to transformation faced routinely by Christian FBOs in the development sector. Bowers du Toit (2018: 29) observes how the BCM focused on community development and stressed communities' self-determination in establishing their needs. Black liberation theology based on BC insisted on an emancipatory approach founded on kingdom liberation and *shalom*, rather than a charitable approach to community development (Bowers du Toit 2018: 33)[166].

It is therefore apparent that social justice is an urgent concern in liberation theology, which also gave rise to the debate, to be discussed later, about the emphasis of social

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[162] Liberation theology had its origins in the 1970s, with the term having been coined from the title of Gustavo Gutierrez' 1973 book "The Theology of Liberation". It introduced a new way of doing theology in the context of South America where it sought to attain liberation for the impoverished from their misery and oppression (Clarke 2011: 125). Development is viewed as the eradication of injustice through redressing structural sin but Clarke (2011: 127) observes how the secular discourse has not understood development in these terms.

[163] Newbigin (1995) engages with liberation theology, criticising aspects of its eschatology and its epistemology as dealing inadequately with the severity of sin and death, whilst also endorsing facets of its arguments.

[164] Accordingly, reasons Newbigin (1995: 97), the theologians of liberation are correct about God's cause and any talk of salvation which does not call for action for liberation of the oppressed, is false.

[165] Plant and Weiss (2015: 61) remark how theologies of liberation have arisen in several contexts, for example Black theology in North America and South Africa, Dalit theology in India and Minjung theology in South Korea.

[166] Whilst solutions to transformation struggles in Christian FBOs are not obvious at this stage, she nevertheless issues the challenge for a decolonising perspective on community development and for Christian FBOs to engage with black liberation theology rooted in BC thinking (Bowers du Toit 2018: 25).

justice in relation to evangelism. In this regard, Von Balthasar (1982: 146) cautions the church about holding in balance the conflicting attitudes towards development, namely social justice and Christ's liberating sacrifice on the cross (Mk 10: 45; Matt. 20: 28), and not prioritising one over the other. He comments as follows: "Liberation theology has its specific place in a theology of the kingdom of God. It is *one* aspect of the whole of theology and, in practical terms, it demands the church's commitment to the shaping of the world as a whole in a manner conforming with Christ" (author's emphasis)[167]. Plant and Weiss (2015: 63) suggest that liberation theology has a distinctive perspective to contribute in development studies in provoking conversation about what constitutes human flourishing.

As an illustration of a liberation theological hermeneutic, and how it informs a theological approach to development, Vellem (2016) makes a valuable contribution to the interface of secular development theory and theological 'development theory'. He examines dependency theory, discussed previously, in relation to development, and critiques developmentalism from a liberation paradigm. Vellem refuses to accept the notion of development as wealth creation, as it has been interpreted under modernity's influence, but seeks to discern what it should yield from a liberation perspective. His starting point is dependency theory, which he remarks, in an African context, caused a pre-occupation with the development of some at the expense of others and disregarded the coloniality of power[168]. Economic exploitation, superiority and authoritarianism are the distinguishing features of development long after the independence of an African state (Vellem 2016: 3). Vellem's claims strongly reflect the views of John de Gruchy (1979: 208), commenting as follows about liberation theology in relation to dependency theory:

> *It is a response to revolutionary Christian action or* praxis*; it is a theological reflection on radical deeds undertaken by Christians who have rejected both the* status quo *and the liberal/reformist approach to social change. The latter, say liberation theologians, by concentrating on development aid, fails to deal*

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[167] In support of this assertion, Newbigin (1995: 99) draws on Gutierrez, to distinguish between political liberation aimed at redressing social injustice and spiritual liberation through Christ, which is liberation from sin and reconciliation with God. Acts of political liberation in history point towards "the fullness of liberation" in Christ (Newbigin 1995: 100). It can therefore be said that a person needs the degree of political and cultural liberation which is fitting for human dignity, but which cannot be enjoyed independently of liberation from sin achieved only by the saving work of Christ (Newbigin 1995: 101).

[168] Dependency theory, featuring a "dominating, civilising mission", coupled with a Eurocentric idea of progress, positivistic science and a view of indigenous knowledge as inferior, led to African scholars such as Moeletsi Mbeki and Sabelo Gatsheni-Ndlovu highlighting the failure of dependency theory and favouring liberation as a paradigm for development, according to Vellem (2016).

with the real problem. Instead of bringing about radical social change, it perpetuates dependence on foreign capital under the guise of promoting real change.

Vellem claims that the eradication of oppression and other obstacles which hamper freedom is the *telos* (goal) of development[169]. He insists on the paradigm of liberation being adopted as evident in "the gospel of Jesus as liberation", stating his position as follows:

The removal of un-freedoms such as poverty, tyranny, poor economic opportunities, and systematic social deprivation, is a quid pro quo *for development as freedom. Development as freedom and how it relates to liberation is the perspective or line of argument we take as the paradigm of liberation is not the same as that of liberalism* (Vellem 2016: 6)*.*

In summary, therefore, Vellem (2016: 5) argues that dialogue with Sen's theory provides a link to a liberation paradigm. Through the removal of 'un-freedoms', Sen's theory of capabilities correlates with the breaking of dependency systems, thereby connecting with the liberation paradigm which Vellem endorses firmly as the goal of development.

It is thus clear that liberation theology has played a foundational role in informing a theological perspective on development. Unfortunately, however, the path to formulating a clear and beneficial theological framework on development has not been smooth. Instead, as Myers (2019: 33) observes, the arena of religion, the church and development has been "confusing, fragmented and sadly devoid of much practical research".

3.6.3 The social justice versus evangelism debate in the church's mission

The pathway towards a theological model for development has most obviously been hampered by the persistent dichotomy of 'mission as evangelism' versus 'mission as social justice'. Bosch (2011: 404) explains how the 'person' and the 'work' of Christ moved further apart over time so that God's activities involving salvation were viewed separately from God's activities involving the well-being of individuals and society[170]. The church has consistently over the centuries reacted to poverty and social injustice by engaging in mission comprising acts of charity and mercy (Tomalin 2013: 20).

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[169] Vellem (2016: 5) advocates dialogue with Sen's 'capabilities' theory, discussed earlier, whereby development is viewed as freedoms (Sen 1999: 3). He is in favour of Sen's essential tenets of his theory of development calling for the destruction of obstacles faced by the marginalised which impede their complete freedom.

[170] In this way, soteriology was elevated above Christology.

However, these acts of service, in respect of taking care of the vulnerable, as well as serving through education and agricultural instruction, were frequently viewed as "auxiliary services" and not missionary in their own right (Bosch 2011: 404)[171].

This attitude towards social development, in which the church was preoccupied with evangelism over social justice, was later equated with the evangelical movement which viewed evangelism as primary, and successful evangelism to be evident in "fruits" in the form of social justice (Bosch 2011: 416). At the other end of the spectrum was the ecumenical movement, which prioritised social justice over evangelism, with a dominant prophetic dimension prompting believers to get involved in serving their neighbours (Bosch 2011: 412). One way to explain the tension between evangelism and social responsibility was by reference to the 'two mandates'. The one mandate was spiritual and was intended to share the Good News of Jesus Christ and the other was social whereby Christians are called to social responsibility which includes justice and well-being of all human beings (Bosch 2011: 413). Evangelicalism accepted this relationship between the two mandates but continued to emphasise the primacy of evangelism (Bosch 2011: 416).

Bosch (2011: 410) claims that, although social justice can never be a substitute for evangelism, the one cannot be emphasised at the expense of the other. He explains that social justice was central to the OT prophetic tradition, but during the reign of Constantine, when Christianity became the only lawful religion of the Roman Empire, social justice became compromised[172]. De Gruchy (1979: 205) is also wary of highlighting social justice whilst side-lining evangelism, and identifies shortcomings of the purely social gospel as follows:

> *The danger of the social gospel when it is divorced from the evangelical message of Christ, is that it leads either to an individualism that has little sense of corporate responsibility, and a cynical view of history that has no hope or vision for the future, or to an overly optimistic view that is incapable of dealing with historical crises and the struggle against evil.*

These two poles of evangelism and social justice understandably constituted "one of the thorniest areas in the theology and practice of mission" (Bosch 2011: 410). This

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[171] Bosch (2011: 404) explains the true purpose of the acts of social justice as being "to dispose people favorably toward the gospel, 'soften them up,' and thereby prepare the way for the work of the *real* missionary, namely, the one who proclaimed God's word about eternal salvation".

[172] Since it was the authorities who were the ones who were largely complicit in injustice, it was difficult for the unified church and state to challenge the injustice.

comment is evidence of the church's conflicting and often confused attitudes towards social justice and Gospel- sharing facets of development, which has been described as the "one-sided" and "inadequate theology of the church" (Samuel 1991: 241). Samuel (1999: 229) emphasises the integral relation between "evangelism and social change" and he stresses that whatever social change is attempted, it cannot occur without reference to what Christ offers people. Samuel (1999: xii) instead describes a holistic mission reflecting a kingdom of God theology of mission "centred in the rule of Christ over the whole of life, [which] seeks to impact a community with the values of the kingdom and the spiritual challenges of the kingdom". A holistic mission, according to Samuel, "asserts the Lordship of Christ over all aspects of life including personal, economic and political." He thus reinforces how social action and evangelism have to be held in equal balance if transformation of communities is to be effected.

This must be the accepted theoretical approach as, in practice, Newbigin (1995: 91) emphasises that mission has never been able to separate the preaching of the Word from social justice. Bowers du Toit (2010: 264-266) elucidates the church history of this balancing of social justice and eternal salvation through Christ. She discusses how world consultations of these movements led to a convergence of ideas and an increasingly conciliatory approach towards a theology of Christian development from these antithetical positions. Finally, "another significant step forward" was taken to overcome "the perennial dichotomy" at the Wheaton Conference of world evangelism in 1983, headlined "The Church in Response to Human Need" (Bosch 2011: 417).

The conference produced a comprehensive statement on what became termed 'transformation', which was intended as a biblical perspective on development. The statement attained considerable success in providing conclusive biblical foundations for the development debate and what constituted poverty and development. The Wheaton Statement stressed that, without the Gospel of Christ in dealing with sin and power issues, social action was insufficient to bring about justice (Samuel & Sugden 1999: x)[173]. The key paragraph in the Wheaton Statement is paragraph 11 and it is worth quoting it in full hereunder as it clearly expresses the essence of the issues:

> *According to the biblical view of human life, then, transformation is the change*
> *from a condition of human existence contrary to God's purposes to one in which*

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[173] As far as deliberation on which countries were more developed than others was concerned, the delegates recognised the need for transformation for all to enjoy harmonious life with God and each other and that development in material terms was superficial and insufficient.

people are able to enjoy fulness of life in harmony with God (Jn 10: 10; Col. 3:
8-15; Eph. 4: 13). This transformation can only take place through obedience
of individuals and communities to the Gospel of Jesus Christ, whose power
changes the lives of men and women by releasing them from the guilt, power
and consequences of sin, enabling them to respond with love toward God and
toward others (Rom. 5: 5) and making them 'new creatures in Christ' (2 Cor. 5:
17) (reproduced in Samuel & Sugden 1999: x).

The Wheaton Conference was a watershed in putting to rest the polarity in views between evangelism and social action in Christian mission. It is noteworthy that, since 1983 when the Wheaton Statement was published, there has been little disagreement in the evangelical mission arena about its contents (Samuel & Sugden 1999: x). Bosch (2011: 417) summarises the position thereafter as follows:

Today both evangelicals and ecumenicals grasp in a more profound manner
than ever before something of the depth of evil in the world, the inability of
human beings to usher in God's reign, and *the need for both personal renewal*
by God's Spirit and resolute commitment to challenging and transforming the
structures of society.

Indeed, Myers (2011:49) dismisses the 'evangelism versus social justice debate' among evangelicals today as being of little more importance than "a historical footnote". Subsequently, from an evangelical theological perspective, the literature focuses on the evolution of development to 'transformation', which is intended to mean human and social change from a Christian perspective, and which term has been widely accepted (Bragg 1987: 39; August 2010: 22).

3.6.4 The de-humanising role of power in the dignity of those in poverty

However, any proposed theological framework on development must adequately address a major challenge in bringing about social change, which is the deleterious effect of power on the dignity of the impoverished. Christian (1999: 11) defines 'power' as "the capacity of some persons within a social relationship to be in a position to carry out their will toward creating intended and foreseen effects on others despite resistance". According to Christian (1999: 10), "powerlessness has become synonymous with poverty". It is therefore instructive here to explore the relationship between power, powerlessness and poverty.

Closely related to Friedmann's view of poverty as diminished social power, discussed in Section 3.3.4 above, is Prilleltensky's view of poverty as resulting from unequal power relations caused by oppression, discussed by Myers (2011: 162). Prilleltensky and Nelson (2002) point out the psychological damage caused to personal identity and social relations by poverty. What is needed is a sense of agency in meeting individual

and collective needs and they present a strategy of increasing power to improve well-being and social relations. Prilleltensky and Nelson's views on development are important in highlighting psychological and relational well-being, as opposed to purely an increase in material wealth. However, their framework for understanding and addressing poverty also has its shortcomings. They acknowledge that power is ambiguous and, whilst it can be used to increase well-being, it can also be used for domination, giving rise to Myers' (2011: 163) comment based on Christian's (1999: 181-182) observation that, "without a kingdom understanding of power, this ambiguity is almost always fatal in a sinful world"[174].

Social power is intended to improve creation so that creation can uphold the well-being of all human beings. God requires the use of social power for the justice of the vulnerable whereas the powerful who abuse power are judged harshly (Psalm 72). It is not intended to perpetuate the power of the powerful and thus this understanding of power is radically different to the world's understanding (Myers 2011: 94-95). Unfortunately, much of the social inequality and injustice prevalent in the world is attributable to the abuse of power and resultant unjust power structures which perpetuate chronic poverty.

Christian (1999: 121) explains the de-humanising role of power in causing destruction of human dignity. He reports that the perception of their own human dignity amongst those in economic distress is generally lacking due to 'marring of identity'. Myers (2019: 23), commenting on the phenomenon termed 'marred identity', describes it as "the internalization of the impact of chronic poverty and sustained oppression which results in reduced agency, risk avoidance and resistance to change". The impoverished, as a result of sustained powerlessness, are unable to effect change in their lives for the better because of their perception of the immutability of the situation and their inability to envision a different future.

The problem concerning power by no means lies with those immersed in poverty. Swart (2006: 19) points out that works of service by the non-poor do not challenge their inherent positions of power and the societal structures which safeguard that power. Nor do they impact the psychological comfort derived by the non-poor from

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[174] Our power as creative agents of God must be considered a gift from God and accordingly, it has constraints imposed by God (Myers 2011: 94).

being the benefactors of the economically deprived. The *status quo* is thus maintained and the non-poor retain their positions of dominance towards the impoverished, who are kept in subservience.   "The non-poor understand themselves as superior, essential, and anointed to rule", comments Myers (2011: 124).

Christian goes further in condemning the relationship of dominance held by the non-poor[175]. He declares that the non-poor, through their relationships of inequality with those experiencing poverty, seek to exert influence over the lives of the latter, holding them in captivity within 'god-complexes' (mentioned in Section 1.5.6) (Christian 1999: 145 footnote). Christian (1999: 124) summarises 'god-complexes' as "[c]lusters of power (social, economic, bureaucratic, political and religious) within the domain of poverty relationships that absolutize themselves to keep the poor powerless" which are "[a] function of structures, systems, people and the spiritual interiority within each cluster of power". Systems which are inaccessible to those in deprivation in the mainstream of public life include legal, economic, political and bureaucratic (Christian 1999: 126-127). They are systematically excluded from education, wealth and benefits of society (Christian 1999: 121). Because the impoverished are precluded from enjoying the socio-economic advantages, which the non-poor benefit from in society, they are thereby entrenched in poverty.

What transpires is that the non-poor assume the role of playing god in the lives of the vulnerable and marginalised. They dominate and exert influence over them in ways which ensure that those experiencing material deprivation remain entrenched in poverty and powerlessness. Myers (2011: 67) sums up the consequences aptly, "When fallen human beings play god in the lives of others, the results are patterns of domination and oppression that mar the image and potential productivity of the poor while alienating the non- poor from their true identity and vocation as well".

Because issues of power and powerlessness cause discomfort in the non-poor, they prefer to respond to the physical need of impoverished people rather than to the powerlessness (Christian 1999: 125). Lamberty (2017) concurs with this observation, remarking that charity and 'hand outs' only serve to entrench the attitude of the non-

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[175] He defines the 'non-poor' as the rich and the middle class without including oppressive relationships unless mentioned specifically (Christian 1999: 12 footnote).

poor that they have something to contribute and that those in states of vulnerability are incapable of taking care of themselves (Lamberty 2017: 96)[176].

This statement of Lamberty overlaps with Bowers du Toit's (2016) comments highlighting the deficiencies of the church's *praxis* in its approach to deprivation. She draws attention to its focus on charity and welfare, whereby basic needs are provided to alleviate the plight of the vulnerable, whereas engagement with governmental authorities and prioritising advocacy would yield more meaningful results. This theology is insufficiently radical in its interpretation of 'neighbourliness' to deal effectively with current social injustice challenges. Instead, she urges emphasis on discourse regarding power, to which a blind eye is being turned, in engaging with poverty, and which she thus aptly terms "the elephant in the room", simply resulting in the perpetuation of powerlessness (Bowers du Toit 2016: 5). What is required is also a change of attitude by the non-poor in developing sensitivity to those experiencing poverty and acknowledging the necessity of replacing unjust institutions and structures (Swart 2006: 197).

Powerlessness, which is systematically embedded, inevitably causes wounding in the vulnerable and marginalised, resulting in a flawed identity. The result is powerless captivity in what Christian depicts in the image of a 'web of lies'. The web is made up of the interplay of power forces in the social, political, economic, bureaucratic and religious arenas, as well as the negative role of worldview themes, which all collaborate in their deceit towards an inter-linked mass of oppressive relationships. This 'web of lies' is supported by various systems, structures, principalities and powers in poverty relationships (Christian 1999: 161). Reliance is placed on "the eternal yesterday" to justify "the eternal tomorrow" of the economically deprived. "It has always been this way", is the anthem (Myers 2011: 124).

Those in economic distress believe these lies based on flawed assumptions which forbid them from seeking change, as they believe that nothing can be done to change the present (Christian 1999: 159-160). Christian (1999: 161) makes the salient point that "[b]oth the poor and the non-poor believe these lies and thus ensure perpetuation of the powerlessness of the poor." Lamberty (2017: 96) expands on this idea by

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[176] His experience is with mercy initiatives in Haiti over thirty years. He comments further that the economically deprived adopt the identity of neediness, assuming that the only way they can take care of themselves is if someone gives them something.

indicating that those suffering in poverty are demeaned and devalued when the non-poor regard them as dependent and inadequate instead of recognising their giftedness and connectedness through our common humanity by virtue of having been made in the image of God.

In the course of recognising the talents of those marginalised by society, and humanity's affinity by virtue of the *imago Dei*, it becomes essential that the inalienability of human dignity be accepted and communicated and the human dignity of those immersed in poverty affirmed. To return to human dignity as the subject matter of Chapter 2, here it is stressed that human dignity is seen as inalienable as it has its roots in Christ's redemption whereby we are drawn back into a relationship with God and are reflecting the image of God[177]. Kilner (2015: 315) explains how, because of human dignity, all human beings have a sacredness about them independent of actual attributes. This sacredness will have a bearing on the fact that they are to be treated with reverence, anchored in the fact that they are in God's image (Kilner 2015: 317).

Whilst human dignity is violated when basic needs are not met, it is not something which can be withdrawn from those experiencing material deprivation (Koopman 2007: 178). It is, therefore, the *correcting* of a wrong perception in impoverished people that they have no dignity that must be restored to escape the 'web of lies'. In other words, their 'marred identity' requires healing. Throughout the twentieth century, development theorists in evangelical circles affirmed a necessary element of the need to heal the marred image of God based on the marginalised being made in the image of God (Samuel & Sugden 1987: 186). A true understanding of self is therefore essential as there can be no meaningful transformation among the materially deprived without the restoration of value and worth in their own eyes. The question is 'how is this done?'

Myers (2011: 94) is of the opinion that we need to develop a theology of power and it is proposed that the practical application of a theology of power would provide an avenue to the restoration of true identity. Christian (1999: 166) declares that there is a need to consider the question of power from the context of those suffering in poverty in such a way that the powerless are put at the very centre. It is therefore suggested

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[177] Koopman (2017: 180) alludes to Helmut Thielicke's notion of 'alien dignity' on the basis of human dignity being imputed to human beings and not earned. Human dignity is an alien dignity by virtue of being bestowed by God as a gift of grace and this alien dignity becomes humanity's dignity by God's design (Kilner 2015: 314).

here that any theological formulation of development must have something relevant to say about the de-humanising effect of power on those in economic deprivation in such a way that the actual definition of power is redefined, as proposed by Christian (199: 166). As the notion of 'transformation' is explored below, it becomes apparent why it is a beneficial framework for confronting the issue of power and its destructive influence on human dignity. The biblical image of the kingdom of God, discussed thereafter, fits together well with the transformation framework and provides arguably the best means of engaging effectively with the de-humanising role of power on human dignity.

3.6.5 'Transformation' as an appropriate theological reflection of development

Why it is that transformation addresses the de-humanising effect of power is because transformation alerts us to the need for unjust power structures and oppressive relationships to be transformed into just ones (Bragg 1987: 42). Transformation refers to God's continuing efforts in history to restore his fractured creation, whereby oppression and injustice caused by sin are in need of transformation to their God-intended purpose.

At its essence, transformation is spiritual. Without spiritual transformation brought about by becoming a new creation in Christ (2 Cor. 5: 17), with resultant changed attitudes, human beings remain self-centred (Bragg 1987: 46). When a person is a new creature in Christ, his or her concept of power is altered. Beukes and Plaatjies van Huffel (2013: 231) endorse this statement in their observation that when people are reconciled to God and to each other, the sinful desire to dominate and oppress others dissipates. Methods of poverty alleviation and development approaches that focus on spiritual transformation will aim to liberate people from destructive beliefs and behaviour. As such, August (2010: 22) endorses transformation as "a framework for looking at human and social change".

Bragg (1987: 38) classifies transformation as "a concept which permeates the biblical record, from the Old Testament images of *shalom* and the reign of God in Israel to the

New Testament church and the kingdom of God"[178]. The biblical image of '*shalom'* is beneficial in enhancing understanding of transformation. Bragg (1987: 39) indicates that God's redeeming and reconciling purposes are reflected biblically in the imagery of *shalom* whereby fractured relationships are restored to a harmonious state, and peace and justice prevail. Humanity is to live as the *imago Dei* in the world, as stewards of creation to foster the well-being of all. Anderson's (1982: 164) clarification of the meaning of '*shalom'* in the following explanation is instructive:

> *The concept of* shalom *is the structure of wholeness and harmony which exists as the result of the divine Word. This peace is first of all a structure of reality before it becomes an existential experience for the human community.*

Padilla (1999: 441) expands on *shalom* as harmonious living with God as follows:

> *The peace (*shalom*) of which the prophets speak is not merely an absence of war…The prophetic vision of a world of peace foresees a new order in which men and women live in full harmony with God, with one another and with creation. Shalom is wellbeing, wholeness, abundance of life. It points to the fulfilment of God's loving purpose for humankind. And it is inseparable from justice (*tzedaka)…*

Padilla thus reinforces the essential connection between *shalom* and justice, as does de Gruchy (1979: 228), with the following description: "the promise is the promise of "*shalom*" – God's peace, in which his justice and righteousness rule supreme, in which human pain and suffering are no more; in which all things, people, and nations have found their fulfilment". One can clearly infer, from de Gruchy's description, the inclusion of power being corrected and of human dignity affirmed.

Transformation is no longer about focusing on building wealth amongst the economically deprived, as it was under modernisation but is instead primarily about recovering the true identity and vocation which God has intended for all (Myers 2011: 179)[179]. Where poverty has dictated that those in material deprivation are worthless,

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[178] For example, the nation of Israel is transformed from slavery into a higher existence and purpose in the OT, and, in the NT, a small group of Jewish followers of Jesus is transformed into the church. Sin, which is visible in the exploitation of people and the injustice in social and political structures, has distorted God's creation. However, transformation is based on the message of the Bible which is that God is redeeming and reconciling all to himself with Christ at the head so that every relationship distorted by sin is restored (Col. 1: 19; Eph. 1: 10).

[179] To make sense of transformation, Myers (2011) prefers a narrative theology indicating that it is necessary to adopt the whole of the biblical story and to be mindful of the fact that God has been working amongst those on the margins of society before any development practitioner arrived on the scene. The biblical story, of which Jesus is at the centre, can heal the story of any person or community by transforming it by redemption and hope (Myers 2011: 96). A transcendent story makes sense of our identity and purpose, what went wrong to result in poverty and injustice and how it can be changed (Myers 2011: 55). Myers (2011: 82) emphasises that the redemptive and restorative goal must be the basis for our understanding of transformation.

transformation declares that they are made in God's image and that God has given them gifts so that they can fulfil their God-given purpose as stewards of God's creation (Myers 2011: 180). Poverty does not negate the potential for transformation and the impoverished can indeed be agents of transformation of society (Christian 1999: 58).

Central to transformation is relationships and the restoration of just and peaceful relationships (Myers 2011: 180). The triune God[180] is loving, self-giving and deeply relational, whose character can be summed up as "a fountain of sending love" (Bosch 2011: 402). If human beings are made in the image of God, therefore, we need to reflect God's loving, self-giving life in communion with one another. Our identity and vocation are deeply rooted in relationships: with each other, with God and with our environment (Myers 2011: 61). "Our purpose or vocation as human beings is to make the earth fruitful for human well-being…", declares Myers (2011: 61) and this image of stewardship has important implications for what ought to be the goal of development.

Plant and Weiss (2015: 62) note how transformational development[181] represents an endeavour by evangelical Christians to "engage practically with global poverty and injustice in an authentically evangelical way". Human beings do not perform the transformational development, but instead participate in God's transforming work (Plant & Weiss 2015: 62). It is apparent that fundamental to transformation is the transformation of communities to reflect values aligned with the kingdom of God. Bragg (1987: 39) too refers to the kingdom of God as he indicates that the aim of transformation is for the purposes of God to be fulfilled. God's purposes are reflected biblically in the image of the kingdom of God and in the notion of *shalom*. Samuel and Sugden (1999) therefore advocate re-interpreting development in the light of the whole message of the Bible. In so doing, they discern the goal of transformation as best being described by the biblical vision of the kingdom of God.

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[180] Myers (2011: 58) also demonstrates why a trinitarian focus is important in formulating a framework for understanding human transformation or well-being. A trinitarian understanding of God removes from the conversation questions about why God would allow poverty and social injustice. Instead, a trinitarian basis provides a more satisfactory response when we enquire what God is doing in an unjust world. Myers (2011: 59) responds that God is saving the world through Jesus Christ in the power of the Holy Spirit.

[181] or 'integral mission' as it is termed by U.K. agency, Tearfund, to which the authors are referring

3.6.6 A response to powerlessness by proclamation of the kingdom of God

'Kingdom of God' is an elusive term, despite its status as one of the most scrutinised terms of all time, according to Harrisville (1993: 140)[182]. 'Kingdom of God' is also referred to as the 'reign of God' by some scholars, such as Guder (1998: 94) who views the latter as capturing better the dynamic meaning of the reigning itself as opposed to the more static image of 'kingdom'. 'Reign of God' has also been preferred as a less androcentric term by feminist theologians who point out the urgent need for the affirmation of women as created equally as *imago Dei*[183]. In selecting 'kingdom of God' rather than 'reign of God' for the purposes of this study, I have been motivated by the fact that 'kingdom of God' is the conventional and widely accepted translation of the Greek word *'basileia'* appearing throughout the NT (Guder 1998: 94). In the evangelical sphere, 'kingdom of God' is also the preferred term of several of the authors of works concerning social transformation to which I have referred (Myers, Christian, Bragg).

Christian (1999: 9) insists that only with an understanding of power from the point of view of the kingdom of God can powerlessness be satisfactorily reversed. Cray (1999), in his exposition of the kingdom of God as a necessary theology for mission as transformation, describes the kingdom as "a theological minefield as well as a vast theme" [184]. He explains that he has "dared to rush in where theologians fear to tread" because, referring back to the abovementioned uncertainty surrounding mission as evangelism and as social action, he is "convinced that this is the necessary way

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[182] Somewhat perplexingly, his article entitled 'In Search of the Meaning of "The Reign of God", refers to this term sparsely, with the author preferring 'kingdom of God' until arriving at his conclusion.

[183] Moder (2019), for instance, presents a critique of patriarchal concepts of God in the face of domestic abuse. However, it may be considered to be ironic that, in re-envisioning God in female language, she elects to use the term 'kingdom of God' over 'reign of God' throughout her argument.

[184] Since 'kingdom of God' is considered a "theological minefield", it is not the intention here to undertake an exhaustive presentation of the concept. Nevertheless, as a central biblical motif underpinning development viewed as transformation, it is essential to extract and analyse a vision of the kingdom of God, particularly in its corrective and restorative capacity in issues of powerlessness and human dignity.

forward for both movements and a vital step towards greater mutual understanding and practical partnership" (Cray 1999: 27)[185].

Indeed, according to Cray (1999: 29), "[i]t is an 'upside-down' Kingdom which presents a direct challenge to and reversal of accepted social and religious values". Of particular relevance for the development as transformation discussion, is how the kingdom of God challenges the power *status quo* with its 'upside-down' nature as Jesus gave radically new teaching about the exercise of power in relation to wealth. As regards the vulnerable, specifically, Kilner remarks as follows:

> *…the existence of all humanity in God's image offers a potent rallying cry for respecting and protecting even the weakest and most marginalized of human beings. God would have people attend to the needs of those who are impoverished precisely because they are in God's image.*

De Gruchy (1979: 213) describes the kingdom of God and what it entails for the disempowered in these terms: "The kingdom of God promises a 'new earth' where justice and righteousness shall flourish. It promises God's *shalom,* God's gift of a renewed creation and a fulfilled humanity". Bowers du Toit (2016: 6) notes that those intending to address poverty in South Africa need to recognise the lingering effects of the scourge of apartheid and the impotence of the democratic regime to address the great socio-economic divide adequately. She therefore calls for theologies which conscientise both economically deprived and non-poor and which emphasise God's solidarity with the deprived, thereby engaging theologically with the relationship between powerlessness, power and empowerment. The kingdom of God theology would be such a theology contemplated by Bowers du Toit, since it both empowers those experiencing material deprivation and confronts the non-poor, conscientising them concerning their power and the abuse of power structures towards those in poverty.

Practical application of the kingdom of God and its remedial influence as a response to powerlessness on the state of the vulnerable and marginalised is most evident in the visual representation of the kingdom in the life of Jesus, through "both the

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[185] Cray (1999: 40-41) is critical of the manner in which theologians and development practitioners have compartmentalised facets of the kingdom of God in attempting to prioritise evangelism and social action, thus limiting the vision of the kingdom of God. Theology must be carried through to ministry so that an integrated form of mission is practised. De Gruchy (1979: 196) would agree as he views the roots of the social gospel as an extension of the kingdom of God from its internal application within the hearts of believers to "every corner of social life", expressing "something of the biblical hope for the kingdom of God on earth here….". Theoretical concepts ought to be translated into practical application in order to enhance their benefit where most needed.

proclamation of the Kingdom with its accompanying call to follow Jesus, and of the effective demonstration of the power and reality of the Kingdom," as Cray (1999: 29) summarises. Central to Jesus' teaching about the kingdom of God and his ministry was his focus on the economically poor and socially powerless as he announced that he had come to preach Good News to the poor (Lk 4: 18; 7: 22) (Cray 1999: 30). Furthermore, according to Christian (1999:182), "[t]he cross was Jesus' decisive criticism of the world's understanding of power", and it made powerlessness an authentic form of power, thus re-defining power.

Of significance is that Jesus explicitly linked the kingdom with justice (Matt. 6: 33). Beukes and Plaatjies van Huffel (2013) accordingly ground their proposed theology of development impliedly on the link between the kingdom of God and justice, stating emphatically that God is a God of justice who cannot tolerate injustice. Consequently, they suggest that Article 4 of the Belhar Confession[186] be the starting point to motivate the church[187] to engage in addressing poverty. Article 4 reads: "We believe that God's own revelation has revealed God as the One who wishes to bring about justice and true peace between people ..." (Beukes & Plaatjies van Huffel 2013: 232).

In continuing with a shift from the theoretical knowledge of the kingdom of God in power issues to its role in practical terms, we find that power and human dignity have been shown to be inextricably linked as power is a destructive force in eroding the dignity of individuals immersed in poverty. So obvious is the devastation caused by abuse of power to human dignity that Koopman (2008) is in favour of development being understood as restoration of human dignity[188]. Christian (1999: 11) also contends that the answer to restored human dignity lies in the kingdom of God. The reason for this is that the kingdom of God re-defines the concept of power. Kingdom power differs materially from the usual concept of power (Christian 1999: 11).

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[186] The Belhar Confession was adopted in 1986 as a reaction to the social injustice of the apartheid regime. The authors' argument is that it is just as relevant as ever in the church's current fight against poverty.

[187] In the particular context in which they are writing, it is the Uniting Reformed Church of Southern Africa (URCSA) to which they refer, based on the historical context of having engaged in resistance against the injustices of apartheid, with their post-apartheid role identified as fostering support for reconstruction. Their nature of involvement has, however, been charity based. The authors therefore now challenge URCSA to move beyond charity projects in the form of hand outs, and their reliance on the denomination's institutional charity organisation, in advancing towards a theologically based approach to development.

[188] In support of his argument, he refers to Biko as one of the "most prominent carriers of the vision of dignity", quoting with approval from Biko's articulation of the challenge of human dignity in the context of South Africa under apartheid as follows: "We must seek to restore to the black man the great importance we used to give to human relations, the high regard for people and their property and for life in general…" (Koopman 2008: 37).

Following thereon, Christian proposes that the frame of reference of the definition of power be replaced by kingdom power in terms of which Jesus completely reversed power as understood by the world (Christian 1999: 197)[189]. Power exerted by the non-poor has been at the root of entrapment in the 'web of lies' by those in economic distress (Christian 1999:191).

Of great significance to the restoration of human dignity in the vulnerable and marginalised, is that an understanding of power in the kingdom of God challenges distortions in identity and instead proclaims truth about self. Kingdom power has the capacity to set the captives free from the 'web of lies' by reversing the 'marred identity' of the impoverished (Christian 1999:191). Because Christ heals, people trapped in poverty can recover their humanity and see themselves as God does (Verster 2012: 112). Consequently, the proclamation of the kingdom of God is advocated by Christian (1999: 214) as being the most effective response to powerlessness caused by 'god-complexes'.

As regards the reversal of power, Bowers du Toit (2016: 5) states that it is God's favouritism of the powerless which reverses the balance of power so that the impoverished do not become powerful, but instead become empowered. They move from the margins of society to a centralised position as a proper understanding of God's world is revealed. De Gruchy (1979: 224), too, alludes to God's favouritism of those in economic distress as follows: "In serving the interests of the kingdom through a ministry of suffering love, the church is called to identify with the powerless. The NT shows how much the kingdom of God is 'biased' in favour of the poor, the oppressed, the downtrodden, the weak, the casualties of society," with the centrality of Jesus' teaching concerning the powerless. In the kingdom, the non-poor do not exploit the vulnerable or seek power over them, resulting in power being reversed (Christian 1999: 190).

What becomes evident in the process of this reversal of power, is that kingdom power breaks the 'web of lies' and establishes liberty so that the dignity of the vulnerable of society is affirmed. This is able to occur because kingdom power is based on a true

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[189] Chambers (1997: 234) tacitly supports Christian's proposal when he insists that the "uppers" (those who are superior or dominant in a particular context) give up their power and control and allow the "lowers" ("the poor, physically weak, isolated, vulnerable, and powerless") to be empowered. Using the very words of Jesus, in a development study which does not profess a Christian foundation, Chambers (1997: 211) calls for the first to be last and the last to be first (Matt. 20: 16; Lk 13: 30).

understanding of identity, instead of an understanding formulated by captivity in a 'web of lies' (Christian 1999: 191). Kingdom power challenges the distortion of truth so that a restoration of dignity implies an affirmation of the foundational truth that those experiencing poverty have value by virtue of having been made in the image of God (Christian 1999: 192, 194). As such, Christian (1999: 197) states: "Kingdom power instead clarifies the identity of the powerless by affirming their humanity and the image of God in them. This affirmation about the identity of the poor attacks the root of bondage to the identity assigned them by structures, systems and the non-poor".

The 'marring of identity' of those experiencing material deprivation also has a bearing on their vocation. They have been taught to believe that they have no creative and productive purpose and are worthless (Myers 2011: 172)[190]. In relation to the prevailing sense of worthlessness due to powerlessness caused by 'god-complexes', Christian notes a clear link between healing of identity and hope, making transformation possible (1999: 196). Samuel (2001: 239), likewise, explains that the Gospel brings self-worth to those in states of vulnerability as their human dignity is restored. Christian (1999: 194) approves of Anderson's (1982: 165) means of understanding this process of restoration of human dignity to those immersed in poverty. He refers to the biblical understanding of humanity as a reality in the kingdom of God because humans are created in the image of God. The impoverished "can become human because [they] …are in fact divinely determined to be human and are human".

3.6.7 Towards a cohesive theological framework for development

The aim of theologians, in seeking a theological framework for development, has been to discern where the remedial needs of social injustice and inequality inter-connect with a faithful reflection of biblical themes. This process required theologians to "wrestle with the scriptures in searching for the biblical path of obedience" in holistic Christian mission (Samuel & Sugden 1999: xi). Myers (2011: 47) points out that development, from a Christian perspective, is grounded in one's theology of what constitutes well-being and a better future, so development is a theological act as much as it is a problem-solving act.

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[190] Myers (2019: 23-24) illustrates how human dignity in those experiencing material deprivation is restored in practice where impoverished people been affirmed into recognising that their true identity is more than "hopeless, helpless and invisible".

It was discussed in the above section how any theological perspective on development has its roots in liberation theology as it upholds God's concern for social justice as an unambiguous biblical mandate. Liberation theology introduces a liberation hermeneutic for development and insists on progression from biblical reading and interpretation to *praxis* (Plant & Weiss 2015: 61).

Thereafter, the lengthy discourse raised in part by liberation theology, relating to social justice and evangelism as priorities in church mission, was explored. It was revealed how the debate over many decades caused conflicting views and had a dilatory effect on Christian involvement in global social justice discourse. At length, however, the evangelical sphere settled the disputed emphasis on social justice, compared with evangelism, at the Wheaton Conference. The publishing of the Wheaton Statement provided near universal acceptance of the notion of development as 'transformation' as best reflecting a biblical image of development.

Nevertheless, it was recognised that any theological framework on development would be required to address power inequality which protected the privileged position of the non-poor, who continued to disempower the materially deprived through 'god-complexes', precluding social change in their lives and their communities. In the kingdom of God, power is based on the person of Jesus Christ, and knowledge of the truth represented by Jesus has the ability to set those in states of vulnerability free from the 'web of lies' (Jn 8:32). For this reason, Christian (1999: 214) contends thus: "Mission among the poor should involve proclaiming the kingdom of God in all its glory and establishing it". Finally, therefore, it was argued that a kingdom of God theology connected to the biblical image of transformation addressed the debilitating influence of powerlessness, fostering empowerment, restoring human dignity and encouraging social change.

3.7 Chapter conclusion

Through an exposition of the history of development's endeavours to address poverty, it was revealed in this chapter how spirituality was consistently rejected as a potential influence on human dignity and human flourishing. This was largely attributable to secularism and its close ties to the ideology of modernity on which development was based. Flaws in the theoretical foundation for development became apparent, however, when it transpired that a purely economic view of development, based on increasing a nation's technology and productivity, was deficient in its alleviation of

poverty. Assessing a person's worth by means of productivity devalued that person's perceived value and falsified his or her true identity. Pure economic development ignored other forms of development, which were necessary for well-being and human dignity, including spiritual, cultural and relational (Sine 1987: 7).

As the failings of modernisation became more apparent, different perspectives on poverty began to recognise cultural facets of a society and at this time spirituality was considered. When religion was considered afresh by development practitioners, it was observed that erroneous assumptions had been made about religion in development (Ver Beek 2000). Lunn (2009), for instance, believes that religion has been mis-conceptualised as a societal institution rather than as a multi-faceted phenomenon. It is not only institutional but encompasses practices, spirituality and personal faith. When viewed in this expanded manner, religion can be a beneficial development tool which contributes to social development or "emancipation and human flourishing" (Lunn 2009: 948). Lunn accordingly calls for religion, spirituality and faith to be taken seriously in development engagement and her views reflect the present trend. In recent times, it has become evident that spirituality provides a meaningful dimension to development and it has becoming a contributing factor in generating social change (Deneulin & Rakodi 2011; Buijs 2008).

Once spirituality became accepted as a potential source of well-being in development, a theology of development needed to evolve. This became possible once the debate about the prominence accorded to social justice compared with evangelism became settled following the Wheaton Conference. Thereafter, as discussed in this chapter, the concept of 'transformation' became the widely accepted theological image of development (Myers 2011), in terms of which the intention is to restore peace and justice, as expressed as the OT term '*shalom*'. When a kingdom of God theology is emphasised, this theological perspective has the capacity to address the de-humanising effect of power since unjust relationships and structures are transformed into just ones[191].

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[191] For instance, Cray (1999: 29) stresses that the kingdom of God has an ethical dimension reflecting values so that it requires faith and also repentance which means that the transformation of inequality to equality is more than superficial and has the potential for meaningfulness. In addition, Bragg (1987: 42) notes that all relationships based on unjust principles, such as institutionalised racism, exploitation of labour, domination by one society of another, subordination of women and unfair trade rules, are in need of transformation.

It has been argued that meaningful transformation can only take place when a person's dignity is affirmed so that self-worth is appreciated. However, as Bragg (1987: 42) observes, "It is a very difficult thing to give or receive dignity". Indeed, it is arguable that it is only an understanding by a person of the *imago Dei* and true identity that can affirm human dignity. Samuel and Sugden (1999: 193) specifically make mention of human dignity and vocation as an indicator of God at work effecting transformation as follows: "Where we see human dignity being affirmed and people discovering a sense of self-worth, self-acceptance and a sense of having something to contribute to the world and others there God is at work". Clearly human dignity is an important theme in discerning where the kingdom of God is manifest reflecting *shalom* and ushering in social justice.

Accordingly, any contextual enquiry into whether meaningful social transformation is occurring must of necessity question the affirmation of human dignity in that scenario. This gives rise to the defining value attached to human dignity in this study indicating whether meaningful social transformation is taking place. The unique contribution which a Christian perspective on development can make is to seek transformation of individuals and communities in a hostile and distressed world. This can occur through restoration of peaceful and harmonious relationships with God, others, our environment and ourselves through an understanding of our human dignity. Transformation results in the well-being of all, impoverished and non-poor alike. Myers (2011: 295) makes the salient point that "the key element of transformative reflection" is to assess the relationships of an individual or community and the extent to which they are changing. What is the view of the people of who they really are and what they believe their purpose is?

Since the normative task of Practical Theology has been undertaken, with discourse on spirituality and transformation having been analysed in this chapter, and human dignity in the previous chapter, it remains to conduct empirical research into the theological perspective on development. In this respect, the methodological approach of the case study is elaborated on in the next chapter, together with positioning the study within paradigmatic and conceptual frameworks.

CHAPTER 4.

POSITIONING OF STUDY WITHIN PARADIGMATIC, CONCEPTUAL AND METHODOLOGICAL INFLUENCES

4.1 Introduction

In order to clarify this study's epistemological foundation, and to limit the scope of the research, it is necessary to position the research within paradigmatic, theoretical and methodological influences and to highlight their contribution to the study. Figure 2 summarises the positioning of the study.
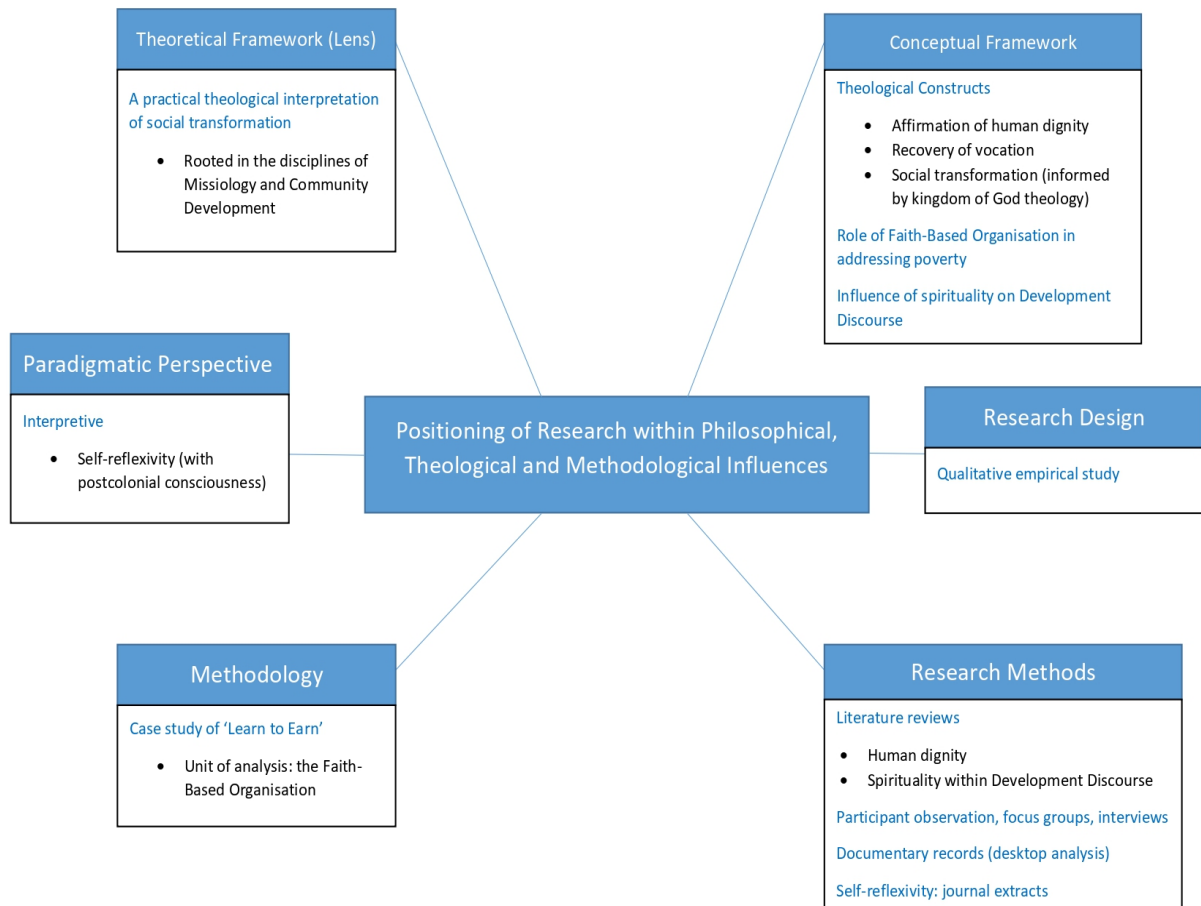
Figure 2. Positioning of study within paradigmatic, theoretical and methodological influences

In Section 1.8 the study's theoretical framework was discussed, in which it was positioned within the discipline of Theology and Development, as influenced by Missiology. It is therefore required that this chapter elaborate on the paradigmatic perspective, as well as to present the conceptual framework and thereafter to discuss the study's research design, methodology and research methods. In the course of the

discussion, justification is provided for preferring the selected approach over other apparently appropriate ones. The chapter commences with the study's interpretive paradigmatic perspective being presented, together with the rationale for interpretivism, as enhanced by self-reflexivity. Self-reflexivity includes postcolonial consciousness (background to which was provided in Section 1.7).

Thereafter, the research design, which is classified as an empirical, qualitative study, is discussed, and justification is provided concerning the decisions reached on the research design[192]. Following the research design, I argue in favour of a case study's suitability as the methodology in the present instance, owing to its capacity to transfer a theoretical enquiry into a concrete outworking of theory, and because the intention was to understand a real-life phenomenon in-depth in a specific context (Yin 2009: 18). Details are provided of the sampling selection and process, and the research methods are discussed next, with emphasis on the fact that a diverse selection of research methods had been chosen in line with the intention to render a 'thick' description of the subject matter of the study (Henning 2004: 37).

Management of data integrity is affirmed in this chapter, whereafter limitations to the study are discussed, with particular emphasis on the significance of the restrictions related to the COVID-19 pandemic. Having dealt with the data collection and management, a description is provided of the data analysed, and the process of data analysis is elaborated on. It is affirmed that the study was conducted in an ethically responsible manner and, finally, the validity or trustworthiness of the study is argued, based on criteria emanating from different scholars.

4.2 Justification of interpretive paradigmatic perspective

All scientific research is conducted within a specific paradigm, which de Vos (2002: 44-45) describes as a way of viewing one's research material and which must be made explicit to one's reader to maintain clear channels of communication[193]. Fouché and Delport (2002: 266) expand on this meaning of research 'paradigm' as a worldview

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[192] In selecting a qualitative design, I provide reasons why both quantitative and mixed methods (Creswell 2009: 203) were deemed unsuitable.

[193] A paradigm is not static but is a "fluid scholarly construct" (Held 2019: 7). Typically the question is asked what paradigm is the dominant one in a given discipline at a specific time (de Vos 2002: 44). Thomas Kuhn (1962) first spoke of paradigms as a way of viewing and making sense of the world, shared by scholars and research communities. It was intended to signify worldviews, values and approaches which are shared across a discipline.

with underlying assumptions about the nature of knowledge, reality, values and the relationship of the researcher to the subject being researched. Bazely (2013: 19) endorses the view of Fouché and Delport by proposing that the word 'paradigm' is commonly used in a metaphysical sense to connote a worldview and that the word provides a basis for how we understand reality[194]. The present study's interpretive paradigmatic perspective views the goal of human sciences to be interpretive understanding ('*Verstehen*') of the meanings which people ascribe to their reality and appreciation of society (Babbie & Mouton 2001: 33). With an interpretivist approach, the aim is to capture the lives of participants and to interpret the meaning thereof, whilst acknowledging the role of the researcher as co-creator of meaning (Henning 2004: 19). This is the intention of the present study, where an exploration of feelings, values, beliefs and intentions of the participants in the study, from the FBO, LTE, were to be explored, in order to interpret issues concerning their human dignity in relation to social transformation. As will be evident below, my role as researcher in interpreting meaning to the circumstances, mentioned by Henning, is brought to the fore in that self-reflexivity is implemented as a facet of interpretation.

A positivist perspective, as a metatheoretical tradition, which frequently uses deductive reasoning to postulate theories, laws of cause and effect and detection by means of scientific research, has limitations, notes Henning (2004: 20) [195]. It was recognised that the positivist metatheory would not produce the intended type of knowledge where feelings, beliefs and thoughts influence the outcome of the study, as was foreseen in the present situation[196]. Research using critical theory aims at promoting critical consciousness of unequal power relationships and attempting to shift power (Henning

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[194] Theoretical or ideological perspectives are paradigms which alert one to the implicit or explicit biases which govern the study. A paradigm therefore implies a philosophical basis for assumptions regarding what constitutes knowledge and how reality is perceived (Bazely 2013: 19).

[195] This is because no one scientist can infallibly capture the world and state unequivocally that that observation of reality is without error (Henning 2004: 20).

[196] Specifically, a positivist perspective would have only yielded superficial understanding of issues relating to the de-humanising effect of power, concerns surrounding human dignity and the influence of spirituality in addressing poverty, since all of these entail description of emotions, beliefs and attitudes. Moreover, as regards Development Studies, which features prominently here concerning social transformation, Tomalin (2013: 41) warns that a positivist approach, as dominated by economists, considers there to be definitive solutions, whereas an interpretivist approach recognises that how development is understood is contextual and varied.

2004: 23)[197]. The present study does not intend to embark on a dialectical process of deconstructing and re-constructing oppressive institutions of power through critique as the means of developing knowledge, as suggested here by Henning as the aim of critical theory (2004: 23). It is nevertheless acknowledged that Practical Theology has a critical element to it (Swinton & Mowat 2006: 11). As with positivist metatheory, a critical paradigm was likewise deemed not the most appropriate for the study; hence an interpretive paradigmatic perspective is justified.

4.3 Interpretive paradigm enhanced by self-reflexivity

4.3.1 Value of self-awareness of researcher

Self-reflexivity compels us to address not only our research problem and those with whom we engage in the process of our study, but also with our selves and the ways in which our research is shaped by our own lives. According to Bennett *et al.* (2018: 35), reflexivity relates to looking thoughtfully and critically at oneself and how one's view of the world affects one's way of presenting it. Grbich (2013: 113) insists that the researcher provides a critique of him- or herself in the research process regarding "history, power, culture, class, experiences and level of empathy" as well as "past influences, beliefs, values and experiences as well as their responses in all situations". It is through these frames that impressions of the actions and behaviour of others are filtered by the researcher[198]. Qualitative research is therefore a form of discovery of the subject of the research and also discovery of the self (Lincoln & Guba 2000: 184).

As an interpretive researcher, I understand that research is shaped by my personal context, including class, gender and race (Denzin & Lincoln 2000: 6) There is no neutral social position we can occupy by virtue of participating in the social world. Instead we should acknowledge our participation and direct it toward shaping the process and product of the research. There are various techniques available to the researcher to position him- or herself within the study. The techniques I have selected, drawing on Grbich's positioning suggestions, are to highlight my background and

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[197] Having its roots in Karl Marx's philosophy with his criticism of capitalist society, the critical perspective insists on social and political liberation (Babbie & Mouton 2001: 44). The distinguishing feature of the critical metatheory therefore is the emphasis on the place of science as an emancipatory and transformative tool (Babbie & Mouton 2001: 34).

[198] Fine, Weis, Weseen & Wong (2000: 108-9) point out that there has long been a tendency to view the 'self' in the researcher as something which contaminates the research and which ought to be minimalised and discarded. However, they not only call for the subjective experience of the researcher to be included, but also challenge the privileged researcher studying the experiences of the marginalised to recognise the responsibility which he or she has in giving voice to the participants instead of contributing to their silencing.

biases which have influenced the study, to ensure that the voices of the participants are given dominance and to use the pronoun 'I' when being explicit about speaking in my own right (Grbich 2013: 114). The pronoun 'I' was indeed used extensively and deliberately to emphasise my role in the research, in recognition that the data is not collected but "*made* collaboratively between the researcher and the researched" (Richards 2015: 52) (author's emphasis). From a practical theological perspective, I also present my own stance on the issues in dialogue within the research undertaken as part of the descriptive empirical task (Osmer 2008: 58). In this way I have not only described what I have observed and what has been told to me but I have also become an outsider to myself, as Osmer (2008: 59) indicates, standing back and developing awareness of my own stance.

4.3.2 Self-reflexivity shaped by postcolonial indigenous consciousness

Self-reflexivity in this study is influenced by postcolonial indigenous awareness, as advocated by Chilisa (2012: 13). It must be stressed that a postcolonial methodology[199] was not intended to be applied in the study, as the study does not employ indigenous methodologies nor the kind of collaboration required. Nevertheless, in recognition of South Africa's history of colonisation and apartheid oppression, a postcolonial indigenous awareness in engaging in self-reflexivity, was deemed essential for this study, especially for a white researcher engaging with research that deals with poverty and therefore the intersection of race, poverty and inequality. Section 1.7 dealt with the affirmative response as to whether researchers who are not amongst the formerly oppressed can adopt a postcolonial consciousness in a research context.

If anything, the academy cannot be transformed unless all researchers, no matter whether historically marginalised or not, are persuaded of the pressing need to decolonise research. However, in engaging in self-reflexivity on this issue, it must be

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[199] Chilisa (2012: 13) argues that indigenous knowledge systems, promoted by formerly oppressed people, are "shaped by the struggle to resist and survive the assault on their culture". Instead of Western practices and interests occupying centre stage, positivist researchers "must relinquish their monopoly on the academy" and indigenous methodologies are one way of introducing marginalised voices to enable transformation of the academy (Chalmers 2012: 103). In order to fulfil this aspiration, Held (2019: 2) is of the view that a new multi-paradigmatic space is called for whereby both Western and indigenous scholars collaborate on full decolonisation of research. This multi-paradigmatic space, which is to aspired to, will allow for fluid means of social enquiry so that neither Western nor indigenous paradigms are forced to 'shoehorn' into each other where there is not a natural fit.

highlighted (as it was in Section 1.7) that, as a researcher who was not amongst historically disadvantaged people, my efforts will be flawed as there will unavoidably exist 'blind spots' which would have been operative during the course of the research. Nevertheless I am guided by scholars such as Mnguni (2020: 28), who would indeed insist on all researchers adopting postcolonial awareness, stating that "#BLM, even in research", and calling for researchers to "take a knee" (2021: 28)[200]. The more studies incorporate elements of efforts to focus on social justice and decolonisation, the more normalised it will become in research (Tajima 2021: 4955).

4.4 Conceptual framework

In response to his own cautioning comments about the differing meanings of a conceptual framework, de Vos (2002: 36) ventures to offer an explanation of a conceptual framework as a set of ideas about the nature of phenomena to be investigated and which provides the theory. Whether this set of ideas amounts to "vague hunches" or "clearly formulated propositions", they nevertheless determine the questions to be answered by the research. In the present study, the conceptual framework has been viewed as a set of ideas about the nature of the phenomenon to be investigated (de Vos 2002: 36). It has further been viewed as necessary in providing a "boundary" and a "focus" for the analysis, giving the researcher control and a sense of direction (Bazely 2013: 35).

4.4.1 Five concepts relied on in study

In the present study, the phenomenon which is being investigated, through Practical Theology, is poverty alleviation. The concepts through which the practical theological interpretation is conducted are the following, and they constitute the conceptual framework:

- Theological constructs:
    - Affirmation of human dignity
    - Recovery of vocation
    - Social transformation

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[200] In an article entitled 'Why are people taking the knee? The history behind the powerful symbolic gesture', Mallinson (2020: 1) explains how 'taking the knee' became a peaceful protest symbol adopted by demonstrators protesting in the name of the movement #BLM (Black Lives Matter), following the death in 2020 of American George Floyd, a black man, at the hands of white policemen. The gesture, adopted also by sports teams globally, conveys anger at racial violence and injustice.

- Role of the FBO in addressing poverty

- Influence of spirituality on development discourse.

In the present study, therefore, what will be explored is the extent to which the affirmation of human dignity through a recovery of vocation results in meaningful social transformation taking place. The three abovementioned concepts are used in their sense of being theological constructs[201]. Social transformation is understood to bear the meaning ascribed to it under the discussion in Section 1.5.5, and is specifically informed by kingdom of God theology, as discussed in Chapter 3. The examination of these concepts will take place within an FBO where the practice of spirituality, a relatively new feature of the development discourse, as discussed in chapter 3, is undertaken. These two latter ideas therefore make up the remaining concepts of the study, in addition to the three theological constructs.

4.4.2 Concepts as indicators and dimensions of concepts

The result of the conceptualisation process in a study is the specification of 'indicators' which show the presence of the phenomenon being studied (Babbie & Mouton 2001: 112). In the present study, indicators have been identified in the theological constructs. The intention would be to observe the extent of the presence of the indicators, namely human dignity affirmation, vocation recovery and social transformation, within the experience of the participants of the FBO. A "specifiable aspect or facet of a concept" is a dimension of a concept, according to Babbie and Mouton (2001: 112), who put forward the example of the fact that a person puts baby birds back into nests may be a dimension of the indicator of compassion. The dimensions of the indicators affirmation of human dignity, recovery of vocation and social transformation, govern the scope of poverty alleviation which is being studied, a phenomenon so vast that it requires delineation. These three theological constructs, together with the role of the FBO and the influence of spirituality in the development discourse, limit the parameters of the study and form the conceptual framework, thus providing focus and a sense of direction to the research. Moreover, the research question and objectives are derived from the conceptual framework, as questions naturally become formulated from what needs to be understood and studied and how

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[201] A construct differs from a concept in that the former has the added meaning of having been consciously adopted for a special scientific purpose or a theoretical framework (de Vos *et al.* 2005: 30).

things relate to each other, which provides clarity to the study (Bazely 2013: 46). It should be noted, however, that this is not an evaluative study in terms of how the field of development understands these within a framework of Monitoring and Evaluation ("M&E")[202]. Dimensions to the indicators are derived from the literature reviews, discussed in Chapters 2 and 3, and are highlighted as follows:

4.4.2.1 Human dignity affirmation indicator

The de-humanising effect of powerlessness is treated as a dimension of the need for the affirmation of human dignity (Christian 1999). The 'web of lies' and 'marred identities' are also dimensions in exploring the affirmation of human dignity (Christian 1999). These indicators are discussed in Section 5.3. Finally, inherent human dignity, by virtue of the *imago Dei* (Cochrane *et al.* 1991: 23), is a dimension, and is discussed in Sections 6.3.1, 6.3.2, 6.3.3 and 6.3.4.

4.4.2.2 Recovery of vocation indicator

An appreciation of one's identity in Christ is a dimension of the recovery of vocation (Christian 1999), as discussed in Section 6.2.1 and 6.2.2. In addition, a manifestation of hope is present as a dimension of the recovery of vocation, according to Migliore (2014: 257), as discussed in Section 6.4.1. Furthermore, the imaging of God in relationships is apparent as a dimension of vocation (Moltmann 1984: 23), as discussed in Section 6.4.3.

4.4.2.3 Social transformation indicator

Healing of 'marred identities' with the emergence of self-worth (Christian 1999) is a dimension of social transformation, signalling the presence of meaningful social transformation, as discussed in Section 6.3.3. Likewise, addressing 'god-complexes' of the non-poor is another dimension (Christian 1999), as alluded to in Section 6.2.3 and argued in Section 6.4.4. Overcoming powerlessness through the initiation of creative and productive purpose (Myers 2011: 178) is also a dimension of social transformation, as discussed in Section 6.2. Restored relationships with God and with others, as well as living in justice, peace and freedom ('*shalom'*) (Myers 2011), are dimensions of social transformation, as discussed in Section 6.4.

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[202] By regularly monitoring and evaluating public programmes, governments can assess how well they are serving their citizens. In this way, they can attain better development results. The M&E process of evaluation is strongly supported by the World Bank (worldbank.org 2021).

4.5 Research design

'Research design' is used in the sense of that which gives the inquiry its character and tone, according to Henning (2004: 39), and having the purpose of maintaining a high level of credibility, which is concerned with whether the researcher, through the selected methods of data collection and analysis, is able to answer the research question convincingly (Bless *et al.* 2013: 131)[203]. I have classified the research design as an empirical, qualitative study[204]. An empirical study addresses a real-life problem, which, in order to answer, requires collection of data, reports Mouton (2001: 53)[205]. The issue of poverty upliftment in South Africa, which the study endeavours to address, would be an example of Mouton's real-life problem. The use of empirical studies in practical theological research is standard practice both internationally and in South Africa, remarks Dreyer (2014: 512), hence its appropriateness for the present study.

With an interpretive paradigmatic perspective, one would expect a discursive, qualitative approach (Henning 2004: 16), which lends justification for the study's research design being qualitative[206]. Qualitative research enables the researcher to explore the social world to understand the ways of the individuals and communities

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[203] Fouché (2002: 271), however, observes that classification and definitions of 'research design' are ambiguous, remarking that some researchers use 'design' to encompass all those decisions which a researcher needs to make in planning the study, whilst others use the concept to refer to a group of worked-out formulas from which researchers can select. Here Fouché (2002: 272) classifies qualitative research designs into biography, phenomenology, grounded theory, ethnography and case study, following Creswell's (1998) identification. Fouché's observations are indeed borne out by a range of research scholars. For instance, Bless *et al.* (2013: 131) classify 'research design' as that which relates directly to the answering of the research question and the operations which need to be conducted. They view the research design as much more flexible in qualitative studies than in quantitative ones, to the extent that the research design must remain dynamic through the study. Yin (2009: 26), on the other hand, denotes a research design as the "logical sequence" connecting the study's research question to its conclusions by way of empirical data. Yin (2009: 26) elucidates further that the purpose of a research design is to prevent the evidence from failing to address the initial research questions. This is impliedly a more rigid undertaking, in contrast to the flexible approach to research design of Bless *et al*. (2013). Since Fouché alludes to the unnecessary confusion caused by the existence of different terms, it is necessary to select certain terminology and to use it consistently. For this reason, he chooses to avoid 'research design' and instead refers to 'strategies', for example "the qualitative research strategy" (Fouché 2002: 271).

[204] For the sake of clarity, since the term 'research design' is used so loosely, I have broadly selected Mouton's (2001) classification of research designs where the first dimension is empirical or non-empirical, and I have next referred to Fouché (2002: 272), who makes a distinction between quantitative and qualitative.

[205] According to the empirical approach, facts observed are the foundation of knowledge so that only what is observable and can be perceived by our senses constitutes knowledge (Bless *et al*. 2013: 3).

[206] The intention was to elicit meaning and perceptions from the participants, one of the widely accepted tasks of qualitative research (Fouché & Delport 2002: 79).

which inhabit it, according to Swinton and Mowat (2006: 29)[207]. From the outset, the aim of the present project was to conduct the research in the natural setting of LTE, in order to understand the feelings, behaviour and practices of the students, through the eyes of the actors themselves (Babbie & Mouton 2001: 270). Simply put, "[q]ualitative data allows us to know that person's story", suggests Cassim (2017: 28). A further reason why a qualitative approach was selected over a quantitative approach was the intention of the data collection being to acquire in-depth ('thick') descriptions and understandings of actions and events, which is a primary aim of qualitative research, according to Babbie and Mouton (2001: 270). The goals and intended outcome of the study depended on hearing accounts of participants' experiences of the de-humanising effects of powerlessness and the extent to which human dignity may have been affirmed with social transformation occurring. These outcomes could not be effectively achieved by means of quantitative study's tools, such as surveys and questionnaires[208].

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[207] Babbie and Mouton (2001: 53) refer to a qualitative research design as one where the approach is for the researcher to take the insider perspective. Social and human action is studied from an "emic" or insider's frame of reference and it is context specific, comment Babbie and Mouton (2001: 53).

[208] A quantitative study, based on data which can be expressed in numerical form (Cassim 2017: 27), was not seriously contemplated, due to some kinds of information not being able to be adequately recorded using quantitative data, such as where human behaviour is being reported on, as in the present project. As compared with a quantitative study, a qualitative study also has the distinctive characteristic of having an inductive approach rather than commencing with a theory or hypothesis. An inductive approach facilitates 'thick' descriptions and understandings due to its open-endedness. In this instance, language is preferable to statistical methods (Bless *et al.* 2013: 48). It is clear that lived experience would not be effectively traced through survey questionnaires and a quantitative design (Henning 2004: 33). Moreover, qualitative design is optimal where a social issue is not conducive to simple quantification, such as where there exist nuances of attitudes or behaviour which elude numerical data collection. Where "orientations" are concerned with participants' attitudes and beliefs, as in this study, numerical quantification would be undertaken only with difficulty and thus remain qualitative in nature (Bless *et al.* 2013: 132). One of the main strengths of a qualitative design is the "comprehensiveness of perspective it gives researchers" (Babbie & Mouton 2001: 309). The present study would not be appropriate for statistical methods as the perspective would be vastly too narrow. Triangulation, or "mixed methods" (Creswell 2009: 203), as a combination of quantitative and qualitative approaches, which is portrayed favourably by Cassim (2017: 35), was considered as a means of increasing reliability. Triangulation refers to the use of multiple methods of data collection, alternatively to the combination of quantitative and qualitative approaches and de Vos (2002: 365) emphasises that a researcher ought to make it clear what is meant when using the term in a study. However, mixed methods was rejected based largely on de Vos' strong criticism (2002: 364) that combining the two approaches is "highly problematical". In support of his contention, he cites several authors who are overtly in favour of a combination but who merely "pay lip service" to the combination, unable to provide any practical guide as to how to combine these two. De Vos therefore finds little concrete evidence of successful combining of quantitative and qualitative studies. It is noted, for instance, how Bless *et al.* (2013: 58) mention mixed methods, yet the example they provide strikes one as being superficial and barely even an example of what one would consider to be a mixed method. Using both designs, de Vos warns, is time-consuming and beyond the budget and skills of most post-graduate researchers.

4.6 Methodology[209]

A case study of LTE was selected as the project's preferred methodology, a compelling reason being that case study can transform theory into practice (Schipani 2014: 99). According to Creswell (1998: 61) case study is regarded as an in-depth analysis of a single or multiple cases over a period of time[210]. In this study, the unit of analysis is the FBO and characteristics will be discerned from its individual members[211].

The rationale for selecting a case study as the study's methodology was that the aim was to understand a real-life phenomenon in- depth in a specific context[212]. The project pursued an understanding of how the affirmation of human dignity could cause

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[209] Swinton and Mowat (2006: 74) criticise the common usage of 'method' and 'methodology' as being interchangeable. 'Methodology' is distinctive from 'methods', as 'methodology' refers to "the coherent group of methods that complement one another and that have the 'goodness of fit' to deliver data and findings that will reflect the research question and suit the research purpose" (Henning 2004: 36). For Mouton (2001: 55), 'methodology' focuses on the process of research and the kind of procedures to be used. 'Methods', on the other hand, are specific techniques which are used for data collection and analysis (Swinton & Mowat 2006: 74). This is the sense in which 'methodology' is distinguished here from 'methods', whereby the 'methodology' is the procedure used in the process of research and 'methods' are the specific data collection techniques.

[210] Creswell uses the term "bounded system" whereby the case studied can be bounded by time, place, process, programme or indeed other factors. To justify using the case study method, a specific real-life case ought to be selected to represent an abstraction, such as a relationship, phenomenon or attitude (Yin 2009: 29-32). The exploration of the case takes place through detailed descriptions derived from numerous data collection methods (Fouché 2002: 275). Yin (2009: 18), like Fouché, advocates reliance on various data collection methods which "converge in a triangulating fashion". Following this recommendation, the study intended to use a wide assortment of data collection methods, which will be detailed below. Unfortunately, data collection methods were severely curtailed owing to COVID-19 restrictions, as will be explained further in Section 4.10.

[211] Of essential importance in a case study is defining what the case is, and so, the unit of analysis, which is the person or object from whom the research material is acquired, assumes great significance (Bless *et al.* 2013: 133). Selection of the appropriate unit of analysis becomes clear when the primary research questions are formulated (Yin 2009: 29-32). In the present instance, it was recognised that the research question could not be answered in a vacuum, or purely within the confines of theoretical sources of data. The knowledge sought was too vast and would become vague and ambiguous if the scope were not rigidly defined. In order to acquire rich data concerning the research question pertaining to human dignity and social transformation, it was apparent that a bounded system, such as an institution or organisation, would be essential to develop in-depth understanding. LTE is such a bounded system, in that it is an organisation operating in a defined area of development, which is skills training, and in a defined geographical area where the campuses are located. Since the case study is a bounded system, once LTE was selected as the case, the unit of analysis became important because the unit of analysis formulates the boundaries of the phenomenon being studied (Henning 2004: 32). The unit of analysis, which is examined in order to derive understandings of similar units, is frequently individuals but can also be organisations or institutions, as in the current study, according to Babbie and Mouton (2001: 87). Characteristics of those organisational or institutional groups can be constructed from their individual members. Yin (2009: 88) alerts the researcher to the commonly occurring confusion between the unit of data collection and the unit of analysis. The sources of data collection may be individual people whereas the unit of analysis may be a collective entity. In the present instance, the sources of data collection were the individuals who participated in LTE's skills development programmes but the unit of analysis remained the FBO.

[212] The case study is also a valuable method where the case is typical of a commonplace situation, institution or entity. Here, Yin (2009: 49) gives the example of a typical project among other projects or a representative urban neighbourhood where the information derived from one case can be considered to be informative of the average person or institution. In the case under present study, LTE could be said to be typical of an FBO involved in skills development training. According to Yin, the single-case study is eminently justifiable and valuable as a methodology under these conditions.

movement towards social transformation as a contributing means of addressing poverty in South Africa. For such a purpose of increasing understanding of a phenomenon in a defined context, Yin (2009: 18) declares case study a suitable and beneficial methodology. Since this is a study with a practical theological orientation, in selecting a methodology, it is necessary to consider whether it is an approach cohesive with Practical Theology. Schipani (2014: 91) confirms that a case study approach is indeed a valued way of doing Practical Theology as it is an effective means of learning from "a slice of reality and human experience"[213]. Furthermore, a case study is a reflection of Practical Theology in that it is empirical and evaluative in character and contextually situated.

A case study of a single organisation was selected deliberately as the intention was to acquire an in-depth understanding of LTE, rather than a more superficial understanding of a variety of FBOs. In other words, what was intended was the situation contemplated by Schipani (2014: 91) where the goal is to acquire deeper insight by scrutinising a particular case. The aim of the study was not merely to describe a case but to discern themes and relationships, which is indicative of in-depth exploration (Henning 2004: 32). The selection of a single FBO thus enabled me to place a complex picture of reality under scrutiny (Schipani 2014: 100). This is evident, not only in the extent of quotations apparent in the data analysis in Chapters 5 and 6, but also in the detailed document analysis undertaken, and the fact that data from interviews would be in-depth data (Greeff 2002: 305), as will be expanded on in Section 4.7 below.

There has been acknowledgement that case studies can provide valuable information (Babbie & Mouton 2001: 280)[214]. This is particularly so when multiple sources of data are used, to provide 'thick' descriptions (Babbie & Mouton 2001: 282), which was the

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[213] Schipani (2014: 91) states that case study in Practical Theology can serve a number of purposes such as study and analysis of faith experience, formation and transformation. In the present study, it is suggested that the case study would relate to formation and transformation. An ancient precursor to the case study, he indicates, is to be found in scripture with the use of story or parable for the purpose of teaching and reflection on faith matters. The account of the Jerusalem Council (Acts 15: 1-35) provides a richly textured illustration of Practical Theology being undertaken by the early church whereby a hermeneutical process of discernment and application can be observed and Luke's narrative is suggestive of the presentation of a scriptural case (Schipani 2014: 94-95).

[214] Weaknesses of case study methodology would be the lack of limits on data collection, which can then become an aimless and endless task for the researcher, as well as the potential for distortion of the material due to the researcher's perception or through biased opinions of those around whom the case is formed (Schipani 2014: 99). However, Yin (2009: 14) responds that this criticism can be addressed by the investigator being systematic in following procedures and adopting an enhanced awareness of the potential for bias.

intention in this study. Major sources of case study evidence, such as documentation, archival records and interviews, discussed by Yin (2009: 99-101), and approved of as being "highly complementary", were adopted. In this way academic rigour of case study methodology rigour was enhanced[215].

4.7 Sampling

Sampling is beneficial as a practical, cost-effective and time-efficient means of data collection[216]. The purpose of sampling is to transfer the data advanced by an element[217] onto the remainder of the population so that an inference can be drawn that the information would be representative of the population, according to Babbie and Mouton (2001: 175). However, as Bless *et al.* (2013: 162) note, in qualitative studies, the aim is not to project the results onto the population by generalising, but instead to seek some aspects of the new knowledge and understanding which can be projected onto other units of the population. This means that, in the present study, in circumstances where it would be impractical, time-consuming and costly to conduct interviews of all students who had registered for skills training courses at LTE, over the course of their thirty year existence, a sample of students would be selected[218].

In this study it was appropriate to use purposive sampling where the subset of the population would be current, as opposed to past, skills development students of LTE,

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[215] In the present study, the warnings relating to case studies, as alerted by the scholars mentioned, such as the potential for bias and the conducting of unscientific research, were heeded and potential disadvantages of the methodology addressed. Specifically, it will be demonstrated how the procedures for data collection and analysis were thorough and systematic. As a result, there can be no suggestion of 'rubber-stamping' preconceived opinions (Yin 2009: 72). Involvement of current participants is necessary for case study research to ensure that they are able to comment on current issues (Babbie & Mouton 2001: 288). In the present project, current LTE participants were requested to comment on current issues. The lack of limits on data collection, as a weakness of case study methodology, can be addressed by adherence to conceptualisation, whereby the researcher states the purpose of the study as well as the guiding principles (Babbie & Mouton 2001: 282). The present study uses a carefully constructed conceptual framework to guide the research and to impose boundaries on its scope.

[216] It can be defined as "a technical accounting device to rationalise the collection of information, to choose an appropriate way in which to restrict the set of objects, persons or events from which the actual information will be drawn" (Bless *et al.* 2013: 161).

[217] An element is the unit from which information is being sought in order to analyse as the basis of the study (Babbie & Mouton 2001: 173). Bless *et al.* (2013: 162) equate an element with the unit of analysis.

[218] Purposive sampling was initially conducted whereby the sample is selected on the basis of the researcher's own knowledge of the population and its elements in relation to the aims of the research (Babbie & Mouton 2001: 166). This type of sampling is based on the fact that the researcher will purposefully select elements which are the most rich in information. Participants will thus be selected based on certain criteria which the researcher deems essential (Bless *et al.* 2013: 177). Often a combination of sampling methods is selected to ensure a suitable fit with the research aims and the available resources (Bless *et al.* 2013: 164). This was the case in the present study where purposive sampling was conducted, as well as random sampling, with snowball sampling also having been considered becoming possibly necessary.

who participated in LTE's Christian activities. Thereafter, random sampling was conducted on individual LTE skills development students, where each participant has an equal probability of being selected (Creswell 2009: 148)[219]. Once purposive sampling was selected, the way in which respondents were selected was that, after viewing a video invitation which I had recorded, and which was posted on Facebook and shown in the classes, the respondents would have to indicate their willingness to be interviewed by including their names on a list. Thereafter, if they were selected, they would attend a virtual interview with me once a video conferencing call had been set up in the boardroom by the Information Technology staff member with whom I was in contact.

Twenty-three interviews were held with staff and students of LTE. Of the staff members, I selected two each from the Khayelitsha and Hermanus branches, who were the branch manager and the life skills and discipleship trainer, and from the Claremont branch, I selected the Events and Communications manager, as well as the director and founding member. In addition, two of the students at the Khayelitsha branch are now working as staff members. In selecting which students attended an interview, I tried to achieve some measure of diversity across genders, branches and courses. Nine of the students were female and eight were male, with the oldest being forty-seven and the youngest nineteen; twelve were based on the main campus in Khayelitsha, four were in Hermanus and one in Claremont. One was a Zimbabwean citizen and the others all South African. Five were doing the sewing course, three graphic design, two office skills and basic computer skills, two Bake for Profit, two

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[219] Other sampling methods were considered but not thought to be suitable. Although purposive sampling was used whereby current LTE students of skills training, who took part in Christian activities, were intentionally selected, systematic sampling could have been used with selection of individual participants as a list would have been available. In systematic sampling an interval such as the selection of every tenth element on the list is included in the sample (Babbie & Mouton 2001: 190). This sampling method was considered, despite being more usual in quantitative studies. However, systematic sampling would have placed an unnecessary burden on the Events and Communications manager of LTE who would have been responsible for contacting a significantly increased number of potential participants in order to provide me with a sufficiently long list for systematic sampling to be applicable. It was not deemed necessary to request her to do so, since Babbie and Mouton (2001: 190) state "In practice, systematic sampling is virtually identical to simple random sampling. If the list of elements is indeed randomized before sampling, one might argue that a systematic sample drawn from that list is in fact a simple random sample". They also make note of the fact that, empirically, the results are essentially identical. Problems in the ordering of elements in systematic sampling is also eliminated with random sampling. It was contemplated that snowball sampling, whereby a subject interviewed is requested to identify others who can be interviewed may be needed, and ethics approval was therefore requested for this type of sampling to be undertaken. It was thought that there may be difficulties encountered with making contact with previous, recently graduated LTE students whose contact details had changed. However, as will be mentioned in Section 4.10, dealing with limitations on interviews caused by COVID-19 restrictions, past students of LTE were not interviewed and so snowball sampling method was not used.

woodwork, one basic handyman, one hospitality and one barista. I intentionally chose four who were not in courses conventionally associated with their gender, so there was one woman on the woodwork course, one man on the sewing course and two men in the Bake for Profit course[220]. As regards the size of the sample, in qualitative studies a sample is considered adequate if it allows all facets of the researched phenomenon to be identified[221]. I am of the opinion that the size of the sample was suitable in acquiring comprehensive information from the participants who were interviewed.

4.8 Research methods

The research methods selected were diverse and included two literature reviews, one on human dignity and the other on spirituality within the development discourse, observational methods including interviews, participant observation and focus groups, as well as desktop analysis of documentary records and, finally, self-reflexivity based on journal extracts[222]. There were six hundred and three documents analysed, as well as social media posts in the form of Facebook and Instagram pages of LTE, as summarised in Table 2 below.

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[220] The sampling methods significantly reduced or even eliminated conscious or unconscious bias, which is an important benefit (Babbie & Mouton 2001: 169). The fact that I had not met the participants prior to selection meant that there was no opportunity to select interviewees who would appear overtly to be willing to assist. They were merely selected according to a list of their names with their branches and the courses they were doing. Cassim (2017: 74) gives the example of conducting her survey and unconsciously approaching people who appeared friendly, thereby introducing the element of bias.

[221] I continued holding interviews until I had canvassed all areas of the subject matter to be researched. When no new information was forthcoming by increasing the sample, data saturation was reached (Bless *et al.* 2013: 164; Auberbach & Silverstein 2003: 20). I am of the opinion that the sampling procedure was undertaken in such a way as to increase the rigour of the study.

[222] Research methods denote ways of carrying out the research project and encompass data collection means (Swinton & Mowat 2006: 74). In selecting these research methods, the recommendations of authors such as Babbie and Mouton (2001) and Henning (2004) were followed. According to them, the emphasis, in qualitative research, where the goal is understanding and interpreting, rather than explaining and predicting, is to adopt research methods which "stay close" to the research subject (Babbie & Mouton 2001: 53) and they recommend including observational methods, such as interviewing and participant observation, as well as documentary evidence. Henning (2004: 20) agrees that unstructured observation and open interviewing, with inquiry taking place in a natural setting, are part of an interpretivist paradigm. The research methods adopted in the present study were therefore considered apt for the study's research paradigm. Certain research methods were given consideration and then rejected. For instance, questionnaires, which are not necessarily restricted to quantitative studies, and are commonly used in qualitative studies, were eliminated as a data collection tool due to the low response, high number of incorrect self-administered forms and lack of access to the internet of the respondents as general barriers (Bless *et al.* 2013: 199). The respondents at LTE have varying levels of education and literacy with many not having finished Secondary School and so there could have been a significant number of incorrectly self-completed forms. Internet connectivity is an issue with the respondents, due to high costs of data and inadequate service provision in the areas in which they reside. This would impact materially on the response rate.

DOCUMENT NAME	DOCUMENT TYPE	DATE	HOW MANY
Interview transcript	LTE students and staff	Oct–Nov 20	23
Trainer evaluation	Purpose to evaluate the benefit of the course and the performance of the trainer.	2020	178
Student feedback	'Help us inspire others' forms completed by students for donors and social media.	2019- 2020	169
Student feedback	'Impact of Covid' forms for LTE management to respond appropriately to student needs.	Apr-Nov20	208
Annual reports	For Annual General Meetings containing details of activities and finances of LTE for all interested parties including donors.	2012-2018	5
Newsletters	LTE communications to donors	2016-2017	4
Student follow ups	LTE interviews with past students several months after completing their courses for LTE planning purposes.	2018	1
Graduate stories	LTE stories of past students for donors and social media.	2018-2020	11
Miscellaneous	LTE promotional material for students, including course flyers, provided to me by LTE.	2018-2020	4
Total			603
Social media	Facebook and Instagram posts	2019- 20	

Table 2. Documents used in data analysis

4.8.1 Literature reviews

Two expansive literature reviews were considered necessary[223]. The first literature review in Chapter 2 related to human dignity, which was necessitated due to the vague and ambiguous use of the notion and the extent of its meaning. The review sought to illuminate human dignity from a theological perspective and motivated why a theological perspective ought to be given consideration. The second literature review in Chapter 3 related to spirituality within the development discourse, where it was revealed how, despite spirituality's exclusion from the conversation surrounding development issues until recent times, spirituality had a role to play in contributing

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[223] Literature reviews are a way to "set the stage…as a useful backdrop for the problem or issue that has led to the need for the study", as Creswell (2009: 26) puts it vividly. The literature reviews, undertaken as a research method, were intended to position this study within related studies and to establish a benchmark for this study within a larger ongoing dialogue in the literature (Creswell 2009: 25), as well as to ascertain how "the accumulated scholarship" had theorised and conceptualised on issues (Mouton 2001: 87).

towards social transformation. A cohesive, theological argument for development was thereafter presented[224].

4.8.2 Interviews

Interviews were chosen as a data collection method due to their benefits of producing large quantities of data quickly and for the fact that the data would be in-depth data (Greeff 2002: 305). In addition, semi-structured interviews, as opposed to strictly formatted interviews[225], enabled me to capture the world of the participant in a way which was not constrained and the participant had freedom to be forthcoming with details of his or her experience pertinent to the study[226]. Participants are likely to provide a more meaningful contribution when permitted to describe their experience

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[224] According to Creswell's (2009: 32-33) recommendations, in conducting the literature reviews, priority was given to recent books and peer-reviewed journals as holding optimal authority. A substantial literature orientation allowed the salient features of the concept of human dignity, as well as the influence of spirituality on human dignity and flourishing, to be thoroughly explored and aired. It was intended that the literature reviews were "exhaustive in [their] coverage of the main aspects of the study (Mouton 2001: 90). For these reasons, the literature reviews were chosen as a beneficial research method.

[225] (Henning 2004: 52) compares semi-structured interviews with strictly formatted standardised interviews where the interviewer has to assume control of the interview and ensure that no leading questions are asked. In this latter instance, the interviewer adopts a controlling position which has implications on power dynamics and on elements of trust. Qualitative studies typically use unstructured or semi-structured interviews (Greeff 2002: 298). I gave consideration to unstructured interviews but felt that these 'conversations with a purpose' (Greeff 2002: 298) could lead to too much irrelevant data and that an interview with a more defined purpose and better delineation would be more effective. I therefore selected semi-structured interviews where I had drafted a set of questions to guide the interviews, but not be dictated by them, which would still allow scope for flexibility whilst obtaining a detailed picture of the participants' experiences (Greeff 2002: 302). The questions were arranged into a logical sequence and were not too numerous, whilst covering the topic thoroughly, and are included as Addendum B. The questions were not used as a questionnaire and translation was therefore not necessary.

[226] As far as the specifics of questions were concerned, I followed expert advice on asking brief and clear questions, omitting any jargon, using open-ended questions and posing more factual questions prior to questions about thoughts and feelings (Greeff 2002: 293). I aimed at permitting freedom in speaking whilst subtly keeping the interview on topic (Greeff 2002: 292-294). Recognising that the quality of the gathered data from interviews was strongly dependent on my skill, I made sure that my preparation was optimal (Bless *et al.* 2013: 197). I was aware that poor interviewing skills, unclear framing of questions and lack of understanding of the interviewees' frame of reference were all factors contributing to data which would be superficial and of little use (Greeff 2002: 292). In following Yin's (2009: 73) advice to the researcher to comment on distinctive skills acquired from previous field work done requiring good listening and other data collection skills, I mention having had extensive experience in consulting with witnesses and minuting statements in litigation matters, and I would hope that this expertise gained would be an asset to the interviewing process.

in their own words and from their own perspective, reports Henning (2004: 52)[227]. I reinforced how important each participant's contribution was to the study (Bless *et al.* 2013: 215), and to each participant said, with sincerity, "Thank you so much for taking part in my study. I am very grateful to you for sharing your story with me. I want you to know that it is a privilege for me to be able to hear about your life".

The limitations of interviews were also recognised in that the data can emerge in unmanageable quantities and that, unless the researcher is astute to pitfalls, the participant may not divulge pertinent information and may instead communicate what he or she believes the interviewer wishes to hear (Greeff 2002: 305), which necessitated maintaining careful control of the direction the interview took[228].

Prior to commencing with the interviews, I was intentional about maintaining a postcolonial consciousness in the process, which, according to Chilisa (2012: 220-222), is guided by a relational way of knowing, and the interview is marked by deep respect and humility amongst all those participating in the interview process[229]. As such, relationship-building was an intended feature of the interviewing process,

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[227] Interviewing techniques which I had studied and which I applied included allowing the participant to do most of the talking, based on the fact that an interview is not intended to be a dialogue, and giving limited verbal responses. No interpretations were offered of the participants' words (Bless *et al.* 2013: 215). I gave encouragement through nodding and smiling, as well as paraphrasing and reflecting back what the participant had told me, which also provided an opportunity to obtain greater clarity and elaboration. Interviews started off with a 'scene setting' introduction, in which the research topic and the function of the interview was clarified, the intention being to put the respondent at ease (Henning 2004: 75). Being a good interviewer required being more interested than interesting, according to Babbie and Mouton (2001: 289), who say that the interviewer must avoid the temptation of trying to create a good impression as a priority. For case studies, listening ought to take place through more than merely auditory means. The researcher needs to make astute observations, capturing the mood and the context in which the participant is perceiving the world (Yin 2009: 70). This I did in the field notes in journal entries.

[228] (Henning 2004: 78) provided practical tips on putting the respondent at ease. Some examples are that she recommends that the interviewer reduce 'theme or question threat' by emphasising that the speaker is not a 'target for information' but is simply someone who is retelling a story which relates to his or her life in an everyday setting. Another way of reducing pressure is to pay careful attention to tone and phrasing of questions where a gentle tone is advisable. I was cautious not to frame questions in a way which amounts to leading questions so that the participant felt compelled to respond in a certain way, which is a covert means of introducing bias (Babbie & Mouton 2001: 289).

[229] In concrete terms, my efforts at the promotion of a postcolonial approach, meant that, instead of creating the impression that Euro-Western information is expected to be forthcoming, allowed interviewees freedom to express themselves within knowledge systems shaped by their own experiences. In this way, I aspired to Chilisa's (2012: 163) guidance that the researched enter into a dialogue bringing with them knowledge which informs their frame of reference, which may include storytelling, songs and poems, talk circles, proverbs and metaphors. In line with an attitude of postcolonial awareness, the respondents were informed the following at the interview: "You may answer the next questions in any way that you feel best to get your message across. This can include: storytelling, poems, song, proverbs or sayings which have meaning to you, or by comparing something with something else" (IQ 45: 1). Since storytelling features prominently in the lives of colonised people and is used for the collection and dissemination of information (Chilisa 2012: 138), several of the respondents included stories in conveying their responses to my questions, and others included comparisons.

coupled with my taking care to show respect towards the participants. One way of demonstrating this respect was by expressing gratitude to them and by informing them of their value to the study, as appears from my interview concluding remarks, "That brings the interview to a close and I would like to thank you for your time and for giving careful thought to answering my questions. Your contribution is extremely valuable to me" (IQ 45: 3*)*.

It must be accepted, however, that although I strived to seek postcolonial awareness in the interviewing process, I would nevertheless have fallen short of my aim, owing to 'blind spots', which I am not able to recognise in some cases because of being an outsider to the lived experiences of those I have interviewed. In the present interviewing process, as the primary researcher, it has been essential that I remain at all times mindful of the potential perception of inequality in power relations. This calls for a constant awareness of clothing myself in humility (Col. 3: 12). The attitude is corroborated by the study's theological perspective of human dignity whereby all, irrespective of differing degrees of erudition, have value and worth by virtue of having been made in the image of God.

Henning's (2004: 76) recommendation was followed, whereby I transcribed the interviews myself, so that, working closely with the data assisted in identifying some of the indistinct speech and discerning the tone of the speaker[230]. At the same time, field notes incorporating both empirical observation and impressions, including emotions, preconceptions and prejudices, were written up (Greeff 2002: 304). Once the interviews were transcribed, the participants who had requested that they be permitted to check the typed interview, were emailed their transcript under cover of a message. The intention of the steps mentioned in this section was to increase reliability, which in turn impacts validity or trustworthiness of the research, to be discussed further in Section 4.14.

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[230] For this purpose, I used Otter.ai voice recognition software programme. I am doubtful that Otter.ai made the transcription more efficient as the programme did not recognise the different South African accents. This necessitated re-typing much of the transcript manually. However, the benefit of this exercise was that I became extremely familiar with the material which facilitated coding. Becoming fully immersed in the data ensured accuracy since the transcription was done immediately following each interview when recall would be clearest (Bless *et al.* 2013: 342).

4.8.3 Document study (desktop analysis) selected as beneficial research method

Documents not written with the intention of being used for research purposes, but instead written with a view to the continual functioning of the organisation, can be a worthwhile source of data collection (Strydom & Delport 2002: 322)[231]. The full extent and description of these documents is recorded above in Section 4.7, from which it is apparent that examples would include newsletters, course evaluation forms, and annual reports. With the COVID-19 related provisions, which restricted certain data collection methods, as will be discussed hereunder (Section 4.10), the profile of document study, previously considered to be a less prominent research method of the study, became significantly raised. Document study was an explicitly approved data collection method, which circumstances dictated needed to fill the gap left by the disallowance of certain data collection methods. As such, it was decided to include a greater volume of documents than considered necessary prior to the onset of the pandemic. Bulk of documents is frequently a disadvantage (Strydom & Delport 2002: 326)[232], but, despite LTE having thirty years' worth of documents, the decision was taken to analyse these voluminous papers, eventually amounting to in excess of six hundred documents, such decision being justified, owing to the effects of the COVID-19 restrictions on the other data collection methods.

4.8.4 Journalling and self-reflexivity

Journalling, as a research method, intentionally draws the researcher into the study, whereby the researcher's agency provides another layer of interpretation. Journalling thus plays an important role as a research method, in allowing reflection,

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[231] They would be classified as secondary sources as originally written material by an author other than the researcher (Strydom & Delport 2002: 322). Document study was chosen as a data collection method due to its advantages as a convenient, accessible and relatively inexpensive means of data collection providing a different form of information to others used. It has value by virtue of the fact of "non-reactivity" in that it is not produced with research in mind compared with interviews, focus groups and participant observation, where the sources of information are aware of the fact that they are being studied (Strydom & Delport 2002: 325).

[232] There can also be a danger of there being a time lag between the events and the capturing of the information, thereby affecting reliability, as well as questions raised of authenticity (Strydom & Delport 2002: 324). However, this weakness was addressed by examining the documents and evaluating them, whereupon they were found to be reliable, valid and authentic. Accordingly they were judged to be of benefit to the study. Rather than asking whether a document represents 'true' evidence, it is more beneficial to ask appropriate questions about its form and purpose for which it was produced (Coffey 2014: 377). In the present circumstances, many of the documents were produced for the purpose of the optimal running of the organisation, such as the course evaluation forms, and bias is therefore not an issue. Nevertheless, it must be acknowledged that several of the documents were compiled to satisfy existing LTE donors and to attract others. Many, such as the Facebook and Instagram posts, are therefore designed to be persuasive and emotive in form.

encompassed in the practice of reflexivity, a crucial feature of qualitative research, according to Richards (2015: 53). In order to create an opportunity to process data meaningfully, Bazely (2013: 102) advises a researcher to reflect observations and musings in a journal to avoid premature closure on data with which the researcher has saturated his or her thoughts[233]. Reflexivity, as a mode of knowing, recognises that it is impossible for the researcher to remain distant from the research and instead aims for the creative incorporation of the researcher's self-awareness into the study (Swinton & Mowat 2006: 59)[234].

4.9 Data management and storage

Steps were taken to ensure that the integrity of the data was maintained. The interviews were recorded using Otter.ai, an artificial intelligence voice recognition transcription computer programme, which is password protected. The transcripts were then exported and stored securely in OneDrive on Microsoft Teams, which is also password protected.

4.10 Limitations on research methods due to COVID-19

It must be recognised that the limitations placed on the relational aspects of data collection by the effects of the COVID-19 pandemic measures were not trivial. Stellenbosch University's Communiqué published on 1 October 2020 entitled 'Research Guidance in the time of level 1 and beyond of COVID-19 pandemic' ("the SU COVID-19 regulation"), included as Addendum C, restricted face-to-face data collection methods to "exceptional and well-justified circumstances", requiring application to, and approval by, the Ethics Committee. The SU COVID-19 regulation, moreover, required replacement of in-person data collection with "desktop research, literature reviews, secondary data analysis, online or virtual data collection activities, individual or group interviews conducted via online meetings or web conferencing tools, such as Zoom, Skype, Microsoft Teams, etc" (SU COVID-19 regulation: 2020).

As a result of the SU COVID-19 regulation, participant observation, which had been selected as a beneficial research method, according to Bless *et al.* (2013: 184), could

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[233] Creswell (2009: 182) also expresses support for journal- keeping, as does Chilisa (2012: 168). The role of the researcher is significant and, in this regard, the researcher's self-awareness is an important dimension, according to Swinton and Mowat (2006: 59), with the notion of reflexivity as a crucial tool enabling the researcher to "monitor and respond to her contribution to the proceedings".

[234] Keikelame and Swartz (2019: 6) draw the conclusion that self-reflexivity is essential in aspiring to transformative research, which the present study aspires to.

not be undertaken. Strydom (2002: 280) describes participant observation as "a qualitative research procedure that studies the natural and everyday set-up in a particular community or situation". I had planned to attend the LTE campuses at Khayelitsha and Hermanus and observe the students and staff as they went about the different types of skills training, life skills training and Christian activities. The participants would be in a familiar and non-threatening environment, and the participant observation would therefore be likely to yield valuable data for the study (Bless *et al.* 2013: 188)[235]. Unfortunately the convening of planned focus groups also could not proceed because of COVID-19 restrictions. Focus groups were planned for the immense value lying in their capacity to provide information which would not otherwise be forthcoming from individuals, owing to the group processing information in a way which results in the group creating meaning together (Babbie & Mouton 2001: 292)[236].

Interviews could not proceed in the manner as planned, since in- person research was prohibited, owing to the potential for infection of participants and researchers by COVID-19. Instead of holding face-to-face interviews, they took place online via web conferencing tools, such as Google Meet, which was a challenge[237]. Nevertheless, it ought to be emphasised that steps were taken to mitigate the adverse effects of the limitations caused by COVID-19. As mentioned in Section 4.8.3, I elected to embark on far more wide-spread document analysis than was previously intended, for the purpose of compensating for the potential effects on other research methods. Moreover, in order to circumvent data lost by inability to interview past students of

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[235] My reason for this planned participant observation was based on the recognition of its significant benefit of allowing the researcher to see first-hand how people act in a certain setting (Henning 2004: 81). Participant observation often makes the observer less obtrusive so the observer is less likely to influence the participants' behaviour which counters reactive effects where the participant acts in unnatural ways when aware of being observed, such as being overly eager to please or doing the opposite of what they know is required of them, the so-called 'Hawthorne effect' (Bless *et al.* 2013: 56).

[236] The main reason for selecting focus groups as a beneficial research method is described by Greeff (2002: 291) as "group dynamics [being] a catalytic factor in bringing information to the fore". That is to say, in focus groups, sometimes one person's ideas can set off a string of related thoughts from others in the group which are then thoroughly processed until greater understanding is reached (Bless *et al.* 2013: 200).

[237] The participants attended the interview virtually via a computer link set up by the Information Technology staff member of LTE in their premises' boardroom. The internet bandwidth was insufficient to support a stable video connection and so the sound and visuals frequently became distorted or disconnected completely during the meeting session. The result was that it was difficult to form a deep relationship with a respondent across a screen with a shaky internet connection. Interviews were limited to current students who were on campus. Communication difficulties due to lack of or inadequate internet facilities, lack of data and airtime, and social distancing regulations rendered it impossible to set up online interviews with LTE students who had previously graduated from the organisation.

LTE, I focused on this group in selecting a large number of graduate stories and student follow-ups, as well as Facebook and Instagram posts.

4.11 Process of data interpretation[238]

The data interpretation was undertaken by breaking the text into fragments which shared some common characteristic and which were relevant to the research question and research objectives as the prime focus of the study[239]. The process upheld a focus on the elements of the theological constructs which I had used in my conceptual framework, as discussed in Section 4.4[240]. Thus I gave attention to portions of the data which revealed the participants' state of poverty on the one hand and other portions of data which pointed to social transformation. The data descriptive of the participants' lives of poverty centred around details demonstrating entrapment in a 'web of lies' and corresponding de-humanising effects of powerlessness, and are discussed in Chapter 5. In the data suggesting social transformation, inferences of affirmation of human dignity through a recovery of vocation were investigated, and are discussed in Chapter 6.

The data was revisited frequently and preliminary ideas were revised as patterns emerged. This approach is particularly advisable when dealing with voluminous documents, including interview transcripts, which was the situation in the present instance, and it was essential to become well acquainted with the data (Roulston 2014: 305). As such, the coding[241] was a backwards and forwards process, "cyclical rather than linear" (Saldaña 2016: 68). I chose to use Atlas.ti as data analytical software for the data interpretation[242]. The benefits of using Atlas.ti, as opposed to paper, are

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[238] The data interpretation process is described in some detail since Saldaña (2016: 284) is in favour of theses and dissertations including detailed descriptions of the researcher's analytic processes.

[239] In this regard, I followed Auerbach and Silverstein's (2003: 22) recommendation, also endorsed by Saldaña (2006: 22), that the researcher keep a copy of the research concern, theoretical framework, central research question and other main issues on a piece of paper nearby, to aid in knowing what to code and what to omit.

[240] My authority for this methodological consideration was Saldaña (2016) who mentions basing a study on a conceptual framework for the study.

[241] Coding entailed labelling by attributing a phrase tag for identification (Grbich 2013: 261). Saldaña (2016: 4) offers the following vivid description of a code, which guided my coding: "A code in qualitative inquiry is most often a word or short phrase that symbolically assigns a summative, salient, essence-capturing, and/or evocative attribute for a portion of language-based or visual data".

[242] With the LTE sourced documents, as opposed to the interview transcripts, content analysis was included in the analysis approach. Content analysis is the systematic coding and categorising where large amounts of textual information exists (Grbich 2013: 190-191). This means that, instead of the entire bundle of documents, such as LTE's annual reports and student feedback forms, being imported to Atlas.ti for coding, they were analysed prior thereto, and documents of extracts produced for import to Atlas.ti.

obvious in that I had flexibility and could easily re-code, un-code, rename, delete and re-arrange the material and the search function assisted me in identifying patterns and relationships (Saldaña 2016: 35)[243]. Having thoroughly acquainted myself with my data through repeated readings, I commenced what has been termed 'open coding' or 'first level coding' (Bazely 2013: 126), whereby codes were assigned to the fragments classified[244]. To ensure that coding was consistent, I stated what each specific code would include by attributing to it a definition (Bless *et al*. 2013: 342-344). A code scheme was therefore established (Saldaña 2016: 27), which is included as Addendum D.

I then embarked on focused coding where I revisited the initial coding and sorted and clustered the initial codes where I was able to combine and merge similar codes (Thornberg & Charmaz 2014: 158)[245]. Thereafter, the aim was to undertake thematic analysis[246], which refers to the process of identifying themes in the data which capture meaning relevant to the research question and objectives, and which may create links between such themes (Willig 2014: 147). Ryan and Bernard (2000: 780) describe themes as "abstract (and often fuzzy)[247] constructs that investigators identify before, during and after data collection". My intention with thematic analysis was to link coded

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[243] Another of the benefits is that the assigning of colours to different codes creates "'at a glance' reference and visual classification" (Saldaña 2016: 33). I heeded the warnings by published researchers on the pitfalls of using data analytical software programmes. For instance, I was constantly aware of the danger of creating too many codes, simply because the computer had the capability to handle the creation of multiple codes more efficiently than paper methods. Similarly I was mindful of the danger of relying too heavily on the task of computer coding and neglecting reflective thinking and connecting (Bazely 2013: 139). I adopted the recommendation of Thornberg and Charmaz (2014: 164) on the benefits of memo-writing and made use of the Atlas.ti function for memo-writing during the course of coding and categorising. The memos recorded my ideas which emerged, questions which were raised, comparisons between data, links to literature and reflections on the data.

[244] In the first stage of coding, I elected to use predominantly gerunds and participles, according to the recommendation of Thornberg and Charmaz (2014: 153) since it aids the researcher in remaining focused on process and action. Examples from my coding include 'draining of hope', 'lacking in purpose' and 'supportive encouraging'. Saldaña (2016: 119) labels this type of coding "concept coding", since it relates to ideas and processes and he notes that it involves an element of analysing, which is conducive to further analysing in future stages. With concept coding, the analyst uses a highly interpretive approach where the codes extend beyond what is merely observable to transcend to the conceptual (Saldaña 2016: 122). I would agree that, in employing concept coding, it facilitated moving beyond the tangible to the conceptual. I chose not to use *in vivo* codes to capture the essence of what participants were saying in their own words, despite recommendations to this effect, since there were insufficient similar phrases used by the participants (Bazely 2013: 166).

[245] For instance, I merged 'belonging' with 'being respected' after I discerned overlaps in meaning and there was frequent co-occurrence of the codes.

[246] Thematic analysis can also be described as a categorising strategy where there can be an internal connected structure in the data or relations between concepts (Maxwell & Chmiel 2014: 26). The primary goal of subsequent steps in data analysis, according to Saldaña (2016: 234), is to attend to "categorical, thematic, conceptual and/or theoretical organization from your array of first cycle codes".

[247] Bazely (2013: 191) attempts to give more clarity to this "fuzzy" nature of themes by locating themes somewhere between the process of coding and theory development.

segments of data to larger patterns or themes (Grbich 2013: 259-260)[248], seeking connections and key relationships that tie segments of data together, more specifically using the study's research question, objectives and conceptual framework as the guide (Maxwell & Chmiel 2014: 27)[249].

The advantage of thematic coding, which made it an appealing technique, is that it forces the researcher to make judgment calls and enables the researcher to recognise patterns in the data to the extent that Ryan and Bernard (2000: 780) note how, by the time the researcher has undertaken the task of assigning codes and extracting themes, a significant amount of interpretive analysis has already taken place.

4.12 Ethical considerations

As researcher, I recognise my primary ethical duty to respect the rights, wishes and values of the participants and these rights were considered first when decisions were made concerning the reporting of data[250]. In line with this duty, and in accordance with the steps prescribed by Creswell (2009: 198), I articulated in oral and written form the research objectives to all participants to ensure that they were clearly understood. I also obtained written consent to proceed with the study, from each participant, as communicated to the participant (See Addendum E). Confidentiality was assured and the anonymity of the participants was guaranteed whereby pseudonyms, followed by the letter 'F' or 'M' to designate female or male, were attributed to LTE students in the transcripts of interviews[251] (Swanepoel 2016: 217-218; Phillips & Pittman 2009: 136).

I undertook to conduct ethically responsible research, as prescribed by the institution of Stellenbosch University in their "POLICY FOR RESPONSIBLE RESEARCH CONDUCTED AT STELLENBOSCH UNIVERSITY" dated 24 June 2013, as updated in January 2016. It is confirmed that the study was at all times carried out within the prescribed parameters of the approval granted by the duly appointed ethics body,

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[248] Grbich (2013: 259-260) cautions against 'codes' and 'themes' being generally used interchangeably with "slippage of terminology" occurring within published articles. She accordingly advises the researcher to be transparent about how the labels are to be utilised in the data analytic process.

[249] Saldaña (2016: 200) mentions the same list but includes the study's literature review as well.

[250] As researcher, I am moreover aware of ethical duties to protect against harm (de Vos 2005: 58-59).

[251] I decided to use pseudonyms instead of alphabetical letters to bring the content alive.

Research Ethics Committee: Social, Behavioural and Education Research (REC: SBE) on 5 October under reference 14627, as appears in Addendum F[252].

4.13 Validity or trustworthiness of research study

Bless *et al.* (2013: 236) agree with Babbie and Mouton (2001), together with Lincoln and Guba (1985), to the effect that, in qualitative studies, the concept of trustworthiness is used to evaluate the validity or quality of the research[253]. According to the authors, this is done on the basis of credibility, dependability, transferability and confirmability. When these four facets of trustworthiness are high, the research will have a high degree of quality.

Credibility, according to Bless *et al.* (2013: 237), is proven when the researcher has demonstrated the appropriateness of the selection of the design and methodology, data collection and data analysis. I would argue that, in this study, I have comprehensively demonstrated the appropriateness of the design and methodology, data collection and data analysis, providing corroborating evidence of all facets hereof[254].

Dependability is evident when the researcher has been able to defend a research strategy which has been precisely and thoroughly followed. This will be apparent in areas such as the process of data collection and analysis. In the current study, the process of data collection and analysis has been extensively described in Sections 4.7, 4.8 and 4.11, and meticulously followed. Direct quotations from the data collected are an instrument which would be used to increase the rigour of the research strategy, according to Bless *et al.* (2013: 239). In this regard, it is immediately apparent from

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[252] Approval included notification of "SUSPENSION OF PHYSICAL CONTACT RESEARCH DURING THE COVID-19 PANDEMIC", and was subject to restrictions detailed in university notice entitled "REC: Social, Behavioural and Education Research (REC: SBE) Communique: Research guidance in the time of level 1 of the COVID-19 pandemic and beyond".

[253] In order for validity of research to be demonstrated, it was previously thought that objectivity was to be strived for but, according to Babbie and Mouton (2001: 276), it has become recognised that objectivity is always going to be a goal which is not wholly attained, particularly in qualitative studies. They therefore endorse the highly regarded approach of Lincoln and Guba (1985) for whom the key to good qualitative research lies in the concept of trustworthiness or neutrality of findings. According to Lincoln and Guba, the question to be asked is how the researcher can persuade an audience that the findings of an inquiry are worth taking account of. They rely on comparisons with principles of objectivity in quantitative studies whereby a quantitative study cannot be considered valid unless it is reliable.

[254] For instance, it is to be noted that I have, in addition, recorded alternatives which were considered as potentially apt, and presented reasons why they were rejected.

Chapters 5 and 6, which interpret the data from the study, that direct quotations are widely used throughout as a deliberate decision in order to increase dependability[255].

Transferability, the third of the factors indicating increased trustworthiness, according to Bless *et al.* 2013: 237), is concerned with the extent to which the results can be extrapolated to other similar contexts. In order to do so, the researcher is required to describe in detail the nature of the context of the data collection and positioning of the researcher. In this way, other situations with similar settings can be imagined where the findings could be meaningful (Bless *et al.* 2013: 237)[256]. The requirements of Bless *et al.* (2013: 237), relating to positioning of the researcher, has been described in Chapter 1 and is fulfilled further through undertaking self-reflexivity as a facet of the interpretive paradigm, and illuminated in the data analysis. The context of the data collection has been discussed at length in Chapter 1, where it was described how the contextual situation relates to the data having been collected from students at an FBO, LTE, who are previously unemployed, economically disadvantaged individuals. The geographical contexts described is Khayelitsha and Zwelihle, low socio-economic areas of Cape Town and Hermanus. Finally, the unique temporal context of the research, having taken place during the 2020 COVID-19 pandemic, is discussed, together with the effects on the study. All aspects of context have therefore been illuminated, thereby increasing trustworthiness.

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[255] Another tool for increasing dependability is detailed description of sampling procedure, sample that actually participated and requirements for inclusion and exclusion (Bless *et al.* 2013: 238). Data saturation is a further tool for raising the degree of quality of a study. In the study under consideration, full details of the sampling procedure, including the requirements of Bless *et al.* concerning requirements for inclusion and exclusion, have been set out above in Section 4.7.

[256] Transferability is also alluded to by Lincoln and Guba (1985) and Babbie and Mouton (2001) as a factor favouring trustworthiness. Transferability, for them, however, in contrast to Bless *et al*. (2013: 237), depends on the extent to which 'thick' descriptions have been obtained with sufficient precision and detail to enable the reader to make a judgment decision about similarities conducive to transferability (Babbie & Mouton 2001: 277). As far as their criterion for transferability is concerned, there was an intentional decision reached to conduct this research in a way in which 'thick' descriptions would be obtained, as appears in Sections 4.6 and 4.8, and it is moreover argued that this aim is achieved as apparent in the data analysis in Chapters 5 and 6.

Confirmability, the final requirement indicating trustworthiness, according to Bless *et al.* (2013: 237), means that other researchers ought to be able to attain similar findings if they were to follow a similar process in a similar context[257].

It has therefore been demonstrated that, on the four criteria of Bless *et al.* (2013: 236), namely credibility, dependability, transferability and confirmability, the test for trustworthiness of research has been clearly met in the present study. Aside from the four indications of trustworthiness, outlined above, in order to enhance validity or trustworthiness in qualitative research, Babbie and Mouton (2001: 275) promote triangulation, or the use of multiple methods. Janesek (2000: 392) expresses a preference for the term "crystallisation" over triangulation since crystallisation recognises the many facets of research[258]. In the present study, as discussed in detail above (Section 4.8), multiple research methods were used, and I would argue that this factor indicates reliability and trustworthiness[259]. Whilst it is acknowledged that the full spectrum of intended research methods was restricted owing to COVID-19 provisions, the scope of document analysis as a research method was expanded to compensate for the deficiency in other areas of focus groups, participant observation and limitations on interviews. This means, for instance, that the extensive document analysis allowed

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[257] Babbie and Mouton (2001: 278), using the same yardstick, also rely on confirmability to enhance trustworthiness. However, it is noteworthy that, despite an almost identical definition, Babbie and Mouton (2001: 278) refer to confirmability here as "dependability". Lincoln and Guba (1985), discussed in Babbie and Mouton (2001: 278), introduce the concept of an audit to determine dependability and confirmability. In undertaking such an audit, they refer to an audit trail whereby the conclusions and interpretations can be traced to their sources through examination of the raw data, such as written field notes, as well as data analysis. In the present study, these sources are available and I am confident that an audit trail would reveal the study to be confirmable. The procedures in question, as outlined in this chapter, provide the necessary evidence. This, according to Bless *et al.* and Babbie and Mouton, would support a finding of trustworthiness.

[258] As with holding up a crystal to the light depends on the particular angle for what we view, so crystallisation of research emphasises the complexity and multi-dimensionality of subject matter. Whatever the terminology, whether triangulation or crystallisation, the indication is clear that where different types of data collection methods are used, this facilitates comparison, providing several perspectives, thereby enhancing trustworthiness of the research (Bless *et al.* 2013: 238).

[259] For Janesek (2000), crystallisation incorporates not only research methods, but also the use of other disciplines and techniques to inform our research processes. For instance, Janesek (2000: 392) is in favour of journal-writing, borrowed from the arts and humanities, as a rigorous documentary tool in striving for a multi-faceted approach to a topic. The current study has indeed used journal- writing as a facet of self-reflexivity (Section 4.8.4), in addition to other research methods, thereby creating crystallisation and increased trustworthiness. Moreover, Janesek's promotion of other disciplines as a means of crystallisation is also featured in the study under consideration, which has its roots in the theological discipline of Theology and Development, whilst also resorting to knowledge within the domain of Development Studies. Babbie and Mouton (2001: 275) present other means of establishing validity and reliability in qualitative research. One of these is field notes, urging researchers to keep extensive field notes describing observations and any impressions which confirm or negate original theoretical ideas, as a means of increasing reliability. Field notes, intended to serve the purposes outlined by Babbie and Mouton, were kept during the data collection of the study under consideration, thus enhancing reliability, I would suggest.

for comparison with interviews, giving rise to a multi-faceted approach, to the extent that triangulation or crystallisation was demonstrated[260]. All in all, academic rigour has been clearly illustrated with the resultant inference being drawn that the research demonstrates trustworthiness or validity.

4.14 Conclusion

The purpose of this chapter has been firstly to position the study within its paradigmatic influence. It was therefore explained why an interpretive paradigm was the most suitable for the study and reasons provided for preferring this over the other major metatheoretical traditions. The interpretive perspective was enhanced by self-reflexivity which was shaped by postcolonial indigenous consciousness. Thereafter, the nature and purpose of the conceptual framework was explained. Following thereon, this chapter has recorded details of how the study was conducted. The study's research design was classified as a qualitative, empirical design, and reasons were advanced for the selection of the design. A case study of LTE was decided upon as the methodology of the study and the rationale for this choice was given. Sampling for the study, reasons for choices made and the procedure, were then discussed. The research methods were clarified, with the rationale presented for each method. The specific restrictions of COVID-19 and their influence on the study were presented, with details how these restrictions were managed and compensated for, and the data collection modified in order to maintain the academic rigour of the study in these extraordinary circumstances. Data management measures in place were recorded thereafter. Confirmation was provided of ethical considerations followed and the process by which data was analysed was next presented. Finally, the validity or trustworthiness of the study was discussed persuasively in order to demonstrate academic rigour of the study.

It is now appropriate to embark on an analysis of the data and to discuss the findings, which exercise is undertaken in Chapter 5 which follows, and in Chapter 6 thereafter.

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[260] A further means of increasing reliability, according to Babbie and Mouton (2001: 276), would be, what they term, "conducting member checks", where the researcher takes the transcripts of interviews back to the participants to enquire whether what is captured is indeed what they said. I am able to confirm that, in the present study, enquiries were made with the respondents as to whether they would like to have sight of the typed transcripts of the interview, and these were sent to be checked to the many respondents who so wished, as mentioned in Section 4.8.2, with none after receipt thereof communicating inaccuracies.

CHAPTER 5.

THE DE-HUMANISING EFFECT OF POWERLESSNESS ON THOSE IN ECONOMIC DISTRESS: A THEMATIC DATA INTERPRETATION

5.1 Introduction

Chapters 5 and 6 rely on the conceptual framework, discussed in Chapter 4, and incorporate its elements into the empirical facets of the study. Chapter 5 undertakes thematic data analysis of the de-humanising effect of powerlessness, which would include the 'web of lies' and 'marred identities', as dimensions of an indicator relating to the need for affirmation of human dignity (Christian 1999) (See Section 4.4.2.1). The present chapter is founded on the premise that "powerlessness[261] has become synonymous with poverty" (Christian 1999: 10), and that powerlessness consists of captivity within 'god-complexes' (Christian 1999: 159) (Section 1.5.6 and 3.6.4). The data analysis indicates the role of 'god-complexes' in maintaining powerlessness. This occurs at the instance of groupings of social, political, economic and bureaucratic power controlled by the elite holders of power. Within the notion of powerlessness, the data analysis focuses on how the economically deprived are trapped within, what Christian (1999: 161) terms, a "web of lies", consisting of flawed assumptions in an oppressive set of relationships, which both they and the powerful believe (discussed in Section 3.6.4). Attention is thus drawn to the resultant need for affirmation of human dignity and healing of 'marred identities' (also discussed in Section 3.6.4).

The chapter will explore how a thematic interpretation of the data immediately identified themes relating to what can be termed the 'de-humanising effects of powerlessness' and this notion will form the basis around which discussion in the present chapter will take place. Thematic interpretation also pointed clearly to themes relating to the theological constructs 'affirmation of human dignity', 'recovery of vocation' and 'social transformation', elements of the study's conceptual framework, the findings of which will be discussed in Chapter 6. Since the data capturing was conducted by means of interviewing staff and students of the FBO known as LTE

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[261] It should be noted that the notion of 'powerlessness' does not denote that people have no agency, only that there are systems (religious, economic, political, social), which entrap and seek to de-humanise.

(introduced in Section 1.4.1), and by perusing documents pertaining to the organisation, a necessary prelude to discussing findings on the role of the FBO in Chapters 6 and 7, is a discussion of LTE. The chapter therefore commences with a description of the programmes offered by LTE, its philosophy, as well as the practice of spirituality at LTE, as extracted from the data.

Thereafter, the prominent themes relating to the de-humanising effects of powerlessness, which emerged from the data, are identified. Attention is drawn to how the unique timing of this study gave rise to revelations of the sudden and dramatic deterioration of socio-economic conditions amongst participants. Here I make reference to the data collection having taken place under the nationwide lockdown during the first year of the COVID-19 pandemic, an overview of which was presented in Section 1.4.3 when clarifying the context of the study. This timing has resulted in unintended data having been collected on the heightened state of vulnerability and deprivation of the participants. A discussion of this theme, 'exacerbating deprivation during COVID-19 pandemic', is then presented to highlight the context of COVID-19's detrimental influence on the lives of the students. The context of COVID-19 gives rise to a further feature of 'context', which is the recognition of the complex nature of poverty, and which is explored herein through the lens of continuous trauma. It is argued that many of the participants, through their exposure to violence and their daily struggle for survival, are indeed experiencing what scholars have identified as the phenomenon known as "continuous traumatic stress".

Roulston (2014: 305) advocates the wide-spread use of examples and direct quotations from interviews to support assertions. The extensive use of direct quotations will therefore be used here to facilitate the amplification of the voices of participants and to render the authentic transmission of participants' experiences (Bless *et al.* 2013: 339).[262]

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[262] Where the quotation is linked to a code, this will be made apparent and the format of Atlas.ti will be used. In explanation thereof, the sample "**In Zintle F. 13:9 ¶ 63**" denotes that the quotation appears in the document titled "Zintle F", (a pseudonym) which is the 13th Atlas.ti listed document, and that it is the 63rd quotation of that code, appearing on the 9th line of the document. Where it is not a coded quotation which is being referred to in relation to a participant, the reference will appear with the name (pseudonym) of the participant and, in brackets, the Atlas.ti numbered document, and, where applicable, paragraph number, as in Nomvula (16: 54) reflecting document 16 and the 54th paragraph.

5.2 Discussion of Learn to Earn and its intentions

In this section is contemplated what Osmer (2008) would term the descriptive empirical task, in respect of which Section 1.4, describing the study's context, would also fall within this task.

5.2.1 Programmes offered by LTE

Barbara Lipp, the Events and Communications manager (BL45: 2)[263], reports that, during the thirty-one years of LTE's existence, its intention has been to equip an unemployed person to turn his or her life around for the better. Male and female students of any post-school age and all religions are welcomed on the courses. The profile of an LTE student for the 2019- 2020 financial year, prior to LTE intervention, is provided as follows:

> Average age of student: 30.7 years old, youngest 18 and oldest 71.
> Gender: 75% women, 25% men.
> Average size of household: 4 adults
> Average number of people working in household: 1
> Average total monthly income: R3 461 (FB 3, 4 Sept 2020)[264].

LTE offers fourteen different courses for skills training in a number of core market areas, as elaborated on in Section 1.4.1. They also provide business skills classes to equip the student more fully with participating in life in the economic world. The training environment is intentionally disciplined, with a structured day and a focus on punctuality and honesty, to simulate the work environment where the student will be expected to arrive on time daily and to carry out duties with integrity, or risk losing his or her job (RvW48: 3).

A basic finance course teaches about saving, budgeting and managing money since many of the students have not earned income apart from receiving social grants (BL45: 7). At the Hermanus branch, Rayvon Joemath, the life skills and discipleship trainer, explained how the life skills curriculum included preparing a student for the workplace and educating him or her about basic conditions of employment and similar human resources information. In order to educate the students about personal finance, she would organise workshops where a financial services institution would come and

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[263] LTE staff are mentioned by name, in accordance with their consent and specific request that they be named in the study.

[264] However, it is to be noted that these statistics would not reflect the adverse effect of lockdown resulting in employment and income being significantly reduced.

speak about consumer rights, budgeting, saving and avoiding debt (RJ46: 1). A business skills course equips the students to start their own business, to be "entrepreneurially- minded" so that they can stay at home and take care of their children while running a business, according to Genevieve Kruger, branch manager of the Khayelitsha campus (GK50: 4). Ms Kruger explains as follows:

> [the students are]*…taught how to set up an invoice, money coming in, money going out, how to do costings of their products, and the importance of not selling on credit, to set up a simple business plan, to think about customers and customer relations, marketing and doing flyers and business cards.*

Ms Lipp explains that the life skills course deals with conflict resolution, job readiness, preparation of CVs and attending interviews, issues of the workplace, such as grooming and dress codes, as well as punctuality and important values like honesty, and also societal problems such as gender-based violence (BL45: 6). Further, in this regard, Ms Joemath (RJ46: 1) speaks of enlisting the aid of the Department of Social Services in order to talk to the students about issues such as domestic violence and drug abuse. Babalwe Madikane, the life skills and discipleship trainer at the Khayelitsha campus, mentions a focus on better communication and on restoring relationships: "…how do you build those relationships, how to fix them if they're already messed up" (BM49: 2). Ms Joemat (RJ46: 3) includes inter-cultural communication in her life skills curriculum.

5.2.2 Philosophy of LTE

According to the co-founder and director, Roché van Wyk, LTE's over-arching philosophy is based on his Master's thesis[265] on the restoration of human dignity and self- respect in post-apartheid South Africa. The organisation's intention is thus to provide skills training to unemployed, economically disadvantaged people, founded on four tenets whereby a person's physical, emotional, economic and spiritual needs are addressed within an environment that nurtures the individual's dignity and self-respect (RvW48: 1).

LTE's motto is 'a hand up, not a hand out' which is aimed consciously at empowering previously unemployed individuals, since this philosophy feeds into instilling self-respect and human dignity (RvW48: 3). For this reason, each student is required to pay a subscription fee for his or her course so the course is not provided free. "A

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[265] His thesis is entitled "I TOO AM A PERSON: Historical and contemporary implications for restoration in a post-apartheid South Africa", submitted to Wheaton College, Illinois, dated 9 April 1995.

student's personal contribution influences their course attendance and completion…[and] in this way, individuals become contributing partners in their own development" (LTE promotional flyer). Even though the subscription fee is only a fraction of the actual cost of the course[266], the payment of the fee attributes value to the course for the individual thereby enhancing the person's sense of contributing to his or her future. In this way, empowerment of the unemployed person is initiated. Because of the student's investment in his or her training, there is a low attrition rate with the majority of students graduating from the courses (See Section 1.4.1 footnote).

Aside from these steps taken deliberately to empower a student, there is also intended to be a strong message conveyed to the student that he or she is a person of infinite worth. Mr van Wyk (RvW48: 2) describes this vividly:

> *… so right from the premises itself, to the way we engage with the potential student, the way they are treated, the way they are spoken to, the facilities that are made available, are all about creating a context that communicates one single message, that you are a person of worth.*

Mr van Wyk (RvW48: 2) observes how, when an unemployed person comes to LTE, there is very little hope evident and a feeling of powerlessness upon arrival is also obvious: "I think somebody that comes to LTE is coming there because they're feeling powerless. And they have run out of options" (RvW48: 6). Addressing human dignity in students, usually not recognised in themselves, is dealt with consciously as part of the LTE experience. Mr van Wyk describes the intentions of LTE towards the students, in building hope, overcoming powerlessness and restoring a sense of human dignity, as follows:

> *And their experience at LTE is one where they are experiencing a gradual installation of hope and that they in particular can do something about their circumstance. And our objective is to nurture that and help them reach a point where they leave with a sense of dignity, with an understanding that they can do something about their circumstance; they do not have to just be a victim. They can be victorious over the circumstance and they can be a contributing member of their family and to society in general. And that is our purpose. Economic development is almost a secondary thing. But the development of that person and their self- worth, and in particular from a faith perspective, that they know they are somebody, they are somebody that is unique, created in the image of God* (RvW48: 2).

From Mr van Wyk's description, it can be inferred that LTE's primary intention is to develop the self-worth of the person in order to restore his or her human dignity. Ms

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[266] lower than five percent of the cost to LTE (RvW2020: 3)

Lipp likewise reported that LTE's approach is holistic and there is recognition that historical trauma has had a debilitating effect on the lives of the students, prompting the organisation to engage a counsellor. The counsellor's area of responsibility includes conducting sessions using 'Poverty Stoplight', a UN- endorsed tool for self-analysis of a route out of poverty (BL45: 17)[267]. Aside from income-producing skills intended to empower an individual economically, LTE particularly focuses on the emotional and spiritual facets of an individual.

5.2.3 Practice of spirituality at LTE

The discipleship programme is presented in order to empower a person through developing awareness of the individual's value and human dignity. The discipleship programme mainly takes the form of the Alpha Course[268] which teaches the basics of the Christian faith (BL45: 7). Acknowledging that our apartheid history has caused deep-rooted trauma in most of their students, Ms Lipp describes how the spiritual focus at LTE aims to restore a person's dignity, demonstrating a person's worth and purpose for which God has created that person (BL45: 8).

LTE accepts students from all faiths and the discipleship course and Christian activities are voluntary. However, most students come from a church background, which is common in the communities in which LTE operates, although many have drifted away from the church when they sign up at LTE, reports Ms Lipp (BL45: 13). She describes how a significant number of their students, through exposure to Christian spirituality, return to their faith or their faith strengthens.

The practice of spirituality at LTE can be seen as the overt declaration and communicating of the Christian faith. The form which this practice takes encompasses a weekly church service in non-COVID-19 times, led by one of the trainers, students or employees. (BL45: 10). A programme for the Alpha Course takes place once a week and an Alpha day is organised with guest speakers and an opportunity for students to engage with the message of the Christian faith (BL45: 10). At the

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[267] "Poverty Stoplight is an approach that helps people progress out of poverty by empowering them to understand and map their own choices. It encourages households to participate and own their journeys out of poverty, and provides a clear line of sight of how to get there; at the same time allowing organisations delivering support to measure progress against their programme objectives" (povertystoplight.org 2021).

[268] The Alpha Course originated at an evangelical, Anglican church in London and gained global popularity in the early 1990s. It teaches the basics of the Christian faith over approximately 8 to10 weeks, through delivery of a short talk on a subject such as 'Who is Jesus?', followed by a small group discussion and a shared meal or snack (alpha.org 2021).

Hermanus campus, Ms Joemath informed me that, prior to lockdown, each day commenced with prayer, hymn- singing and worship in the hall, or what they call 'daily devotions' (RJ46: 1). At the Khayelitsha campus, the day commences with Bible study and prayer in the classrooms with the trainers, due to lockdown prohibiting larger gatherings in the hall, as is the norm in non-COVID-19 times (BL45: 12).

On the surface, therefore, it would appear that the nature of spirituality practised at LTE is the intentional exposure of the students to the teachings of the Christian faith. Conventional Christian worship in the form of church-style gatherings, with prayer and hymn-singing, forms part of the practice of Christian spirituality, as does teaching, by way of the presentation of the Alpha Course. However, the data has revealed that the extent of Christian spirituality goes far deeper than conventional Christian teaching and worship. As will be discussed in Chapter 6, it emerged from the data that the ethos of LTE as a consciously Christian organisation, and more specifically the lives, character and behaviour of the Christian trainers and staff, are the facets of Christian spirituality which influenced the students. In this respect, it will be proposed and discussed in Chapter 6 that signs of the kingdom of God evident at LTE is what impacts the students, in so far as meaningful social transformation is concerned.

Prior to any meaningful social transformation taking place, however, the condition in which the students arrive at LTE can best be described as experiencing the de-humanising effects of powerlessness. This is what emerged from the themes in the data analysis, which will be discussed in the following section.

5.3 Thematic data analysis of de-humanising effects of powerlessness

The thematic data analysis reported on hereunder relates to the contexts of COVID-19 and to a trauma perspective, as indicated in the introduction. It can also be considered to be included in Osmer's (2008) interpretive task, where the enquiry is "Why is this going on?".

5.3.1 Identification of prominent themes in relation to context of study

The codes of relevance to this chapter, as distinct from the following chapter, were categorised as descriptions of the hardships of the participants prior to their arrival at LTE, as indications of powerlessness. Several of the codes fit into three themes which I termed 'economically needing', 'emotionally needing' and 'spiritually needing'. These three themes encapsulated the types of deprivation experienced by the participants

and which constituted their experience of powerlessness. Moreover, an additional theme was identified, termed 'exacerbating deprivation during COVID-19 pandemic'. These four themes, it will be demonstrated, reflect the de-humanising effect of powerlessness and will be contrasted with themes relating to social transformation in Chapter 6. Indeed the four themes provide unequivocal evidence of a desperate need for social transformation of the LTE students in the context of circumstances of powerlessness.

Moreover, these themes serve the purpose of providing context for the experiences described by the participants. In qualitative research it is believed that one cannot understand a participant's experience without understanding the participant's context, since meaning is derived from that context. Failing the acquisition of some knowledge of background factors, our understanding of people will be extremely limited. Context is a broad concept which would refer to geographical location, family structure, as well as social and economic worlds which the participant inhabits (Bless *et al.* 2013: 339). The themes relating to the de-humanising effect of powerlessness provide context for all of the above features of the lives inhabited by the participants. The geographical context of Khayelitsha and Zwelihle, as low socio-economic areas, with settlements of temporary structures in several parts, and, in the case of Khayelitsha, an extremely high level of crime and violence, as well as the prevalence of gangsterism, was described in Section 1.4.2.

However, in the present study, due to the abnormal circumstances in which the research took place, the particular timing of the study, with field work undertaken during the latter part of 2020, is also an essential feature of context. The theme 'exacerbating deprivation during COVID-19', discussed hereunder, provides the most immediate and noteworthy context for the study, since the field work was undertaken directly in the midst of the coronavirus pandemic's most severe influence, as discussed in Section 1.4.3.

5.3.2 Context of study: exacerbating deprivation during COVID-19 pandemic

The data, coded under 'COVID fearing for survival', revealed unmistakeably the destructive effect of the COVID-19 pandemic on the lives of those who were already vulnerable at the time the pandemic struck in March 2020. As discussed in Section 1.4.2, students at LTE's main campus in Khayelitsha live predominantly in Khayelitsha

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and students at the Hermanus campus live in Zwelihle, both of which are deprived areas with inadequate services. Some students live in even more deprived accommodation, in informal settlements, in temporary structures or what are commonly known as 'shacks'.

The most obvious fact which emerged was how devastating the COVID-19 pandemic has been on employment amongst the participants. The majority of LTE students had lost jobs or had family members of their household, on whom they were dependant, lose jobs, as related by the respondents below.

> ***In LTE COVID-19 impact. 44:3 ¶ 6.*** *It was bad, no food, no money, because I'm losing my part-time job, now I'm jobless.* **LTE student 1, 2020 .**

> ***In LTE COVID-19 impact. 44:33 ¶ 73.*** *My father is a breadwinner that is no longer working. We're suffering.* **Office administration student 6, 2020.**

Often several members of the same household all lost their jobs due to COVID-19's detrimental effect on the economy, with lockdown in place.

> ***In LTE COVID-19 impact. 44:26 ¶ 56.*** *It is bad, only one person is working, now only my brother buys food for us.* **Basic sewing student 51, 2020.**

> ***In LTE COVID-19 impact. 44:27 ¶ 58.*** *The challenge we get is my two sisters lost their jobs and my husband was retrenched.* **Bake for Profit student 58, 2020.**

> ***In LTE COVID-19 impact. 44:39 ¶ 4.*** *My family and I we've been unemployed, it's bad. I have lost a job because of this lockdown.* **Bake for Profit student 50, 2020**

> ***In LTE COVID-19 impact. 44:58 ¶ 77.*** *I lose a job, my two sisters were not working and with the pandemic my brother loses a job as well.* **Basic computers student 8, 2020.**

Here we find confirmation of the findings of Wills *et al.* (2020) that two out of every five households lost their primary source of income during April 2020, soon after the nationwide lockdown was imposed on 26 March (Section 1.4.3).

In addition, it was apparent how certain LTE students and their families tragically moved from experiencing hunger to facing near starvation due to COVID-19's impact. Many mentioned having insufficient food and having to restrict meals, as the following respondents explained.

> ***In LTE COVID-19 impact. 44:8 ¶ 16.*** *Jobless, not enough food for everyone during this virus.* **Bake for Profit student 54, 2020.**

> ***In LTE COVID-19 impact. 44:19 ¶ 42.*** *Lockdown brings suffering because we don't have food, we don't have money to buy food because I'm not working.* **Basic sewing student 44, 2020.**

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> *In LTE COVID-19 impact. 44:46 ¶ 28.* No jobs, no money, a lot of hardships, no food, had to survive on one meal a day or nothing. **Barista student 6, 2020.**

> *In LTE COVID-19 impact. 44:52 ¶ 44.* There were some days that we did not have food…. **Basic sewing student 45, 2020.**

> *In LTE COVID-19 impact. 44:59 ¶ 83.* Most of my family members could not go to work, therefore no income. We had to reduce eating, we only had [enough] to eat once a day. **Barista student 8, 2020.**

Almost without exception the promised government emergency grants and food parcels had not reached the intended recipients at the time of their response, as the sample of respondents below confirms.

> *In LTE COVID-19 impact. 44:55 ¶ 60.* I've applied for the R350 grant but I never received it. **Bake for Profit student 59, 2020.**

> *In LTE COVID-19 impact. 44:53 ¶ 46.* Challenges, not having food in the house, and we didn't get food parcels we were promised, no-one is working. **Basic sewing student 46, 2020.**

The financially- related effects included being unable to support family members, or pay for transport and electricity, or pay rent, and having to relocate to informal settlements, as the respondents below testify.

> *In LTE COVID-19 impact. 44:36 ¶ 79.* Emotionally it affected me big time as a father of a 2- year old boy I couldn't provide, I couldn't go anywhere looking for a job. Spiritually it knocked me bad cause I felt like a failure when my kids asked me to buy them something. **Woodwork student 2, 2020.**

> *In LTE COVID-19 impact. 44:48 ¶ 34.* Not to have enough food, struggling to pay electricity and not enough fare to attend school. **Woodwork student 1, 2020.**

> *In LTE COVID-19 impact. 44:25 ¶ 54.* This is very challenging … because I'm staying in informal settlement and … I have one room and kids are crying, want to go out and me also; I can't cope. **Basic sewing student 50, 2020.**

> *In LTE COVID-19 impact. 44:58 ¶ 77.* People got retrenched, a lot of chaos happened, they started to build shacks because they no longer had money to rent. **Basic computers student 8, 2020.**

> *In LTE COVID-19 impact. 44:37 ¶ 81.* I feel drained because my family and I got evicted during lockdown due to not having rent money. Now we live in a squatter camp without electricity. **Basic sewing student 52,2020.**

The emotional toll which the pandemic has taken on the lives of the participants is severe. They described feeling extreme anxiety due to the uncertainty of the virus' effect on their lives. They were fearful of being unable to provide basic necessities, as well as facing the uncertainty of how long the pandemic would endure and they would have to be struggling for survival, as appears from their comments below.

> *In LTE COVID-19 impact. 44:32 ¶ 71.* My uncle [breadwinner] had to stop working with no income or UIF. We didn't even get the R350 or groceries. It is really an emotional situation. **Office administration student 5, 2020.**

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> *In LTE COVID-19 impact. 44:39 ¶ 4.* *I am feeling stressed out because I am not working. I have rent to pay, feed my child.* **Bake for Profit student 50, 2020.**
>
> *In LTE COVID-19 impact. 44:56 ¶ 65.* *I feel so bad because things are getting worse. We lose our loved ones, lose jobs, everything is just a mess.* **Office administration student 2, 2020.**
>
> *In LTE COVID-19 impact. 44:36 ¶ 79.* *…it knocked me bad cause I felt like a failure when my kids asked me to buy them something.* **Woodwork student 2, 2020.**
>
> *In LTE COVID-19 impact. 44:37 ¶ 81.* *My 8- year old went to live with my mother in Port Elizabeth, this makes me feel I have failed as a mother.* **Basic sewing student 52, 2020.**

All of the abovementioned quotations appear in the code 'COVID fearing for survival'. It is evident that COVID-19 and lockdown has significantly increased unemployment in the households of the participants, has worsened hunger and has caused the most vulnerable to be evicted from their accommodation due to inability to pay rent, compelling them to seek shelter in informal settlements. Emotionally the implications of the pandemic are also dire, causing the participants to experience fear and hopelessness. This is the context in which the study took place, one in which COVID-19 has revealed the insidious character of poverty and the corresponding de-humanising effect of powerlessness.

5.3.3 Context of study: complexity of poverty and conceptualisation of prolonged trauma

5.3.3.1 Employing the notion of trauma to understand poverty

The examination of 'exacerbating deprivation during COVID-19 pandemic' provided empirical evidence of the complexity of poverty and the de-humanising effects of powerlessness. This in turn led to an awareness of the inadequacy and simplistic nature of the term 'the poor', in addition to highlighting its demeaning insinuations. When dealing with issues concerning vulnerable individuals in situations of socio-economic distress, therefore, it is proposed herein that a more nuanced and complex approach is adopted to replace the vague and hackneyed nomenclature 'the poor'.

These reservations concerning the appellation are shared by various scholars who have likewise called for an alternative vantage point to facilitate understanding of individuals in vulnerable life circumstances. One such suggestion, which has applicability to participants in the study, particularly apposite in light of the context presented by the theme 'exacerbating deprivation during COVID-19 pandemic', is employing the notion of trauma as a lens for understanding exposure to prolonged life-

threatening circumstances. Trauma, as an expression of poverty, is inextricably linked to powerlessness and provides an added hermeneutical lens for clearer understanding of the dimensions of powerlessness.

Recently, alternative contexts and conceptualisations of trauma and an expanded meaning have been explored by scholars such as Kaminer and Eagle (2013), as well as Benjamin and Carolissen (2015), and it is arguable that these alternative contexts, conceptualisations and meaning of trauma would include the context of the participants in the study. The data reveals the participants' manifestations of suffering, such as fear, anxiety and psychological distress, caused by their precarious circumstances threatening their survival. This has been elucidated in the discussion on the exacerbating deprivation of COVID-19 in Section 5.3.2. above, and will be discussed further in the discussion of the three theoretical constructs below.

5.3.3.2 Continuous Traumatic Stress and its evolution

It is through employing the construct of trauma that a clearer understanding of the contexts of the participants is attained. One relatively recent conceptualisation of trauma is what is known as 'continuous traumatic stress' ("CTS"), a term which has gained in reputation in trauma theorists' spheres. Coined during the 1980s to characterise the mental health-related work of anti-apartheid health professionals, such as the treatment of tortured political activist detainees, the term was introduced into the literature in 1987 by a number of psychologists, including Straker (2013: 209).

Stevens, Eagle, Kaminer and Higson-Smith (2013) are amongst the psychologists who, like Straker, recently saw the benefit of exploring the viability of extracting CTS from its historical use during the civil conflict leading to South Africa's liberation from apartheid, in describing the life-threatening circumstances faced by many individuals in their everyday lives, and their psychological response thereto. They consider the term favourably for current use as a supplementary framework for understanding situations of exposure to ongoing threat (Stevens *et al.* 2013: 82). In so doing, they highlight the complex nature of excessive exposure to abiding threat and danger, which they find is likely to be experienced by many communities in the Global South, such as low socio-economic, crime- filled areas, including Khayelitsha, whose crime

statistics were illuminated in Section 1.4.2 (Stevens *et al.* 2013: 82).[269] It can be inferred, therefore, that the participants could well fall within the group contemplated by these authors, who raise awareness of abiding threat and danger resulting in CTS.

In re-examining the term 'CTS', scholars have sought to distinguish prolonged trauma occurring in the present from past episodes of trauma. At first glance, what Straker and Stevens *et al.* appear to be describing in CTS is reminiscent of the psychiatric condition posttraumatic stress disorder ("PTSD"). Diamond, Lipsitz and Hoffman (2013) point out how, in the past, experts have explained manifestations of suffering, such as fear, anxiety and psychological distress, in terms of psychiatric labels, mainly PTSD. They postulate that PTSD was conceived to describe prolonged psychological and emotional stress which occurred in the past whereas people living under conditions of ongoing traumatic stress are living *currently* with the stress. Diamond *et al.* (2013: 101) remark how there has been little effort to address prolonged traumatic stress *in the present*. Their opinion is concurred with by Kaminer, Eagle and Crawford-Browne (2018: 1039) who also draw attention to the lack of engagement with the psychological impact of present danger and threat, as opposed to past trauma suffered, in trauma-related diagnostic terminology and evidence. In distinguishing between past stress from present continuous stress, Pat-Horenczyk, Ziv, Asulin-Peretz, Achituv, Cohen and Brom (2013) reveal that individuals who were exposed to prolonged traumatic stress experienced greater traumatic distress than individuals who were exposed to past stress.[270] Rather than leading to resilience to the trauma, the results of the study demonstrated that prolonged trauma causes exacerbation of emotional distress (Pat-Horenczyk *et al.* 2013: 133). Eagle and Kaminer (2013) are in agreement with Diamond *et al.* (2013) that persons living with CTS are preoccupied with current survival. Straker (2013: 2014) endorses the views of both Diamond *et al.*

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[269] In this regard, Stevens *et al.* (2013: 77) describe as "deeply problematic" how studies into trauma as a result of prolonged stress focus on the Global North, rather than the "conflict-laden and resource-constrained" contexts of the Global South where the condition is likely to be more prevalent. Straker (2013: 210) is in firm agreement with this sentiment expressed by Stevens *et al*.

[270] The study was conducted on mothers and children, with one sample who lived in a town in Israel adjacent to Gaza where they experienced prolonged periods of missile attacks and the other sample from different towns who had experienced thirty-three days of missile attacks during the Second Lebanon War during 2006. They found that children exposed to longer periods of missile attacks displayed more severe behavioural problems than those who were exposed to missile attacks of shorter duration in the past, and the respective mothers in the sample displayed significantly more posttraumatic and depressive symptoms than those exposed to past trauma and coping with the aftermath of war (Pat-Horenczyk *et al.* 2013: 133).

and Eagle and Kaminer, stating as a defining feature of CTS, evidence of present stressors which are continuous with past stressors.

5.3.3.3 Continuous traumatic stress and a violent context

The question therefore arises whether CTS encompasses the experiences described by the participants to the present study and whether it is an apt conceptualisation of their experiences. Straker, in her 2013 study, revisits the term CTS[271] and argues that, although the political scenario in South Africa has changed since then, the term CTS is still applicable. This is due to exposure by many South Africans to levels of violence creating life-threatening circumstances (2013: 209).[272]

In amplification thereof, multiple data sources confirm that youth in areas of Cape Town grow up in a violent context, as was evident in the background to Khayelitsha in Section 1.4.2. For instance, Kaminer, du Plessis, Hardy and Benjamin (2013: 114) endorse Straker's view, reporting that communities in the Western Cape region in which Khayelitsha is located, are characterised by high degrees of gang activities, having some of the highest levels of inter-personal violence and the highest national homicide rates. Indeed, from the results of their study of a group of youth in low socio-economic areas of Cape Town, they report that an alarming figure of 98,9% had witnessed violent crime. The absence of protection in the form of just and effective regulatory measures can affect people's sense that they are not safe from harm and can cause trauma. Section 1.4.2 indicated how Khayelitsha's law enforcement measures are insufficient to protect the citizens from criminals and gangsters. This lack of confidence can increase a person's sense that "existence is precarious" (Eagle & Kaminer 2013: 93). Given that the participants in the present study reside in the same area as the respondents of the study of Kaminer *et al.* (2013), it would be a natural inference to draw that they are likely to be experiencing CTS.

5.3.3.4 Continuous stress not defined by violence as a form of trauma

Whether contexts of prolonged stress, not defined solely by violence, would be included in the concept of CTS, is a scenario which has been explored by scholars. Eagle and Kaminer (2013: 86) build a case for the retention of the term 'CTS' in the

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[271] which she was amongst the first to introduce in the 1980s

[272] Straker (2013: 214) argues that manifestations of CTS also occur in perpetrators of violence. It will be seen in the data of the present study how certain of the participants admitted to perpetrating crimes, including crimes of violence. This observation of Straker's could accordingly be applicable to them.

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lexicon of trauma but seek to "stretch the boundaries" of what has conventionally been encompassed in CTS. As one considers contexts beyond those defined purely by exposure to violent crime, Eagle & Kaminer (2013: 90) emphasise that the categories of contexts where CTS is likely to prevail is not exhaustive, even contending for the use of CTS in "highlighting the traumatic stress suffered primarily by systematically oppressed, deprived and marginalised populations" (Eagle & Kaminer 2013: 86). They express the view that those suffering from CTS may indeed be preoccupied with current survival.

Implied in these statements is that the present and future stress does not have to be restricted to violent threat but a case can be made out for an interpretation of vulnerability due to financial need and the danger of finding oneself and one's dependants without basic survival necessities, as in the present study. Indeed Straker (2013: 211) concurs with this assertion. Paring the idea of CTS down to its essentials, she records "context" to be its defining feature. Failing to take context into account in acknowledging daily stress of the oppressed is limiting in conceptualising trauma, according to Benjamin and Carolissen (2015). Specifically, Straker makes the following remark, significant to the participants in the present study:

> [t]his context is defined by the presence of stressors that are in the present and are continuous with stressors in the past and future. The stressors are extreme, multiple and encompassing in the sense that individuals cannot easily escape them" (Straker 2013: 214).

Where there is protracted threat to survival or where "threat and danger is an inescapable part of daily life" (Kaminer *et al.* 2018: 1039), an addition of the construct CTS may offer a useful clinical conceptualisation of traumatic stress which is ongoing. A situation such as that which exists under the exacerbating effects during COVID-19, where there is protracted threat to survival, as expressed by the following respondents, would arguably be included amongst the circumstances contemplated by Kaminer *et al.* (2018).

> **In LTE COVID-19 impact**. **44:24 ¶ 52.** *My family lost their jobs. I didn't know how to survive. I didn't receive anything* [grant or food parcel]. **Basic sewing student 49, 2020.**

> **In LTE COVID-19 impact. 44:34 ¶ 75.** *I feel that the world is coming to an end.* **Basic computers student 7, 2020.**

> **In LTE COVID-19 impact .44:51 ¶ 40.** *It's like I'm trapped in this dark nightmare and waiting for someone to come and wake me and tell me it's over.* **Basic sewing student 43, 2020.**

All of these conclusions point directly to the likely identification of CTS in the participants in the present study, in their exposure to continuous threat of violence in their communities and in facing danger associated with a threat to daily survival. The identification of likely CTS in the lives of the participants serves as an added dimension to understanding the de-humanising effect of powerlessness.

5.4 Discussion of findings of the de-humanising effect of powerlessness and integration with theoretical framework

As with Section 5.4 above, this section would also be considered to be part of Osmer's (2008) interpretive task of Practical Theology.

5.4.1 Drawing propositions from themes

When presenting theoretical propositions in this chapter, I have been guided by Saldaña (2016: 278) who makes the following helpful observations about such propositions:

> *In general, a theory states what and how and preferably why something happens… A theory is not so much a story as it is a proverb (e.g., 'If you lie down with dogs, you'll wake up with fleas'. It is a condensed lesson of wisdom we formulate from our experiences that we pass along to other generations. Aesop's fables have morals; our research tales have theories.*

Accordingly, the analysis in this chapter postulates what happens and why something happens in situations of economic distress and powerlessness. Saldaña (2016: 203) recommends taking the themes and their related data and exploring how they integrate or relate to the theoretical framework, which is the approach followed here. The analysis discusses noticeable links between the themes and the theoretical basis of the de-humanising effect of powerlessness as a prominent feature of the data collected, as expressed vividly by one of the participants.

> ***In Bathandwa M[273]. 9:1 ¶ 125.*** *I never felt like I had the power to do anything. So I was at a level whereby I felt helpless. Nothing I could do was gonna take me out of whatever I was doing.*

The four themes extracted from the data analysis, namely 'economically needing', 'emotionally needing', 'spiritually needing' and 'exacerbating deprivation during COVID-19 pandemic', are all reflections of the de-humanising effect of powerlessness among the participants. The analysis of these themes arising from the data leads me to make propositions suggesting relationships between these ideas and the evidence apparent in the theoretical framework presented specifically in the literature reviews in

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[273] A reminder is included here that all students' names are pseudonyms.

Chapters 2 and 3. The themes and their related data serve as illustrative examples to support the interpretation and presentation of the three propositions or "theoretical constructs", according to Saldaña (2016: 203), which follow.

5.4.2 Theoretical Construct 1: Those experiencing powerlessness are held captive by the 'god-complexes' of the non-poor

5.4.2.1 'God-complexes' and systems of disempowerment

This theoretical construct is drawn largely from an interpretation of the theme 'economically needing', which will be discussed in this section. Myers (2011: 15) points out that, amongst the non-poor, selfishness, love of power and sentiments of privilege manifest themselves as 'god-complexes' (Section 5.1). 'God-complexes' is used to refer to the entire social system of disempowerment those in severe deprivation find themselves due to exploitation and exclusion by the non-poor. 'God-complexes' is a collective term since it involves the inter-play of various holders of power who work in conjunction to keep those suffering deprivation powerless (Christian 1999:122). The holders of power believe themselves to be superior and use systems such as government, the law and bureaucracies to entrench their rule, thus 'playing god' in the lives of those in economic distress (Myers: 2011: 123ff). Poverty is therefore frequently the result of injustice in economic, political and social systems which causes oppression and entrapment of those experiencing deprivation within poverty, and evangelical theology has strongly acknowledged the close ties between poverty and institutional and corporate sin (Christian 1999: 69).

As discussed in Section 3.6.4, Christian (1999: 158) refers to this entrapment as "captivity in a web of lies". Christian's imagery suggests that, in the same way that a spider's prey would be held in its web with no available means of escape, those experiencing powerlessness are led to believe that their situation will never change, thus ensuring perpetuation of powerlessness (Christian 1999: 161). It is therefore easy to see why the 'web of lies' is an evocative representation of their captivity within poverty due to powerlessness sustained by systems, structures and attitudes, including the attitude of the non-poor who are in control of 'god-complexes'. The lies within the systems, making up the 'web of lies', are identified in Myers' (2011: 130) visual representation in Figure 3 below.

Theme	Social system	Lie
Captivity to the 'god-complexes' of the non-poor	Social	You are outside the social system.
	Political	Your purpose is to serve us.
	Economic	You have no assets, nor should you.
	Religious	We will speak to God on your behalf.
'Marred identity' of the poor	Social	We are not worthy of inclusion.
	Political	We are not worthy of participation.
	Economic	We have nothing to contribute.
	Religious	We are not worthy of God's concern.
Inadequacies in worldview	Social	Our place in the social order is fixed.
	Political	They are supposed to rule over us.
	Economic	Over poverty is ordained.
	Religious	We sinned: God gives us what we deserve.
Deception by the principalities and powers	Social	Social systems are not for the likes of you.
	Political	Political systems are not for the likes of you.
	Economic	Economic systems are not for the likes of you.
	Religious	God is not for the likes of you.
Weakness of mind, body, and spirit	Social	I'm not smart enough.
	Political	I'm uneducated.
	Economic	I'm too weak to matter; I have nothing.
	Religious	I can't understand these things anyway.

Figure 3. Myers' (2011: 130) adaptation of components of Christian's (1999) 'web of lies'

An interpretation of the data demonstrates the extent of imprisonment in a 'web of lies', as a result of 'god-complexes', as is apparent in the exposition below, and vividly expressed by the following participant:

> **In Sibabalwe M. 2:12 ¶ 92.** *I always told myself that I'm like this, that this is my life. Yeah, but if I could change, that would be like,* [whistles] *it would be a miracle to change. I was not someone who set goals and stuff like that. I never knew anything about that. Now we talk about the future, something that I thought I never had.*

The theme 'economically needing', refers to the financial impact of poverty, including inability to generate income. This inability to generate income can be seen as the direct result of the participants being captive to the 'god-complexes' of the non-poor in the form of the social, political and economic systems over which the powerful exercise control.

5.4.2.2 'God-complexes' cause economic deprivation

The theme 'economically needing' revealed that most of the participants acknowledged that they were lacking in skills prior to their arrival at LTE. This had prevented them from being gainfully employed and some had never had a "proper job", eking out a living from temporary or 'piece' work, as the following respondent testifies:

> ***In Daniel M 8:2 ¶ 107.*** *I think this whole year, I was never financially stable in any way. Like, I never got a cheque this, this year, the only time that I remember that I worked was just a piece job that I got like two hundred rand. That's the money that I had this year.*

It was evident that their inability to generate revenue perpetuated their powerlessness, which culminated in feelings of desperation and hopelessness, leading to criminal activity, which is discussed below. In this way the data mirrors what scholars like Chambers, whose views were discussed in Section 3.3.4, as quoted in Myers (2011: 115-116), are saying about those in severe deprivation being in entangled in a "cluster of disadvantage" where there is poverty in lack of assets, coupled with isolation, physical weakness and vulnerability against disaster or emergencies. Chambers (1983: 103-39) thus speaks of an interactive system operating as a "poverty trap". These findings are also consistent with Standing's (2014) observations of the wage-earning class of workers he terms "the precariat". Standing (2014: 10), in his articulation of societal hierarchy, postulates that the proletariat[274] are being replaced by an emerging lowest echelon of workers termed 'the precariat', whose work is characterised by unstable, intermittent labour or temporary jobs[275].

The data revealed how the participants are subject to power inequality and are systematically excluded from political, administrative, legal and economic processes. This ties in with Christian's (1999: 121) insight that, through pervasive 'god-complexes', the non-poor exert influence over the lives of those experiencing poverty, to the detriment of the latter. The influence of 'god-complexes' is evident too in the comments of Standing (2014) to the effect that these lowest wage earners are exploited outside the workplace as well as in it. In the workplace they are excluded from paid leave, pensions, retrenchment pay-outs and medical insurance subsidisation. Outside the workplace they are precluded from rights-based state benefits such as unemployment funds, as well as private benefits such as investments

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[274] The proletariat were traditionally the lowest working group earning wages but Stander (2014: 10) argues convincingly that the proletariat consisting of a uniform mass of working class labourers no longer exists.

[275] Standing's claims are borne out by South African statistics which record that 34,4% of the working age population was unemployed in the second quarter of 2021. In light of this colossal figure, and in order to provide a livelihood, 1,8 million people in 2017 had to resort to self-employment in the informal sector, defined in terms of a lack of tax registration and number of employees. The main reason given was inability to find employment, where these individuals are acknowledged by the government to be the most vulnerable people with inadequate qualifications. For the present study, it is noteworthy that 90,8% of these people are black Africans (Statssa 2017).

and funds from contributory insurance funds (Standing 2014: 10) [276]. Because the wages of the precariat are minimal and volatile, they live in a state of "chronic economic uncertainty" (Standing 2014: 10). Like Standing's 'precariat', the participants to the study experience exploitation by the 'god-complexes' of the non-poor, living without public services and deprived of civil, political, cultural and economic rights[277].

A stark example from the data of 'god-complexes' causing deprivation of economic rights, as indicated by Standing, is apparent in the assurances made of payment of governmental COVID-19 Social Relief of Distress Grants of R350. Problems such as incorrect eligibility found that individuals initially rejected actually qualified, with backlogs resulting in delays, causing the implementation to be compromised (Schotte & Zizzamia 2021: 4) At the time of being interviewed, the LTE students responded with almost unanimity that the politicians and government officials had failed to make good on their promises, as indicated in Section 5.3.2 above. As a result of seeking to 'play god' in the lives of the vulnerable, and failing to deliver, many of the LTE students were plunged into near starvation due to COVID-19 lockdown, keeping them powerless (Christian 1999: 122). The following respondent captures this state of desperation.

> ***In LTE COVID-19 impact. 44:51 ¶ 40.*** *It* [lockdown] *was very bad as most of my family members lost their jobs, some got infected, they were quarantined with hunger. Many people lost their jobs and they were promised food parcels but none received and the UIF grant, none.* ***Basic sewing student 43, 2020.***

Two codes which pointed to the theme 'economically needing', and which demonstrated 'god-complexes' causing economic deprivation, are 'lacking in skills/employment' and 'inability to meet responsibilities'. The pervasiveness of poverty experiences was apparent in the participants' lives and their imprisonment in powerlessness. In the seventeen student interviews alone, it is noteworthy that 'lacking in skills/employment' is coded thirty-one times. An extract from quotations referring to the codes 'lacking in skills/employment' follows.

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[276] Labour legislation offering protection to workers in South Africa is only applicable to workers in the formal sector (Hurlbut 2018: 104).

[277] The World Bank report provides the example of the under-developed public transport system resulting in high costs of commuting, rendering it a burden for those in deprivation to gain better employment in the formal sector (Hurlbut 2018: 88).

> *In Bulelani M. 4:10 ¶ 80.* *…there was this lack of skills.*

> *In Daniel M. 8:2 ¶ 107.* *I mean it's November and, where am I, I'm nowhere, no money, nothing, no job. What do I have to show? Nothing. I've got nothing to show. I haven't been employed, I haven't had a cheque.*

As a consequence of lacking in skills and having no employment opportunities, inadequate or no income was being generated. This meant that the participants were unable to meet their responsibilities, both personal and to their families, as recorded in the code 'inability to meet responsibilities' and as alluded to in the sample of quotations selected.

> *In Lonwabo M. 3:6 ¶ 63.* *I have responsibilities to take care. So I couldn't just sit there like when folding arms and depend on my brothers.*

> *In Thembeka F. 1:4 ¶ 99.* *Yes, it is the finances because I can't take care of my kids now.*

> *In Zintle F. 13:9 ¶ 63.* *I'm a new mum again, with no work, with no money.*

A striking fact which emerged from the interviews was how many participants were financially responsible for extended family members, such as parents, grandparents and siblings. Where a participant was unemployed, several other family members too were affected, as this participant explains.

> *In Nandipha F. 6:2 ¶ 48.* *It's not easy always because it's a big family as I told you and it's not only us, we've got family, like mothers and fathers also, both sides. I'm staying at home. I didn't like that. But what can I do? There's no work.*

It was inferred from the data that it was a struggle to pay rent, buy food and clothing and load electricity, as described by this respondent.

> *In Nandipha F. 6:17 ¶ 101.* *I can see the electricity box, that the electricity is going, is going to be finished today. Then I'd say, 'if I was working, if', but now I am not working so I must learn to accept the situation at that moment.*

In essence, the data revealed that the participants endure unimaginable hardship, due to financial need, which results in the perpetuation of powerlessness, as is evident in the quotation below.

> *In LTE help inspire. 18:117 ¶ 217.* *I am from a very poor background where we go to bed on empty stomachs, from a big family of 10 siblings.* *Woodwork student 5 2020.*

This ties in with Schotte and Zizzamia's (2021) investigation into township livelihood impacts of COVID-19 in Khayelitsha where they reported that those who, with the onset of lockdown, were unemployed or in informal employment and therefore in a

position of "economic insecurity and instability", were the hardest hit economically by the effects of COVID-19 lockdown (Schotte & Zizzamia 2021: 11).

5.4.2.3 'God-complexes' cause various forms of socio-economic harm

In addition to suffering directly caused by the pandemic, there were many forms of suffering apparent related to socio-economic factors. Through different means, the holders of power within situations of poverty 'play god' over the lives of those in economic disadvantage, creating 'god-complexes' within poverty relationships (Christian 1999:122). It is arguable that other harm is caused by the non-poor 'playing god' in the lives of those who are vulnerable through institutionalised means. For instance, the message communicated by the non-poor to the most economically deprived through exclusion from the economic system is that "you have no assets, nor should you" (Myers 2011: 130). Limited opportunities exist for the marginalised to enter mainstream commerce. Moreover, the message of 'god-complexes' conveyed by the non-poor include that "you are outside the social system" (Myers 2011:130), resulting in an absence of protection from varying forms of harm or damage.

Examples of other harm suffered, owing to socio-economic factors in the data, include Khanyisa's (17: 137) house being burned down and her losing all her belongings. One student confided in me about being HIV positive and the accompanying health struggles. Thozoma (12: 22) experienced unspeakable tragedy in her life when her shack burnt down while she was out, killing her young child, resulting in Thozoma's prosecution, leaving her with a criminal record. In addition, Section 5.4.3.4 below details how several of the LTE staff told me about the "red flag" warnings of socio-economic problems experienced by the students, which include physical, emotional and sexual abuse. Suffering, in the form of gender-based violence and substance abuse, was evident, such as in the quotation below.

> *In LTE help inspire.doc. 18:122 ¶ 225. I'm raised by a single parent who is taking care of four. This only happened because of gender- based violence and we were left with my mother to take care of us. I was never a troubling child but I was a troubled child as I couldn't cope with what was happening. Barista student 16, 2020.*

Unexpectedly, several participants informed me, unsolicited, and not related to any specific question, of their participation in gangsterism and criminal activities while unemployed. The reason implied was desperation to survive, given their unemployment. Mbulelo (15) pointed out scars on his face and head, clearly visible

to me even across the computer screen[278], the consequences of living a life of danger on the streets. Another LTE student, Sibabalwe (2: 92), refers to himself as a "jailbird". A drug addiction has left him with impaired short-term memory so that he frequently cannot recall the question which was asked, and his sentences would trail off. A sample of the relevant quotations follows.

> ***In LTE help inspire. 18:10 ¶ 23.*** *I will be sitting at home doing nothing, and the result of that is my life will be shattered because I will end up doing things which are not legal and live a hell life.* ***Barista student 7 2020.***

> ***In Sibabalwe M. 2:10 ¶ 72.*** *I only knew crime. I was good at that. That was the only thing that I knew. I also told myself that I would never work. I would never do anything because this is what I know best ever. I loved illegal things.*

> ***In Lonwabo M. 3:9 ¶ 75.*** *Because now like, peer pressure is there when we are unemployed. And the only option you have now. Okay, there's no other way. So just trying to survive, I have to survive, doesn't matter how do I survive, I have to make a way of living. So I was exposed to drugs and also gangsterism, like everyone in the streets, like no one wants to, the moment we don't work, the only option you have is become a gangster and I have to make a living…*

This reliance on a life of crime echoes the insights of Myers (2011: 130), who, applying Christian's term 'marred identities', illustrates how 'god-complexes' cause 'marred identities' of those in economic distress, resulting in them appropriating the message that "[w]e are not worthy of inclusion". This holds true for economic life and so those excluded believe that they have to resort to criminal activities.

5.4.2.4 'God-complexes' result in a failure to protect the vulnerable from crime and violence

The prevalence of crime and gangsterism which emerged from the data reinforces the link between socio-economic vulnerability, including apartheid's legacy, and crime and violence in society. Reference is made here to the study of Kaminer *et al.* (2013), mentioned in Section 5.3.3.3 above, which established the prevalence of prolonged exposure of adolescents to multiple forms of violence amongst certain communities in the Western Cape region, in which Khayelitsha is situated. The research of Kaminer *et al*. draws attention to ongoing violence in close proximity to the participants' residences and the exposure of the study's participants to prolonged trauma. An example is how the participant, Lonwabo, (3:9) speaks about "everyone on the streets" being exposed to gangsterism and, for the unemployed youth, gangsterism being "the only option".

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[278] A reminder is included that this was the COVID-19 precautionary method of holding interviews.

Khayelitsha has one of the highest violent crime rates in the country, as discussed in Section 1.4.2, (saps.gov. 2021), with noticeable deterioration during lockdown when the field work was conducted, prompting Schotte and Zizzamia (2021: 16), in their aforementioned study on conditions in Khayelitsha during lockdown, to comment that "the economic downturn appears to have been accompanied by a surge in opportunistic criminality as well as organized crime". This means that the participants would have been directly affected by high levels of crime, including violent crime and the threat thereof.

Once again evidence surfaces of the likelihood of the participants experiencing the condition known as continuous traumatic stress or 'CTS', discussed in Section 5.3.3. In support of this contention, Eagle and Kaminer (2013: 89) understand CTS to occur "in contexts in which danger and threat are largely faceless and unpredictable, yet pervasive and substantive". A common context listed by them is that of exposure to "chronic community violence" (Eagle & Kaminer 2013: 89), such as the Cape Flats[279], where Khayelitsha is located, where gang violence is ubiquitous and security forces are unable to intervene to protect members of the community.

'God-complexes' are evident in the governmental failures whereby the non-poor are unable to protect the vulnerable from pervasive community crime and violence. Kaminer *et al.* (2013: 122) suggest structural issues of historical oppression and socio-economic marginalisation to be the cause of the ubiquity of violence in society. A recent survey has revealed that systemic failures in service delivery, including inadequate lighting and un-navigable vehicular pathways, render law enforcement ineffective (Kiewit 2021). These are all indications of 'god-complexes' of the non-poor, who create structural, institutional systems which operate unfavourably towards those who are marginalised in society and entrap them in powerlessness.

5.4.2.5 'God-complexes' prevent access to education necessary for employment

Further evidence of 'god-complexes' was found in the theme 'economically needing', arising from the code 'lacking in skills/employment', relating to the education received by participants. The educational system is one such system over which the non-poor maintain control and in respect of which such control operates against those

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[279] In support of their assertion, the authors quote here a 2008 study by Shields, Nadasen and Pierce.

experiencing deprivation. Quality education is a benefit which leads to employment, yet this benefit remains in the hands of the non-poor, leaving those in economic distress unable to find employment (Hurlbut 2018: 83). Turok *et al.* (2021: 75) highlight how black communities have traditionally been denied access to suburbs with well-resourced schools due to spatial segregation which exists to the present day. The Hermanus branch manager, Monica Pike, identifying herself as a recipient of unsatisfactory apartheid education for black people, emphasised the extent of disadvantage caused by black education in the past, as well as in the present, because of apartheid's enduring influence. She reported how students in the sewing and baking classes had to be taught the basics of kilograms and centimetres since measurement is simply not part of what is taught in poorly resourced schools (MP47: 4). Selected quotations from the data illuminate the severity of the participants' joblessness and lack of skills.

> *In Lulama F. 10:2 ¶ 66.* Ever since I left school in 2018 I never had a job.
>
> *In LTE help inspire. 18:89 ¶ 16.7* I had a very rough background, poor, no opportunities for skill development. **Bake for Profit student 25 2020.**
>
> *In Thozoma F. 12:1 ¶ 2.8.* I was sitting at home, plus minus five years.

An obvious example of how 'god-complexes' of the non-poor affect the most materially deprived is found in the testimony of Lulama (10: 85), who spoke of having written her final school exams in the midst of daily protests, as mentioned in Section 1.4.2, in the streets outside her house, due to the failure of government to provide basic services to her community in Zwelihle outside Hermanus. The environment in which she found herself, at the mercy of institutional 'god-complex' failures in the form of service delivery neglect, and subject to the devastating effects of apartheid's legacy, was wholly unsuitable for studying purposes. As a result, Lulama explained that she did not attain the results which would have gained her acceptance into university. Instead she approached a tertiary education college but, after one week of attending classes, was rejected when she was unable to pay the fees instalment due, as it was unaffordable on her mother's domestic worker's wages. 'God-complexes' were once again evident in the college's restrictive admission's policy requiring an admission fee which was prohibitive to all but the non-poor. Educational systems, affected by inequality in power relationships and 'god-complexes' conspired to prevent Lulama from escaping captivity in poverty.

A further example of the pervasiveness of 'god-complexes', impacting the employability of those in socio-economic suffering, is found in the story of Maita, a young woman originally from Zimbabwe, who told of countless times of having been excluded from educational and employment opportunities because she was, what she termed, "a foreigner" (5: 66). Possibilities for financial independence and a way out of poverty were thwarted by her systematic exclusion from access to skills training and employment, owing to 'god-complexes' in the form of institutionally determined eligibility requirements such as visas and residence status.

What we see in the instance of Maita and Lulama is an important hallmark of poverty relationships whereby those in vulnerable economic circumstances are consistently obstructed from entering the mainstream of society (Christian 1999: 125). The data confirms that poverty is about power relationships and the inequality of those relationships which keep the disadvantaged in captivity to their circumstances of poverty (Christian 1999: 121). The plight of those on the margins of society is maintained by the powerful evil structures of society, as particularly obvious in the cases of Maita and Lulama. The non-poor 'play god' in the lives of the vulnerable in a network of relationships which do not work for them, according to Myers (2011:15). These factors cause Standing's classification of 'the precariat' to live with a consciousness of deprivation, with anxiety, alienation, anger and anomie (despair of escape from their precarious status) (Standing 2014: 11).

5.4.3 Theoretical Construct 2: Powerlessness results in a flawed perception of human dignity

5.4.3.1 Human dignity and the 'web of lies'

A further feature of the situation of powerlessness is how it feeds those affected with flawed assumptions about their human dignity. The findings revealed that the participants largely failed to appreciate their worth through having been made in the image and likeness of God, prior to their arrival at LTE. Robinson (2011: 175) effectively sums up the meaning of the *imago Dei* for contemporary application in a world yearning to connect with what ultimately defines us, as follows: "To be created in the *imago Dei* means above all that we are loved infinitely by Christ who draws us into a life of love ultimately fulfilled in our divine destiny". As discussed in Section 2.9, human beings are imbued with human dignity purely by virtue of the *imago Dei*, as amplified by covenant and the Incarnation, and nothing can alter that. Koopman

(2007: 178) emphasises how human dignity is not something which can be withdrawn, yet those in positions of powerlessness often apply a subjective estimation of their human dignity, based on their standing in society. Moreover, due to the 'web of lies', the economically deprived suffer 'marring of identity' (Christian 1999: 157) which leads them to believe that they have no human dignity. In the present study, this was found to be true, with the result that a person's perception of their human dignity was almost universally found to be diminished. It was established that the domination system caused wounds in the oppressed which made them feel valueless (Christian 1999: 123).

5.4.3.2 Feelings of worthlessness affecting human dignity

The interpretation that powerlessness results in a flawed perception of human dignity amongst the vulnerable and marginalised is given authority by the responses in 'feelings of worthlessness', one of the codes attached to the theme 'spiritually needing'. Quotations attached to this code were any comments made by the participants about not feeling good about themselves, having no self-confidence, feeling "defeated", not feeling worthy, having no self-respect, not believing in themselves and needing to change because of negative feelings. Examples of comments coded under 'feelings of worthlessness' follow.

> *In Graduate story Sasha (32).* *I was a very negative person, and I did not believe much in myself.*
>
> *In LTE Facebook posts. 19:18 ¶ 54.* *I don't have much going for myself.*
>
> *In LTE life skills evaluation. 43:44 ¶ 78.* *I was down and felt defeated.* *LTE student 4, 2018.*
>
> *In Sibabalwe M. 2:7 ¶ 64.* *Did I feel good about myself? No. Did I think my life was worth something? Nah. Feeling good is doing good. When you feel good you do good. Yeah, so I didn't do good at all. I used to hurt people because I was hurt a lot.*

The data contained direct references to human dignity as well as implied references, such as comments about the participants looking down on themselves. Such references are clear indications of the impact of the debilitating 'web of lies' formulated by Christian (1999). This disempowering impact of the 'web of lies' is discussed further by Myers (2011:130), who observes how those already in economic distress believe that they are "not worthy of inclusion" in society and "have nothing to contribute". Noteworthy is how frequently diminished awareness of human dignity was due to

judgmental treatment by the community of the participants, because of their deprivation and unemployment, as is evident in the following quotation:

> *In Fezile M. 7:10 ¶ 179.* *But when you're unemployed, you see how the community looks at you like. It can make you feel like you are a waste.*

The frequency with which the participants mentioned lacking in self-esteem and self-confidence was remarkable, with the 'feelings of worthlessness' code reflecting a massive number of thirty-five times that this idea was coded in the seventeen student interviews alone, aside from the LTE-sourced documents. As a result, there were strong indications of participants having very little self-respect and minimal appreciation of their human dignity, as this sample of quotations demonstrates.

> *In Student follow-ups 2018.* *I was confused and lost. I had a low self-esteem. My life was terrible and I couldn't find a job.*

> *In Graduate story Ntombentsha.* *Life has been hard, and this resulted in low self-esteem.*

> *In Daniel M. 8:7 ¶ 152.* *I hit rock bottom….I was broken, emotionally, physically, mentally, in any form that you can think of…there comes a time where you feel like you are useless, you know.*

> *In Bulelani M. 4:11 ¶ 80.* *So, you, you think that okay, I'm worthless.*

> *In Khanyisa F. 17:16 ¶ 227.* *I was struggling so my dignity was very low…*

> *In Lulama F. 10:9 ¶ 102.* *I did not believe in myself that much. I had low self-esteem. A lot of things had happened in my life. That's why I ended up losing my self-esteem, losing my self-dignity… looking down on myself…*

5.4.3.3 Human dignity affected by mental and emotional distress

Furthermore, under the theme 'emotionally needing', the code 'stressing mentally' presented the participants' emotional distress with accompanying negative feelings about themselves. These factors are clear indicators of their failure to recognise their human dignity in light of the *imago Dei*. 'Stressing mentally' was the term which I attributed wherever mention was made of feelings of anxiety, worry, depression or circumstances described which implied a negative emotional state. The data revealed that stressing mentally is a very real phenomenon for many, if not most, of the participants. Some of the participants, as in the following examples, reported having been diagnosed medically with depression.

> *In Lonwabo M. 3:4 ¶ 59.* The other thing last year, I was discovered with depression. It's very difficult. There are times where I feel like I'm drowning and then I always struggle.

> *In Maita F. 5:4 ¶ 86.* So it just took a lot for my mental state. I was really depressed, I was down.

> *In Fezile M. 7:2 ¶ 94.* So I had pressure. It can make you depressed, you see.

> *In LTE help inspire. 18:121 ¶ 224.* I'd still be stuck, depressed, not motivated and having less belief in myself. *Barista student 16, 2020.*

Others, as in the quotations below, display apparent symptoms of depression or emotional distress, such as feeling low, sleeping excessively, weeping and becoming withdrawn.

> *In Anathi F. 11:14 ¶ 138.* It's only afterwards that you realise that you are emotionally down. Because when you are in the situation, you don't realise how much you are emotionally down.

> *In Nandipha F. 6:14 ¶ 101.* I thought, if I talk about these things, I am going to stress them about these things. So I didn't want to put that pressure on them. So I just bottled things on me. Because if I, if I talk about this, sometimes I will cry.

> *In Thozoma F. 12:10 ¶ 50.* But the only thing that you do, you cover yourself with blankets, you're sleeping or you're watching the TV the whole day, or even if you think you're watching the TV, your mind and your heart is not with what you were watching, but you were thinking about what will happen to my life, what is going to happen, how this situation I'm facing will change.

> *In LTE help inspire. 18:12 ¶ 28.* My life would be terrible. Because I would sleep the whole day. *Bake for Profit student 1, 2020.*

> *In Zintle F. 13:2 ¶ 47.* …you cannot even show much affection to your child.

Many, as in the examples below, feel as though they are carrying a burden, which is made heavier by the shame of having to ask for help, which impacts their dignity. I heard frequently how the participants felt that they had to conceal their actual emotional state due to feelings of shame.

> ***In LTE help inspire. 18:83 ¶ 155.*** *Wow, you would see me happy every time you see me but deep inside I am hurting. Thing that happening in my home is very bad.* ***Bake for Profit student 19, 2020.***

> ***In Nandipha F. 6:4 ¶ 68.*** *And there was nothing, nothing. And then we must ask for hand outs and in our culture, I don't know, maybe in somebody else's culture is [inaudible] is different but, in our culture, that takes a lot.*

> ***In Daniel M. 8:19 ¶ 245.*** *So, these are moments where I find myself worrying, I find myself stressing, and I find myself feeling as if I'm not contributing to the society, I'm doing nothing, I'm just breathing and eating, that's all I'm doing, and that just doesn't sit well with me.*

There were even insinuations of the most severe feelings of mental and emotional stress where the students could no longer tolerate their situation and thoughts of suicide arose.

> ***In Nomvula F. 16:3 ¶ 59.*** *I have many problems, especially the financial problems, I started to say, Oh, God just take me because I can't live in this world without any money.*

> ***In LTE help inspire. 18:111 ¶ 205.*** *I almost take my life Sunday night because of the tough time I've been facing.* ***Basic sewing student 1, 2019.***

Mental and emotional stress was directly linked to the difficulty in finding employment, as expressed by Bathandwa (9) and Fezile (7), as well as due to financial problems and not being able to imagine a different future, as expressed by Anathi (11: 139) as follows: "I hate the idea of not knowing the direction of my life and not knowing the next step". Distress was also owing to coping with the relentlessness of daily survival, as expressed by Nomvula (16:161), whose desperation was revealed in her comment that she had thought of going "under the bridge" in Umfuleni "to be a prostitute".

5.4.3.4 Human dignity affected by exposure to violence

Mental and emotional stress was also owing to fear of gender-based violence, as expressed by Maita (5: 94). Since gangsterism and criminal activities were evident in the areas where the participants lived, it was implied that their mental and emotional stress was also connected to factors like exposure to gangsterism and violence. Lonwabo (3: 87) confirmed the presence of this exposure when commenting about Khayelitsha, that "…there were lots of things going around in the place where I grew up, it's notorious and it's full of gangsterism and drugs". Section 1.4.2 referred to Schotte & Zizzamia's (2021: 18) study which noted an increase in crime and overt gangster activity during the time of lockdown when the participants in the present study were questioned. This was confirmed by the testimony of participants, such as the following:

> ***In LTE COVID-19 impact. 44:59 ¶ 83.*** *It* [lockdown] *also increased theft in our community. I feel shattered, COVID-19 has taken our normal life, we have become prisoners. I fear my future. I feel stuffed up, prisoned.* ***Barista student 8, 2020.***

Ms Kruger divulges details of the "red flags" of socio-economic problems, including physical and sexual abuse (GK50: 2). She describes the "the absolute desperation" of LTE students at not having food on the table, having no money for transport to get to class and suggestions made that the only way they are able to pay for their course fees is through engaging in work as a sex worker (GK50: 3). Ms Madikane and Ms Joemath both shared incidents of physical abuse suffered by LTE students in their classes. Ms Madikane recounted a story of a student in her class who confided in her about suffering ongoing domestic violence at the instance of her boyfriend (BM49: 6). Ms Joemath had a student arrive in her class with a black eye and had to assist her in laying a charge of assault and obtaining a protection order at the police station (RJ46: 2).

Further, as regards the violence to which the participants are exposed, Ms Kruger speaks of them "…seeing a lot of violence around them, being fearful of the gangs that are now looking for a protection fee, seeing neighbours shot in front of them,… one of our students was kidnapped and so he went through a very traumatic experience…" (GK50: 3). It will be recalled too, as discussed in Section 1.4.3, how Schotte & Zizzamia (2021) observed an increase of "psychological distress" amongst the most vulnerable during the period of lockdown during which the field work was undertaken. The authors suggest that the cause is the decreased agency and control over their circumstances, stating that "[t]his sense relates to both the perceived inability to determine one's own *health* outcomes in a pandemic context, as well as the perceived inability to secure viable *livelihood* strategies" (authors' emphasis) (Schotte & Zizzamia 2021: 19). In other words, the de-humanising effects of powerlessness is evident in terms of the trauma caused by the exacerbating effects of COVID-19.

5.4.3.5 Human dignity affected by continuous traumatic stress (CTS)

Once again, understanding of the participants' experiences of mental and emotional stress, affecting their human dignity, is sought in the notion of CTS. It is to be remembered that, for Straker (2013: 211), context is critical, whereby CTS is an "overarching concept that can encompass a number of traumatic stress conditions and not just civil conflict". CTS is germane in these circumstances in contextualising the

experiences of the participants, in finding the psychological distress distinguishable from a pathological condition such as PTSD, and, indeed, finding the symptoms of traumatic stress to be normal, according to Diamond, *et. al*. (2013).   In their view, persons living under conditions of ongoing traumatic stress are distinguishable from those suffering from PTSD, as the former often show no scarring, as is evident in PTSD, yet they demonstrate fear and anxiety which is evident in PTSD.

The authors accordingly propose an alternative framework, which they term Ongoing Traumatic Stress Response ("OTSR"), which addresses a range of meaningful clinical responses, which are nonpathological[280], in instances of psychological distress as a result of prolonged traumatic stress (Diamond *et al*. 2013: 102).   In finding such manifestations to be nonpathological, they state thus: "In this context, anxiety responses to ongoing traumatic stress may be conceived as normal reactions to abnormal conditions" (Diamond *et al.* 2013: 102)[281]. Diamond *et al.* (2013: 108) are therefore of the view that fear, distress and anxiety associated with OTSR are normal and to be expected. The authors conclude by remarking pertinently that CTS provides an epistemological base from which to understand the experiences of "individuals living in currently precarious and violence-ridden contexts" (Eagle & Kaminer 2013: 97).

The conclusion can be drawn in the present study that the mental and emotional distress described by the participants is probably associated with CTS due to the relentlessness of their struggle for survival, frequently in a violent environment. Strong support for this contention is to be found in the observations of Benjamin and Carolissen (2015: 415), who comment that: "[m]arginalized groups experience *persistent,* cumulative stress as a result of their oppressed position in society…" (authors' emphasis). Confirmation is provided by Kaminer *et al.* (2018: 1039) who, in examining the case of CTS occurring specifically in certain communities in South Africa, find it to be a context of "high prevalence for CTS".

Inevitably mental and emotional distress affects how people understand their own human dignity. It was established that the participants' feelings of worthlessness and

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[280] i.e. not caused by physical or mental disease

[281] Their observation of participants living in conditions of terror in parts of Israel, where missile attacks were imminent, revealed that many did not associate the onset of their anxiety with the recollection of a specific event, but as a response to a future likely threat, and their emotional state did not reflect any of the hallmarks of PTSD, such as helplessness, flashbacks or hyper-vigilance (Diamond *et al.* 2013: 102).

negative feelings about themselves were a reflection of what the study's theoretical foundation suggested, in that these feelings portray a 'marred identity', as observed by Christian (1999: 139) amongst those already in economic distress. A "negative imprint", according to Christian (1999: 140), is etched on the minds of the severely disadvantaged through a lifetime of having been oppressed and exploited by the 'god-complexes' of the non-poor. Their ability to evaluate their situation critically, and their capacity to form aspirations, have been stunted, suggests Christian. Years of powerlessness and exploitation causes pain and inevitable distortion of their identities to the extent that they believe the 'web of lies' that their place in the social order is fixed and their poverty is immutable (Myers 2011: 130). It was observed how South Africa's apartheid past has had a compounding effect on the 'marred identity' of the participants. Ms Madikane commented that "it [apartheid] has taken a lot from their self-worth…it's almost like it's engraved in…[their] minds, like whites are better than you…" (BM49: 4).

Since the vulnerable and marginalised feel valueless, wounded and powerless, they are deceived into believing that they are not made in the image of God (Christian 1999: 153)[282]. The effects of trauma have a bearing on the distortion of identities, such effects being easily masked in a context where people are struggling to survive (Benjamin & Carolissen 2015: 421). The authors conclude as follows concerning the consequences of living with continuous trauma: "The dehumanizing effect of insidious trauma reinforces feelings of disempowerment and hopelessness…" (Benjamin & Carolissen 2015: 428).

5.4.4 Theoretical Construct 3: Powerlessness diminishes a sense of vocation

Chapter 2 discussed how the *imago Dei* and vocation are inter-related as far as human dignity is concerned (Moltmann 1984; Sands 2010). This was borne out by the data, as is apparent in the analysis in this section.

5.4.4.1 Failing in relationships impacting vocation

It will be recalled from Sections 2.10.3 how Moltmann (1984: 23) and Medley (2002) described vocation as a person's destiny, being to reflect the image of God in all relationships. In the case of the participants to the study, the data indicates that their

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[282] Myers (2011: 15) remarks that their relationship with God who created them in God's image is distorted by an inadequate knowledge of who God is and of God's goodness and love, as discussed in 2.9.

sense of vocation has been diminished due to poverty. Contrary to reflecting the image of God in all relationships, their relationships were instead shown to be under threat, with many describing high levels of conflict and fractured relationships prior to coming to LTE.

One of the codes under the theme 'emotionally needing' was 'failing in relationships'. 'Failing in relationships' was the term given where it appeared that relationships, mainly family relationships, were suffering due to the state of deprivation in which the participant found him- or herself. It was clear that conflict was affecting relationships, which were under threat, due to the pressure of poverty[283]. There were unresolved issues, a decrease in communication and resultant unravelling of relationships, as is apparent from these selected quotations:

> *In Maita F. 5:16 ¶ 106. I was going through a lot where my relationship with my mom was falling apart, and we were staying under the same roof, but we're not like talking or anything. And I just felt so alone.*
>
> *In Nandipha F. 6:26 ¶ 141. I didn't talk with my brothers and sisters.*
>
> *In Lulama F. 10:12 ¶ 114. I can't respect people while I don't respect myself.*
>
> *In Zintle F. 13:5 ¶ 47. We went into a space whereby we just, the relationship collapsed.*

The participants attributed fractured relationships to taking frustration out on others, not wanting family members to be part of their predicament because of pride, blaming others and behaving selfishly as a survival strategy. The data demonstrated that the image of God was not reflected in the participants' relationships and therefore Moltmann and Medley's remarks that a person's vocation is to reflect the image of God in relationships was quite clearly missing.

5.4.4.2 Draining of hope impacting vocation

In addition to reflecting the image of God in all relationships, vocation attaches meaning and purpose to life. Connotations of destiny give rise to hope, an essential feature of vocation. Tinder (2003) offers an explanation of this diminution of vocation in his description of the inter-play between fate and destiny, as discussed in Section 2.7. Tinder (2003: 23) reasons that destiny is selfhood whereby no occurrence is accidental but every life experience plays a part in the actualisation of one's personal identity. Fate, however, is seen as a destructive force, coming to us as an enemy.

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[283] One of my research memos records the observation that very few of the households included the fathers of children living there, increasing the stress on the mothers to provide.

What happens is, when suffering is evident, as in situations of poverty, and events cannot be controlled, self-confidence becomes challenged and hope quickly evolves into despair as pride dictates that reality ought to be able to be brought under human beings' control. Fate becomes the natural explanation when suffering increases and hope recedes owing to the lack of human sovereignty over the world. Tinder (2003: 23) demonstrates therefore how hope becomes precarious as destiny is seen to be overthrown by fate.

In this way Tinder (2003) reinforces the inter-relationship between hope and vocation. As society's most vulnerable are deprived of hope, so they are stripped of their sense of vocation. As discussed in Section 2.10.3, hope is accordingly an essential ingredient in vocation's role in affirming human dignity. However, in circumstances of poverty, Christian (1999: 138) alerts one to the fact that lack of hope is usually the condition of those experiencing deprivation. Christian's remarks were observed in the present study, where the theme 'spiritually needing' encapsulated the code titled 'draining of hope'. 'Draining of hope' was the code attributed to any expression of a state of hopelessness, feeling powerless and the futility of even trying to change circumstances. Aside from expressly mentioning feeling powerless, many of the participants presented feelings of "sinking" and "drowning" to describe their powerlessness over their circumstances. Their despair is inferred further through feelings of giving up, being "discouraged" and "vulnerable" and believing that their lives were "meaningless". Examples of quotations implying a lack of hope follow.

> *In Student follow ups 2018. 41:9 ¶ 32.* *Being retrenched in the corporate environment and struggling to find employment has made me lose hope.*
>
> *In Bulelani M. 4:14 ¶ 92.* *As much as I try, my main fear is to fail my son.*
>
> *In Thembeka F. 1:8 ¶ 140.* *I feel like I'm losing my mind. Everything's a mess. Life is not going on, I don't see any direction.*
>
> *In Daniel M 8:13 ¶ 218.* *… the more I tried to do my own thing, the more I was drowning into this situation…So for me, I came to a point where I realised I was never in control and there was nothing that I was gonna do that was gonna help me out of anything. I had failed.*

The data thus bears evidence of what Myers (2011: 130) mentions about the distortion of the vocation in those distressed economically in that, when they accept their 'marred identity' and assume that their circumstances are permanent, their hope dissipates.

5.4.4.3 Lacking in purpose impacting vocation

According to Christian (1999: 138), hopelessness shapes the powerlessness of those in circumstances of deprivation, expressing itself as low aspirations, preventing them from meaningful action in their lives. This aspect of lack of hope was evident in the data under the code 'lacking in purpose', also one of the codes forming part of the theme of 'spiritually needing'. This phrase was employed whenever there was any indication of the participant feeling aimless, that there was no direction to life, that he or she had no idea what to do with his or her life, that life was messed up or that he or she was feeling that time was being wasted. Participants would explicitly state that, prior to their arrival at LTE, their lives lacked purpose, but would also mention feeling "lost", that they were "wasting time", "not moving", feeling "helpless" and being "stuck", as appears in samples of quotations below.

> *In LTE help inspire. 18:74 ¶ 138. I felt lost and like I had no purpose.* **Graphic design student 3, 2020.**

> *In Bathandwa M. 9:6 ¶ 167. So it was kind of frustrating the fact that I have nothing to give and I feel like I'm going nowhere. I didn't have direction. I mean, I didn't think that I had a purpose.*

> *In Anathi F. 11:13 ¶ 138. I started to realise how much I had missed out on, I had literally been able to achieve nothing.*

> *In Daniel M. 8:6 ¶ 152. Okay, so before I came to LTE, I felt like a complete failure. I cannot understand why everyone's life looks like it's going forward. And mine was just stuck.*

'Lacking in purpose' quotations also, once again, sometimes implied engaging in illegal and immoral activities and having unlawful purposes to their lives, as the following participants described.

> *In LTE help inspire. 18:82 ¶ 154. Keeping myself busy, not being with bad people in the community. I don't wanna lie, I was a bad girl doing bad things.*

> *In Sibabalwe M. 2:12 ¶ 92. I had come from the previous life that I just told you, like my brother I was also an addict, I was also like a jail bird, I was also like struggling to live life.*

> *In Daniel M. 8:7 ¶ 152. I had to hit the streets. You know, like for eight months I was there and there's nothing that I never saw there, there's nothing that I didn't do there. I saw everything and I was part of it, you know, it was that bad.*

> *In Lonwabo M. 3:16 ¶ 87. Cos like we live in a rascal way. We don't care. We live like, we are not afraid to die. I was living a notorious life…*

Since "poverty is a web of relationships within which the poor are captives" (Christian 1999: 78), the study revealed how those struggling with poverty are left deprived of a sense of vocation. The contents of Section 2.10.3 are reiterated in terms of Migliore's

(2014: 257) emphasis on hope translating into vocation. The presence of hope is a feature of vocation's role of affirming human dignity. The participants in the study, however, demonstrated feelings of depleted hope, wrapped up in failed relationships, with an absence of purpose and a sense of the futility of any effort to bring about change. In other words, the data gave rise to the theoretical construct that powerlessness diminishes vocation. Christian (1999: 138) describes the negative spiral of powerlessness and hopelessness thus: "The relationship between marred history and hopelessness causes further powerlessness, powerlessness further destroys hope, binding the poor within a vicious circle of deprivation". Eventually those trapped in powerlessness lose the capacity to hope and it requires formidable inner strength to prise themselves out of poverty. According to Myers (2011:17) the oppressed and vulnerable are deceived into believing that they have no vocation other than to serve the powerful.

5.5 Conclusion

This chapter has been concerned with a thematic interpretation of the data in relation to the de-humanising effect of powerlessness on those in economic distress as a prominent feature of the data. The themes and their related data serve as illustrative examples to support the interpretation. The context of the study was expanded on by elaborating on the nature and purpose of the FBO known as LTE from where the data was collected. The context was illuminated further by a thematic data analysis of the effects of the study having taken place during the COVID-19 pandemic lockdown during a time when the vulnerable plunged into deeper vulnerability and poverty, exposing heightened de-humanising effects of powerlessness. This observation led to a consideration of trauma as a hermeneutical aid to gain deeper understanding of what is meant by 'the poor'. After comparing the data to the applicable scholarly delineations and interpretations of trauma, it was proposed that the condition termed 'continuous traumatic stress' or 'CTS' could be applied to the circumstances of the participants.

Thereafter, in this chapter, having systematically revealed supporting evidence from the data, I have been able to make theoretical propositions, rooted in the themes, and to reach conclusions (Bazely 2013: 327). I presented three theoretical propositions, which Saldaña (2016: 203) terms "theoretical constructs", through integrating the data with the theoretical elements of the study contained in the literature review (Saldaña

2016: 203). The three theoretical constructs, derived from the thematic data analysis are:

> Theoretical Construct 1: 'Those experiencing powerlessness are held captive by the 'god-complexes' of the non-poor'
>
> Theoretical Construct 2: 'Powerlessness results in a flawed perception of human dignity'
>
> Theoretical Construct 3: 'Powerlessness diminishes a sense of vocation'.

In Theoretical Construct 1, it was indicated that the data calls for an inference to be made that those experiencing powerlessness are held captive by the 'god-complexes' of the non-poor. Systems are so oppressive that they restrict the economically deprived from any hope of changing their circumstances and poverty persists, imprisoning them in a 'web of lies'.

Next, the data confirms Theoretical Construct 2, that powerlessness results in a flawed perception of human dignity. There is diminished acceptance of inherent human dignity which rests on God having made each human being in God's image and for God's Son having died for the redemption of each human being (Myers 2011: 53). Instead, the participants vocalised feelings of worthlessness and negative feelings about themselves interwoven with mental and emotional stress. The data revealed what Myers (2011: 128) and other authorities on poverty have established, which is that the result of poverty is that people do not know who they are, which relates to the *imago Dei*, and do not believe that they have any worth or gifts of any value, which relates to vocation.

A necessary interpretation of the data accordingly led to the proposal of Theoretical Construct 3, that powerlessness diminishes a sense of vocation. Instead of imaging God in relationships, the participants spoke of wounded relationships fraught with conflict. Instead of hope, purpose and an appreciation of their destiny, the participants felt the futility of their circumstances and the meaninglessness of their lives. Thus they confirmed how a 'marred identity' and diminished vocation is the result of entrenched poverty (Myers: 2011: 128).

When those who are rendered powerless by the 'god-complexes' of the non-poor, accept their 'marred identity' and their flawed sense of vocation as their permanent

reality, their hope diminishes of escaping poverty. Myers (2011: 130) indicates that this state becomes permanent unless they can be aided in recognising their true being as having been made in God's image and in recovering their identity and vocation. That is the subject matter to which I turn in the next chapter's findings and interpretation.

CHAPTER 6.
SOCIAL TRANSFORMATION AT 'LEARN TO EARN': A THEMATIC DATA INTERPRETATION

6.1 Introduction

In this chapter, the central research question relates to the extent to which human dignity is being affirmed and whether social transformation is occurring at LTE. It would also relate to the significance of the practice of spirituality at LTE, including an assessment of the benefit contributing towards social transformation, which could be derived from the practice of spirituality, as suggested by Deneulin and Rakodi (2011: 48) and other scholars, in relation to the gap identified in the development discourse. This chapter can therefore be considered to continue Osmer's (2008) interpretive task from Chapter 5, as indicated.

The codes of relevance to this chapter were categorised according to descriptions of the perceived difference LTE made in the lives of the participants, in contrast to Chapter 5[284], where the codes related to indications of powerlessness of the participants prior to their arrival at LTE. Chapter 6 provides an exposition of prominent themes which, it will be argued, lead to an inference of human dignity being affirmed at LTE and social transformation occurring. The three themes, contrasting yet correlating with the aforementioned themes of powerlessness, I labelled 'LTE meeting economic need', 'LTE meeting emotional need' and 'LTE meeting spiritual need'. The themes included codes, as follows, which will each be discussed in this chapter:

'LTE meeting economic need' included the codes 'producing of income' and 'contributing to society', [285]

'LTE meeting emotional need' included the codes 'being respected', 'supporting encouragement', 'restoring of relationships' and 'imaging God in relationships',

'LTE meeting spiritual need' included the codes 'healing of self-worth', 'knowing God's love', 'feelings of hope' and 'knowing purpose'.

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[284] It will be recalled how, in Chapter 5, the theme 'exacerbating deprivation during COVID-19 pandemic' was identified, whereafter several of the codes fit into three themes, which I termed 'economically needing', 'emotionally needing' and 'spiritually needing', encapsulating the types of deprivation experienced by the participants and which constituted their experience of the de-humanising effect of powerlessness.

[285] See code scheme included as Addendum D for definitions of codes.

The themes reveal how the de-humanising effects of powerlessness, illustrated in Chapter 5, are addressed at LTE, and how the affirmation of human dignity, leading to social transformation, becomes possible. The data interpretation displayed clear signs of significant change in the lives of the majority of the participants, with confirmation received from staff at LTE, as the example of Ms Lipp (BL45: 8) demonstrates, that "…not everyone has the life change we hope for. But the majority of the people do. And if that takes root, the communities can change".

Once the themes had emerged from the codes, it was possible to produce theoretical constructs, according to the recommendation of Saldaña (2016: 203) again, as in Chapter 5. Following elaboration of the theoretical constructs and examination of factors relating to the affirmation of human dignity and vocation, it becomes necessary to show empirically how a kingdom of God theology plays a pivotal role in bringing about social transformation. Employing the conceptual framework in this task, I have engaged with the concept of spirituality within development discourse from the discussion in Chapter 3. Firstly, the nature of spirituality at LTE, is examined, where spirituality is informed by a kingdom of God theology. Next, using the discussions from the theoretical constructs, I have explored what value the practice of spirituality at LTE lends to movement towards social transformation. In this regard, it will be demonstrated from the data why the recent inclusion of spirituality in matters relating to development ought to be embraced by practitioners and scholars in the field.

6.2. Theoretical Construct 1: Powerlessness is overcome through having purpose

The codes which gave rise to this theoretical construct were 'knowing God's love' and 'knowing purpose', presenting in the theme 'LTE meeting spiritual need', as well as 'producing of income' and 'contributing to society', both presenting in the theme 'LTE meeting economic need'. These codes will be discussed individually so that explanations can be set forth why they lend support to the theoretical construct. In brief, it was found that when the participants experienced a knowledge of God's love, they then gained a new sense of purpose. This purpose in turn resulted in the ability to produce income and also to contribute to society. Evidence is thus supported, as discussed hereunder, of the merit of Theoretical Construct 1: 'Powerlessness is overcome through having purpose'.

6.2.1 Experience and impact of knowing God's love

Some of the participants had, due to feeling wounded or angry because of their adverse circumstances, turned their backs on God prior to their arrival at LTE, as revealed by the following respondent:

> *In Maita F. 5:18 ¶ 106. And so the whole time, religion for me was not working out because I felt like life is just so unfair. And I didn't understand what's going on…I was like, I don't understand why this is happening to me. I've worked really hard. And I've been trying, and I was like to God, 'why? Why is this?' I just kind of moved away from Christianity, and everything.*

These feelings expressed, of anger or hurt at God's apparent abandonment, confirm Christian's (1999: 57) observation that "poverty disfigures the image of God in the poor"[286]. Despite some participants having felt distant from God, due to this marring of God's image in their eyes, almost all of the students at LTE have some form of Christian background, as mentioned by Mr van Wyk, because of the Christian nature of their environment and culture. He refers to it as "an affiliation" with the Christian faith without the "relationship" (RvW48: 5). Whilst some respondents had arrived at LTE with a church attendance history, or "an affiliation" to the Christian faith, during their time at LTE, that faith had strengthened in a meaningful way so that it impacted their lives positively. This fact was confirmed by Ms Lipp (BL45: 4): "so they [LTE graduates] might say something like, 'I've learnt more about God and who he is', or 'my relationship with Jesus has been restored'. This restoration of faith is reflected in the following respondents' remarks:

> *In Mbulelo M. 15:12 ¶ 139. So, when I got to LTE and we had a church service, or we had a talk about church, it brought me closer to God….*
>
> *In Anathi F. 11:24 ¶ 144. For me personally, I think it kind of, um, pulled me back and made me understand God differently from what I'd viewed God as, and reminded me that I am in his image almost every day.*
>
> *In Nandipha F. 6:11 ¶ 89. So I always believed in him and now when I came in here, it just tightened that, that bond between me and God now. Because sometimes I would say 'why we don't have food in the cupboard'?, and 'why God won't provide'? But now I know that everything happens for a reason. And God will not give me something that I will not handle.*

During their time at LTE, the participants had been positively affected by the Christian activities and many had made a conscious decision to return to God, as indicated by the following participants:

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[286] This observation, concerning the marred image of God in the vulnerable and powerless, was also a key element in the evangelical response to poverty (Christian 1999: 68).

> ***In Bulelani M. 4:12 ¶ 84.*** *It came into my senses that okay, well, this thing is beautiful. Because if I could manage to stick with God, I could just lay off the heavy weight. So why shouldn't I go with it? Why shouldn't I engage more with him? I feel now like I'm free…*

> ***In Fezile M. 7:20 ¶ 269.*** *And I realised, like coming here, at LTE, I must go back to my dreams again and fix something. I'm missing God in my dreams.*

The difference the new or renewed faith in the triune God made on the participants was profound. All of the respondents interviewed reported a marked difference in outlook and sense of well-being during their time at LTE, with many attributing this changed outlook directly to knowing God's love, as the following quotes indicate:

> ***In Daniel M. 8:11 ¶ 212.*** *I understand what God did for me, I understand the depth of his love and I've seen what he did to me, you know, just lifting me up from where I was.*

> ***In Sibabalwe M. 2:11 ¶ 72***. *So when like Christianity came in, they* [LTE staff] *told me about examples where God took the other guys, like Paul, and they were the least in their family, people were judging them, so that is when I started seeing hope. And then I started to try things, and then things happened slowly but surely.*

> ***In Lulama F. 10:13 ¶ 126.*** *We are told scriptures, like scriptures that encourage us, scriptures that will build us, as people. So they* [LTE staff] *give us those scriptures, then we read them at home. When we read them at home you feel like something has changed in your life, because those, those scriptures are, are life changing. They change, they change your mentality on how you are thinking of God. They make you realise that God is alive. God is able to do anything in your life.*

In addition, students who had already graduated from LTE, mentioned that they had experienced knowing the love of God at LTE.

> ***In LTE help inspire. 18:8 ¶ 17.*** *I learnt a lot of things about life, such as communication, forgiveness, and how much God loves me.* ***Barista student 3, 2020.***

> ***In LTE help inspire. 18:42 ¶ 79.*** *The best thing that happened to me is that I went back to God. I welcomed him again into my life because of LTE. And I started believing in myself more.* ***Office administration student 3, 2020.***

> ***In LTE help inspire. 18:47 ¶ 93.*** *I have found the love of God.* ***Office administration student 8, 2020.***

In order to appreciate the full impact of these comments, they ought to be contrasted with the most dire circumstances faced by the participants, described fully in Chapter 5, interpreted as suffering from the de-humanising effects of powerlessness. Viewed in this light, the new-found love of God experienced by participants is of momentous significance. In this regard, a particularly poignant memory is shared by an LTE student as follows:

> *In LTE help inspire. 18:94 ¶ 175. I almost take my life Sunday night because of the tough time I've been facing. But I thank God to wake me up Monday morning and gave me a second chance at life. I was still so cross that I'm alive that I tell myself when I get to my house I will do it again. But the first thing I saw when I enter my shack was the Bible that I got at Alpha day with Alpha red book. Then in my mind I recall* [the trainer] *… when she said God loves us even if we are poor, even if rejected by everyone. In him we have value and place and in him we will get everything we ask in faith. That's where I realise that God has purpose to bring LTE to my life. **Basic sewing student 1, 2019.***

The fact that the participants experienced knowledge of God's love relates directly to the theological construct of vocation. Vocation, (as elaborated on in Section 2.10), has been interpreted as a calling to follow God, and implied in knowing God's love is a calling to follow him, as indicated above by the participants. As discussed in Section 2.10.3, Badcock (1998: 123) records how a calling to the love of God is an obvious feature of vocation[287]. From the scholarly observations, it can be inferred from the participants' new understanding and appreciation of God's love, that they have experienced a recovery of their vocation. Thus, knowing God's love is essential to restore true vocation which has been damaged in the participants, due to their suffering in circumstances of powerlessness[288].

6.2.2 Experience and impact of knowing purpose

Aside from the sense of purpose in recognising their destiny with God, due to knowing God's love, the data revealed that knowing God's love also resulted in the participants experiencing a new sense of purpose for their immediate life and adopting concrete plans for their future. This ties in with Gorlorwulu and Rahschulte's (2010: 201) understanding of vocation in terms of "meaning, purpose or calling". Some respondents were satisfied with having used their skill to acquire employment as a result of their new sense of purpose gained, whilst others felt motivated to start their own businesses with the skills they had learned at LTE, as the following respondents mention:

> *In LTE help inspire. 18:21 ¶ 42. I'm planning a business (bakes)…so I'm starting to collect machinery and ingredients. **Bake for Profit student 6, 2020.***
>
> *In Nandipha F. 6:30 ¶ 158. I don't want to have a business here in Cape Town only. In Eastern Cape, I must open a linen shop there.*

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[287] This feature of vocation is confirmed by Migliore (2014: 257), who identifies vocation as "[u]niversal participation in the love of the triune God", also discussed in Section 2.10.3.

[288] This is confirmation of Sands' (2010) remark, mentioned in Section 2.10.3, to the effect that the fall has damaged the way human beings pursue their vocation.

> ***In Bathandwa M. 9:11 ¶ 239.*** *So what I'm actually hoping for is to open a business and start a clothing brand which will be affordable yet sophisticated.*

> ***In LTE help inspire. 18:60 ¶ 117.*** *I want to be a fashion designer having my own tailoring shop where I sell different clothes.* ***Basic sewing student 14, 2020.***

In others the sense of purpose was evident in their assumption of family responsibilities whilst earning an income:

> ***In LTE Facebook posts. 19:35 ¶ 125.*** *I was able to open my own spaza shop, whilst taking care of my sick mother. On Saturdays I go to the other villages and sell tracksuits and traditional wear that I have made.*

> ***In LTE help inspire. 18:48 ¶ 95.*** *I want to apply for jobs so that I can be able to help my mother financially and be able to educate my daughter.* ***Office administration student 8, 2020.***

A sense of purpose was evident in the determination expressed by certain participants to study further:

> ***In LTE help inspire. 18:69 ¶ 129.*** *To study further, do animation.* ***Graphic design student 4, 2020.***

> ***In LTE help inspire. 18:67 ¶ 127.*** *I want to study a BA in Visual Communications and gain work experience. I want to improve the way I live and be independent and strong. One day I'll have my own business and travel!* ***Graphic design student 3, 2020.***

It is noteworthy how many participants spoke about having had their passion ignited through discovering and exercising their gifts, which had a meaningful effect on their sense of purpose, as is apparent in the following quotes:

> ***In LTE Facebook posts. 19:39 ¶ 138.*** *It has also awakened a talent in me that I did not know I had, a passion to make novelty cakes.*

> ***In Student follow ups 2018. 41:1 ¶ 3.*** *This organisation has given me a skill, I am now employed in a field that I am passionate about.*

> ***In Lonwabo M. 3:3 ¶ 35.*** *And the more they told me about graphic design, the more I developed a love* [for] *graphic design.*

The sense of purpose enabled the participants to envision new goals for themselves and to have the motivation to work towards realising those goals, as the following respondents testify:

> ***In Sibabalwe M. 2:18 ¶ 116.*** *But when I got myself a job I told myself that I must get myself a licence. So I worked on the goal. And now I have a driver's licence.*

> ***In Maita F. 5:35 ¶ 146.*** *Now I feel so useful, I can do a lot of other things.*

> ***In grad story Nhagotou. 27:3 ¶ 28.*** *I started fixing people's pipes and bathrooms on the weekends whilst busy with my course and was able to pay my course fees with the money I had earned!*

> ***In Lulama F. 10:23 ¶ 174.*** *So, it's the first step for me because I'll be able to work in a restaurant in the hospitality industry. And when I'm there I'm not going to stay, because I'm gonna still study further to become a master chef, because I want to be a professional chef, one day, and own my own restaurant.*

From the LTE interviews, I ascertained that it is an intentional feature of the organisation's strategy to instil a sense of purpose in its students. For instance Ms Lipp (BL45: 8) confirms this as follows: "So part of what we do is restoring a person's dignity, through showing that they have got value and worth. And they've got a purpose and that God created them for that purpose…".

Interpretation of the data reveals clearly that knowing God's love had a profound effect on the participants' sense of purpose. This interpretation confirms that the *imago Dei* is closely tied to vocation, as observed by Sands (2010) (Section 2.10.3). Directly related to knowing the love of God, the sense of purpose, which emerged from the participants' responses, was most obvious.

> ***In LTE help inspire. 18:123 ¶ 227.*** *I used to tell myself that there is no God but when I started my training I saw that God is existing. I've changed a negative attitude into a positive one. I used to start things and not finish them.* ***Office administration student 9, 2020.***

> ***In LTE Facebook posts. 19:33 ¶ 119****. Spiritually, I am full, and I have a skill, and it is the first time that I have completed something.*

This sense of their lives having purpose relates to the participants' recovery of their vocation and reflects Moltmann's (1984: 23) comment (alluded to in Section 2.10.3), that their true future lies in their fulfilment of being destined for future glory in God's kingdom. Moreover, the knowledge of who they are in God's eyes, and their identity in Christ, was evident.

> ***In LTE life skills evaluation. 43:28 ¶ 46.*** *It made me find out who am I and introduced me to the Lord and made me to know that I am God's child.* ***Woodwork student 14, 2020****.*

> ***In LTE life skills evaluation. 43:41 ¶ 72.*** *I now walk with confidence because I know that I am not walking alone. I am walking with God because I am a child of God.* ***LTE student 2, 2018.***

> ***In LTE life skills evaluation. 43:48 ¶ 86.*** *I am God's son no matter what, 'cause I thought with all my sins God had abandoned me.* ***Barista student 3, 2019.***

The LTE staff members conveyed, with consistency, the message that enabling the students to experience the love of God is a deliberate action at the foundation of their operation as an organisation. Whilst the students arrive at LTE in order to attend a core skills course, the discipleship course, including the Alpha Course, and the

Christian activities, are an integral part of the curriculum and the structure of the weekly timetable (BL45: 7).

6.2.3 Producing income in relation to overcoming powerlessness and having purpose

When a participant's state of mind changed so that he or she felt a new sense of purpose, this resulted in the ability to produce income, as the following participants confirm:

> ***In LTE help inspire. 18:95 ¶ 177.*** *I am working at* [listed financial services company] *as a graduate of LTE.* ***Basic computers and office administration student 15, 2018.***
>
> ***In LTE Facebook posts. 19:4 ¶ 10.*** *I am now running a small sewing business doing alterations and traditional clothing.*
>
> ***In LTE Facebook posts. 19:25 ¶ 83.*** *Best thing now that I have completed the course is that I now feel confident because I know who I am - not dumb or useless, but skilled and self- employed. I can feed myself and can help out at home.*
>
> ***In LTE Facebook posts. 19:47 ¶ 189.*** *I went from asking for R10 to having R500 on me.*
>
> ***In LTE course evaluation. 21:11 ¶ 29.*** *Now I have money to support my kids.* ***Bake for Profit student 32, 2020.***
>
> ***In grad story Vonco. 26:2 ¶ 30.*** *After graduating* [from LTE] *I found work! Job readiness prepares you for job hunting as you need to know employers' expectations. I am now working at* [supermarket chain]*. I now have the confidence to realise my dream of having my own business. I am out of the group of unemployed.*

The reaction of the participants to their new-found purpose is to take steps to uplift their circumstances, as is seen in their income production measures described. This reaction is confirmation of Christian's (1999: 58) comment to the effect that "the poor have the ability to work out their own liberation". The fact that LTE provides a range of employment opportunities, from entrepreneurial to employment, aids in moving their students out of the "poverty trap", as described by Chambers (1983: 103-139)[289].

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[289] In some instances, LTE is able to offer an internship programme to their graduates, to assist them in gaining experience and, frequently, to enable them to secure employment. Ms Pike (MP47: 9) described how LTE had a strong affiliation with the hospitality industry, including the Windsor Hotel, popular with the vast number of tourists to Hermanus in pre-COVID times, who would offer internships and subsequent placements for breakfast cooks, waiters and housekeepers. In addition, they had a similar affiliation with Checkers supermarket and Woolworths retail chain for shop assistants and cashiers. Aside from the core skills, business skills, workplace skills and life skills, LTE also develops language skills in their encouragement of English being spoken in the classes. Ms Pike (MP47: 7) presents the rationale for this approach as follows: "Remember, everyone that is here is going to a workplace. And in the workplace, you need to speak a language that everyone can understand. So we empower them so that they are confident".

6.2.4 Contributing to society in relation to overcoming powerlessness and having purpose

In addition to producing income to improve their own situation, the participants also expressed the desire and will to use their skills which they had learned to contribute to society. They had developed an awareness of the needs of others and intended to improve the lives of those in need around them. This intention is evident in the comments of the following respondents:

> *In LTE course evaluation. 21:21 ¶ 47. The skill and knowledge that I learned from LTE I am going to use on community building. **Woodwork student 16, 2020.***

> *In LTE life skills evaluation. 43:26 ¶ 42. The course improves me to be a better active citizen. **Woodwork student 12, 2020.***

> *In Sibabalwe M. 2:21 ¶ 124. But now, it's the other way around. Now they* [the community previously critical of him] *are calling me an example. A lot of things have changed in my life.*

> *In Lonwabo M. 3:24 ¶ 95. I've done some artwork for this guy who is a musician…*[who] *wanted a CD cover. So I decided to design for him for free. Because I think it's an opportunity that allows me to express myself, 'this is not the guy you used to know'…. And he was so surprised that I did something for free.*

> *In Bulelani M. 5:22 ¶ 116. Just suppose that I could be an inspiration to others, be effective like, to make change to other people and to help them.*

> *In Bathandwa M. 9:12 ¶ 239. I hope to employ people to uplift them.*

The comments relating to contributing to society are confirmatory of Christian's (1999: 58) opinion that "the poor can be agents of transformation of society", whereby he believes that those suffering from deprivation can usher in a new society. This agency or ability to contribute to society is also alluded to by Myers (2011: 184), describing human beings as "actors in history" who have "a vocation of development". Moreover, contributing to society is an indication of a recovery of vocation, as referred to by Myers (2011: 178), who refers to the challenge to the vulnerable and marginalised to "discover their vocation as productive stewards, realizing that they have been given gifts to contribute to social well-being". It is thus expected for the participants, upon recovery of their vocation, to be able to invest whatever gifts or resources which God has given them, to effect change within society.

6.2.4 Concluding comments on evidence presented to support Theoretical Construct 1: 'Powerlessness is overcome through having purpose'.

It was apparent from the previous chapter that the participants arrived at LTE unemployed and experiencing the de-humanising effects of powerlessness. However, the data interpretation in the present chapter revealed that, whilst embarking on skills training at LTE, they underwent an unmistakeable shift in mindset, with the majority attributing their positive outlook to a simultaneous awareness of the love of God. Knowing the love of God resulted in the participants gaining a sense of purpose and, having their passion ignited at the discovery of their gifts, is an indication of a recovery of vocation. The sense of purpose they discovered also enabled them to take steps to produce income and, not only were the participants able to generate income, they also developed a heightened awareness of social responsibility. In this regard, many of the participants expressed a desire to contribute to society. All of these factors are indications that the participants are overcoming powerlessness through having purpose. Furthermore, all of these factors constitute evidence of vocation being recovered by the participants at LTE.

6.3 Theoretical Construct 2: A respectful and loving environment heals 'marred identities'.

The codes which gave rise to the second theoretical construct were 'being respected' and 'supportive encouragement', both presenting in the theme 'LTE meeting emotional need', and 'healing of self-worth', presenting in the theme 'LTE meeting spiritual need'. The applicability of these codes will be discussed individually so that explanations can be set forth why they lend support to the theoretical construct, which in turn provides evidence of the affirmation of human dignity. In brief, it was found that when the participants were nurtured in an environment where they were treated with respect and where they were demonstrated love, this resulted in healing of 'marred identities'. A respectful, encouraging and loving environment corrected distorted identities and positively influenced the participants' perceptions of their human dignity. Evidence is thus supported, as discussed hereunder, of Theoretical Construct 2: 'A respectful and loving environment heals 'marred identities''.

6.3.1 Influence of being respected on healing of 'marred identities'

An interpretation of the data divulged how the participants were impacted meaningfully by the respectful manner in which they were treated and how this respect had an

influence on healing of their 'marred identities'. This respect was noticed, in the first instance, in the way in which the LTE staff treated everyone on campus in similar manner, without differentiating between staff and students or between different students. They modelled that respect for the participants to emulate, according to the following participants:

> *In LTE help inspire 18:32 ¶ 61.* The teachers, they respect us. **Bake for Profit student 13, 2020.**
>
> *In Sibabalwe M. 2:32 ¶ 144.* We respect one another here. Yeah. And they are an example, the facilitators and others here.
>
> *In LTE help inspire.18:56 ¶ 111.* I have met very humble people [LTE staff], so down to earth all of them, they treat all of us the same way. **Basic sewing student 11, 2020.**
>
> *In LTE life skills evaluation. 43:20 ¶ 30.* [Trainer] shows us how to love and respect one another. **LTE student 16, 2020.**

From a number of comments made, the respect demonstrated by the LTE staff was clearly in contrast to what the participants were used to experiencing in their daily lives. They had apparently been made to feel unworthy of respect, as though inferior to others and not deserving of being spoken to in a way which conveyed a message that they were valued. The following particularly poignant comments of respondents emphasise this point:

> *In LTE help inspire. 18:47 ¶ 93.* LTE… has many good trainers that have love and sympathy… they stand by your side and are not making you a laughing stock. **Office administration student 8, 2020.**
>
> *In grad story Nhagotou 27:1 ¶ 24.* I was welcomed with warmth and smiles. As a foreigner that was very foreign to me because most people treat us differently and I think that is what is special about LTE - acceptance.
>
> *In Zintle F. 13:21 ¶ 104.* It just felt like, I'm home…it gave me a sense of comfort, you know, like, 'Okay, this is a space where I'm not gonna be judged', you know, that safety.
>
> *In Lonwabo M. 3:34 ¶ 103.* … to have such place that could have faith in you and hope and belief in you, even though you know, people who used to be around you, they lost hope in you a long time ago.

The respect from LTE staff was also manifested as hospitality, where many of the participants spoke about how 'welcoming' the environment was, including the following participants:

> *In LTE help inspire. 18:110 ¶ 203.* They welcomed me with warm hands. **Basic handyman student 2, 2019.**
>
> *In LTE Facebook posts. 19:11 ¶ 22.* LTE is a place where people without homes belong.

> *In LTE course evaluation. 21:22 ¶ 49. Everyone at LTE is very kind. They talk to you with a smile, you feel welcome in this school. **Woodwork student 17, 2020.***

The respect displayed by LTE included the staff accepting the students 'as they were' and refraining from judging them, which was recognised and valued by the participants, according to the following sample of quotations:

> ***In LTE Facebook posts. 19:13 ¶ 25.** I have found people who don't judge and discriminate each other. I have found such beautiful souls. They give me joy.*

> ***In LTE life skills evaluation.** They are so accommodating and loving, they don't judge you. **LTE student 12, 2020.***

Refraining from judging the students was an attitude intentionally adopted by the staff at LTE, as mentioned, for example, by Ms Joemath (RJ46: 5): "…they know they are not going to be judged here. At LTE we do not judge anyone, we accept a person the way they are. So they go home with self-acceptance". From the numerous comments about the lack of judgment at LTE, it can be inferred that the participants had suffered protracted judgment over their lifetimes. The absence of judgment at LTE, therefore, held particular significance for the participants as an example of respect demonstrated for them.

The respect displayed to the LTE students by the staff was shown to be of such depth that they fostered more than a sense of community, but actually a feeling of belonging to family and a sense of homecoming. Indeed it was a noticeably high number of participants who commented on this sense of belonging and homecoming, as conveyed in the following examples:

> ***In LTE help inspire. 18:115 ¶ 212.** They love people in such a way that we are family. **Woodwork student 3, 2020.***

> ***In Lonwabo M. 3:7 ¶ 71.** [Trainer] makes sure everything we do as a family, you know, you don't feel like an outsider.*

> ***In LTE help inspire.18:37 ¶ 67.** They treat us as a part of their lives. It feels like family. **Business essentials student 2, 2020.***

> ***In LTE life skills evaluation. 43:27 ¶ 44.** We were treated as family. My yard is always clean now. They taught me that my yard must always be clean. **Woodwork student 13, 2020.***

Being worthy of being considered family conveys a clear message of respect to the participants, as does the message about keeping their yards clean convey their worthiness of feeling self-respect. The respect, demonstrated by the staff at LTE, and noticed by the participants, is intentional, as communicated to me by all staff members. An example is found in the comments made by Ms Kruger:

> *…everyone is treated as an equal. People are spoken to in a kind and gentle manner…I think just simple things of greeting each other and looking each other in the eye and the way I speak to my teammates and our students and recognising who they are (GK50: 1).*

6.3.2 Influence of supportive encouragement on healing of 'marred identities'

It is clear from the participants' responses that LTE is an environment where they feel supported and encouraged, giving rise to the code 'supportive encouragement'. In this respect, LTE was to the respondents noticeably different to their usual places of interaction with others outside of LTE. The participants felt that the support they received related to their skills ability, but also to emotional and spiritual aspects of their lives, including how to cope better with life's challenging issues. Comments were made along the lines of the following examples:

> ***In Annual report. 2018. 40:3 ¶ 64.*** *…the support we received from the staff is beyond explanation…. - you don't just learn the skill but you learn about life itself, how to deal with social issues, emotional situations and spiritual upliftment.*

> ***In LTE help inspire. 18:132 ¶ 244.*** *I have family now because the teachers at LTE are supportive all the time. They understand the situation if you tell them. They advise the way forward.* ***Basic sewing student 16, 2020.***

There are a number of ways in which an interpretation of the data reveals that LTE creates an environment of supportive encouragement. For instance, the participants felt cared about, prompting the following remarks:

> ***In LTE help inspire. 18:11 ¶ 25.*** *…how we were welcomed, we were shown love, care and we are accepted….****Barista student 8, 2020.***

> ***In Lonwabo M. 3:19 ¶ 87.*** *So now LTE… asks 'how are you doing? How are you coping?'*

The respondents also felt that they were receiving motivation, with the LTE staff coaxing them into becoming "a better person", as the following respondents mention:

> ***In LTE help inspire. 18:100 ¶ 187.*** *The care and the love the Ground UP* [LTE barista academy] *people have for us. I thought it would be just about the course but I discovered that it's way more above the course. It's about building us up and motivating us and teaching us about life skills and about our importance in the eyes of God.* ***Barista student 3, 2019.***

> ***In Daniel M. 8:16 ¶ 224.*** *…how they interacted with us, it's something that gives you hope, man, like at least there's somebody who is listening to you, there's somebody who actually cares to teach you, to go the extra mile. So, I will say, LTE has boosted me.*

Finally, in showing supportive encouragement, and something which was of great meaning to the participants, was how LTE staff expressed belief in the students in so

far as their characters, and their ability to make something of their lives, were concerned. These expressions of belief occurred in circumstances where similar sentiments were impliedly not expressed to the students outside the organisation, and even where the students themselves had, tragically, given up on themselves. This fact mirrors what Christian (1999: 140) notes about heightened hurt and pain experienced by those in economic deprivation, through being used or ignored, causing 'marring of identities'. The following quotations are examples of supportive encouragement taking the form of belief in the participants:

> *In Annual report 2012. 39:5 ¶ 219.* He [trainer] *never gave up on me.*

> *In Student follow ups 2018. 41:2 ¶ 3.* *They have never doubted in my ability to change and improve my life, and I am now able to show that their belief in me has borne fruit.*

> *In Lonwabo M. 3:35 ¶ 103.* *They encourage you, yeah, like they don't give up even though what you used to be. But* [LTE staff say] *'don't give up because we believe in you. And we know you can manage to be a better person than you used to be'.*

The supportive encouragement shown by LTE is an intentional intervention in healing 'marred identities', as confirmed by Ms Madikane, "I try my best not to bring them down, I try my best to lift them up (BM49: 2)".

6.3.3 Healing of self-worth in relation to 'marred identities'

The code 'healing of self-worth' demonstrated that there were a number of different ways in which the participants experienced healing of their self-worth, but the response in respect of this code was overwhelming, with almost unanimity in those interviewed that they had with certainty experienced healing of self-worth. One of the more common ways in which self-worth was expressed was an increase in self-confidence, as the following respondents mention:

> *In Bathandwa M. 9:8 ¶ 197.* *The classes helped me a lot. It gave me a lot of self-confidence.*

> *In Bulelani M. 4:9 ¶ 72.* *I'm very confident, and I feel more in control of myself.*

Another means of the participants expressing healing of self-worth was in recognising improved self-esteem, and an appreciation of their value, as the following respondents state:

> *In LTE help inspire. 18:106 ¶ 196.* *Ground UP made me feel wanted.* *Barista student 6, 2019.*

> *In LTE help inspire. 18:120 ¶ 222.* *I got more confident. I got my self-worth back and I found a new family that accepts me for who I really am.* *Barista student 15, 2020.*

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> *In LTE Facebook posts. 19:12 ¶ 25. I have started loving myself, and valuing me.*
>
> *In Nandipha F. 6:18 ¶ 117. When I see my life now, it is more precious. Like sometimes that thing of me closing the door, like I would sleep the whole day, but now, I don't have that.*
>
> *In Fezile M. 7:12 ¶ 209. Since I've come here, I believe in myself a lot now, like I used to…*

Furthermore, there was a recognition of previous thoughts about themselves being destructive, and undergoing a change of feelings related to their worth. They spoke, for instance, about having "a different mindset" (in LTE Facebook posts. 19:30 ¶ 98) and "seeing things differently than yesterday" (in LTE life skills evaluation. 43:12 ¶ 16), as the following sample of quotations illustrates:

> *In Anathi F. 11:28 ¶ 162. I was too afraid of failing. I was too afraid of not achieving what I had dreamed of wanting. Yeah, basically LTE kind of not only built my skill but it worked a lot on my emotional state.*
>
> *In Zintle F. 13:25 ¶ 133. …forgiving myself was a big part of it…*
>
> *In LTE help inspire. 18:45 ¶ 86. I used to be depressed and had just given up on myself. But now I am grown to love myself… Office administration student 6, 2020.*
>
> *In LTE Facebook posts. 19:10 ¶ 19. I have stopped putting myself down.*
>
> *In Grad story Spondo. 22:3 ¶ 22. …to engage the world instead of hiding from it.* [LTE] *has made me realize that the person I kept hidden for so long is actually the person people want to be around.*

Feelings of inadequacy and self-doubt were replaced by feelings of pride in their abilities and changed attitudes, as expressed as follows:

> *In LTE life skills evaluation 43:14 ¶ 20. It makes me to be proud of myself since I started this course and I have no doubts of me. LTE student 11, 2020.*
>
> *In LTE Facebook posts. 19:43 ¶ 163. I do not feel helpless and hopeless anymore.*

Finally, healing of self-worth was also brought about by being empowered economically so that the participants had the ability to generate an income. The ability to be independent financially engendered a sense of pride in the participants, as the following respondents illustrate:

> *In Bathandwa M. 9:14 ¶ 257. I would say, I have a lot more power over my life. Because I've seen a lot of change.*
>
> *In LTE help inspire. 18:105 ¶ 194. I learned to stop expecting hand outs from people but to develop myself. Barista student 5, 2019.*
>
> *In LTE Facebook posts. 19:46 ¶ 186. The best thing is I don't have to ask anyone to borrow money or help me with food.*

Tied to this healing of self-worth by way of attaining financial autonomy, is the participants' self-fulfilment through realising their abilities and reaching achievements which they previously thought they were not capable of doing, described as follows:

> *In 2017 Dec newsletter. 36:1 ¶ 19. I'm amazed at what I can do with my hands.*
>
> *In LTE help inspire. 18:128 ¶ 235. Now I know I can overcome and do anything I plan to do. Office administration student 12, 2020.*
>
> *In LTE course evaluation. 21:19 ¶ 44. I was taught things that I never knew that I would be able to do. Basic sewing student 38, 2020.*
>
> *In LTE life skills evaluation 43:12 ¶ 16. It makes me see things differently than yesterday. Today I am a new man and I can defeat any challenge. LTE student 9, 2020.*
>
> *In Daniel M. 8:14 ¶ 224. I've managed to do a lot of things that I never thought I could have done, you know, with God, of course, and I'm proud of that, man.*

Self-fulfilment, linked to healing of self-worth, was also brought about through the participants discovering talents and doing what they love doing.

> *In Maita F. 5:11 ¶ 94. And I love doing this. I'm obsessed with drawing, I'm obsessed with art. So I decided to do something that I love. And now, it has been helping a lot with me mentally and my emotions.*

There is recognition by many of the participants that they are in need of healing of their self-worth, and that they are being healed during their time at LTE, as these participants confirm:

> *In Thozoma F. 12:19 ¶ 60. …the more sharing, the more we get healing.*
>
> *In Sibabalwe M. 2:14 ¶ 108. How I feel now? Totally different. My main plans, is to be a better person than I was able to be…. At LTE I started healing because we had sessions, Wednesday sessions. Where we spoke about life, generally, we didn't speak about Christianity only, we spoke about life.*

6.3.4 Concluding comments on evidence presented to support Theoretical Construct 2: 'A respectful and loving environment heals 'marred identities''.

Corroboration has been presented above which, it is argued, supports Theoretical Construct 2: 'A respectful and loving environment heals 'marred identities''. Firstly, it was shown how the respectful environment created at LTE brought about healing. This respect was shown to the participants through treating everyone on campus alike, whether staff or students. The respectful attitude of LTE was also apparent in their non-judgmental attitude towards the participants. Respect was also shown through hospitality, a new experience to the participants. It was furthermore demonstrated that

the welcoming, respectful environment impacted the participants so deeply to the extent that many felt like they had found a home.

What was obvious was that the respect, hospitality and lack of judgment had not previously been experienced by the participants. One could immediately infer that they had been exposed to much judgment in the past and this adverse treatment would undoubtedly have had an impact on how they perceive themselves. This links to what Christian (1999: 57) reports about those in economic need often being invisible and disrespected, described as "non-persons", "lost in anonymity". Becoming a non-person, he says, implies denial of basic human dignity towards people. At LTE, therefore, refraining from judging the students, and accepting them unreservedly, has positive implications for their human dignity.

Next, it was shown how the influence of supportive encouragement contributed to healing of 'marred identities'. The supportive encouragement they received consisted of motivation and confidence expressed in the ability of the participants to change their circumstances. This occurred in a loving environment where they were encouraged not only in relation to the accomplishment of their skill, but also to emotional and spiritual matters, which the participants felt was needed. What is apparent here mirrors Prilleltensky and Nelson's (2003) exposition of diminished psychological well-being on those suffering from powerlessness, discussed in Section 3.6.4. Their observation that unjust power arrangements affect the well-being of the marginalised and vulnerable, especially in so far as their view of themselves is concerned, presents itself in this study's participants. The participants felt encouraged to improve themselves and their situations where previously everyone, including they, themselves, had lost belief in their ability to do so.

Finally, ways in which healing of self-worth manifested in the participants was discussed. These ways included increased self-confidence and improved self-esteem. Low self-confidence is a feature of 'marred identities', according to Myers (2011: 169) and so it is to be expected that it was evident in the participants prior to their introduction to LTE. At LTE, however, improved self-confidence became apparent, and previous negative and destructive thoughts of themselves were replaced by positive mindsets. These previous negative mindsets are to be expected as reflections of the psychological impact of poverty described by Prilleltensky and

Nelson (2013: 19-34) and caused by "disrespect, exclusion, humiliation and erasure of identity".

Moreover, this psychological dimension ought to be viewed in the light of the discussion in Section 5.3.3, of poverty viewed through the lens of trauma, where the inference is that the participants are likely to be experiencing trauma. In these circumstances, healing of 'marred identities' would be an urgent need in overcoming poverty. This, we saw in the participants' responses when feelings of self-doubt were replaced by pride in their abilities and changed attitudes. Healing of self-worth occurred when the participants were able to accomplish something they thought they were incapable of, as well as to generate an income, and in using their talents to do something they love. The abovementioned factors lead to confirmation of Theoretical Construct 2: 'A respectful and encouraging environment heals 'marred identities''. Moreover, the abovementioned factors, together with the factors discussed above on recovery of vocation (Section 6.2), lead to an inference that the human dignity of the participants is being affirmed at LTE. This finding will be elaborated on hereunder when the effect of the practice of spirituality on human dignity is discussed.

6.4 Theoretical Construct 3: Escaping the 'web of lies' enables progression towards *shalom*.

The third theoretical construct refers to the biblical concept on which transformational development is based, as explained by Bragg (1987: 39), as indication of God's redeeming and reconciling purposes, where fractured relationships are restored, and justice and peace prevail, as discussed more fully in Section 3.6.5. The 'web of lies', referred to by Christian (1999) (discussed in Section 3.6.4), is a feature of this theoretical construct, marked by powerlessness of those in situations of economic distress, portrayed as a scenario in stark contrast to *shalom*.

Theoretical Construct 3: 'Escaping the 'web of lies' enables progression towards *shalom*', was formulated from the data which emerged from the code 'feelings of hope', assigned to the theme 'LTE meeting spiritual need', as well as from the codes 'restoring of relationships' and 'imaging God in relationships', both appearing in the theme 'LTE meeting emotional need'. The data interpretation of these three codes will be discussed individually, with quotations corroborating why they support the theoretical construct.

6.4.1 Feelings of hope indicating escape from the 'web of lies'

Feelings of hope, which contrasted with their feelings prior to their arrival at LTE, were expressed by most of the participants, as the following examples illustrate:

> *In LTE Facebook posts. 19:14 ¶ 33.* LTE changes lives and gives hope to those who don't have any. They give you something that no one can take from you.
>
> *In Dumisa M. 14:12 ¶ 124.* Now I'm feeling positive.
>
> *In Lulama F. 10:24 ¶ 180.* I feel very excited.

Feelings of hope were discerned to have been expressed in various forms by the participants. For instance, many, as the following quotations illustrate, spoke of having 'dreams' for their future, implying that they had not previously had so:

> *In LTE help inspire. 18:58 ¶ 115.* It changed my life completely, LTE gave me hope and I started to dream more. *Basic sewing student 13, 2020.*
>
> *In LTE help inspire. 18:88 ¶ 165.* I've got … new ideas, big dreams. *Bake for Profit student 24, 2020.*
>
> *In Anathi F. 11:28 ¶ 162.* Ja, I have all these aspirations and I have all these dreams.

Other respondents expressed their feelings of hope, with reference to a contrast with fear, which they had previously felt about their future:

> *In Fezile M. 7:24 ¶ 287.* I would say, when I think about the future, I'm not scared anymore.
>
> *In Daniel M. 8:24 ¶ 301.* Before, I was scared, like real fear. I didn't know what else to do. So it was like real fear before I came here. But now I'm not scared any more.

Other participants noticed feelings of hope, when they compared their feelings to stress associated with their future, they had experienced prior to their arrival at LTE, as the following quotations indicate:

> *In Thozoma F. 12:20 ¶ 60.* I'm no longer feeling that heaviness.
>
> *In LTE help inspire. 18:57 ¶ 113.* I feel like a heavy load that was on my shoulders is away. *Basic sewing student 12, 2020.*
>
> *In LTE Facebook posts. 19:17 ¶ 51.* The best thing since finishing my course at LTE, is that I feel free. It is like there was a stone on my shoulder but now it has been taken off.

Finally, for some of the participants, their hope was associated with obviously changed and improved circumstances, as mentioned by the following participants:

> *In LTE Facebook posts. 19:1 ¶ 7.* I now have my own mobile kitchen and each day I wake up with a reason.

> ***In LTE help inspire. 18:87 ¶ 163.*** *I won't go to bed hungry, I will always know what to do to make my child support.* ***Bake for Profit student 23, 2020.***

What the data reveals is how hope has become evident in the lives of the LTE participants, which was not present prior to their arrival at LTE. The significance of this phenomenon is that hope's influence enables them to escape from the 'web of lies'. Christian's (1999: 161) image of the 'web of lies' (discussed in Section 3.6.4) relates to his observation that those who are impoverished, are captive to an oppressive set of relationships based on flawed assumptions, including their own 'marred identities'.

It has been discussed in Section 3.6.6, how essential hope is, in order to escape the 'web of lies', as stressed by Christian (1999: 196) as follows: "The link between identity and hope is crucial while addressing realities of the powerless". The importance of hope in addressing issues of power is echoed by Msabah and Bowers du Toit (2017), who propose that empowerment by developing hope, is a strategy for *diakonia* which can be used effectively to equip marginalised people to be able to overcome powerlessness[290]. It can therefore be seen how the presence of hope expressed by the participants can be interpreted as being transformational, as confirmatory of their escape from the 'web of lies'.

6.4.2 Restored relationships point towards *shalom*

Myers (2011) speaks of indications of the biblical concept of '*shalom*', which include 'just and peaceful relationships' signalling the occurrence of transformational development[291]. In essence, as Myers (2011: 61) comments, because we were made in the image of the triune God, we were meant to exist in loving relationships. These relationships are with God, with ourselves and with community. A relational understanding of our identity is the foundation for the commandment to love God and love others.

Many of the participants shared stories of restoration of previously fractured relationships, mainly with family members, as appears from the following sample of quotations:

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[290] From engagement with asylum seekers, they advance evidence that it is hope which keeps asylum seekers going when their suffering becomes intolerable (2017:196).

[291] This was discussed in Section 3.6.5.

> ***In LTE Facebook posts. 19:40 ¶ 151.*** *I have grown spiritually and emotionally. Today I am a better wife and mother.*
>
> ***In Thembeka F. 1:16 ¶ 181.*** *And I'm not rude when I'm talking to her. I just speak to her. So the Alpha classes they changed me.*
>
> ***In Bulelani M. 4:20 ¶ 108.*** *I had anger in me so every time we would have an argument, it's more like I would make it so big. I would just leave the house. But now I manage to just come and explain whatever or talk through the situation.*
>
> ***In Maita F. 5:31 ¶ 142.*** *Um with my mom, well, I'd like to believe that since I started here, I'm able to sit in a room with her, because usually when she came to my aunt's house, I'd just go to the bedroom and not say anything.*
>
> ***In Lulama F. 10:17 ¶ 156****. …it changed my relationship because I could not spend much time with my mother. I don't know what was going on but now as I'm here, and I was told that you need to respect yourself and respect the people around you, um, now I have a strong bond with my Mom.*

Addressing conflict in relationships is intentionally undertaken by LTE, as a number of staff informed me. Ms Joemath (RJ46: 4), for example, spoke about management of family conflict, as well as domestic abuse, being dealt with as part of their life skills 'Poverty Stoplight' enquiries (referred to in Section 5.2.3) into the LTE students' lives. LTE's intervention here is in implied acknowledgement that our identities and vocation are expressed through our relationships. Therefore it is to be expected that transformational development be viewed through a framework of restored relationships, states Myers (2011: 180). The central relationship in need of restoration is obviously with God, as explored above in Section 6.2.1, but it is also to be expected that restored relationships with others will signify transformation occurring. In the present instance, an interpretation of the data reveals that the relationships of the participants are being restored. The significance of this is that just and peaceful relationships are an indication of progression towards *shalom*, according to Myers (2011: 61).

6.4.3 Imaging God in relationships

The data interpretation exposed the new reality of the participants being lived out, with godly values being formed in them. This is apparent from the following quotations:

> ***In Mbulelo M. 15:19 ¶ 169.*** *I would say that's the one thing that I've noticed about myself. I'm more concerned about others than myself.*
>
> ***In LTE help inspire. 18:116 ¶ 216.*** *It changes the person I was. It was not that I was violent but I used to shout whenever there is something I don't like.* ***Woodwork student 5, 2020.***
>
> ***In Dumisa M. 14:7 ¶ 100.*** *I feel proud of the way I relate with my colleagues.*

> ***In Thembeka F. 1:14 ¶ 169.*** *Because I was like, …if you are rough to me, I'll be rough back, so I feel like I have changed because of the Alpha classes. I feel more gentle. So now I'm not that kind of person I was before. I'm talking nice to people.*

> ***In Lonwabo M. 3:17 ¶ 87.*** *When I came to LTE, my life started to change around a lot. I started to, to value other people, I started to respect other people, I started to show some remorse and started to ask for forgiveness.*

> ***In Anathi F. 11:25 ¶ 150.*** *I learnt more to be forgiving.*

Many of the participants noticed changes in their characters, or had had those close to them comment on godly character traits, as indicated. The participants felt more loving and caring towards others, experienced greater control over anger and were more forgiving. It could be said that their characters demonstrated a greater degree of the 'fruits of the spirit' (Gal. 5: 22-23). This phenomenon reflects Myers' (2011: 179) observation that, once people discover their true identity, their character is able to be formed to reflect this new reality through instilling values which permit a better future. This will "allow the poor to love others as themselves, seeking to be life-enhancing for all".

6.4.4 Concluding comments on evidence presented to support Theoretical Construct 3: 'Escaping the 'web of lies' enables progression towards *shalom*'.

To sum up the indications of hope in the participants, discussed above in Section 6.4.1, this was expressed in a variety of ways, whereby some spoke of hope in connection with dreams for their future, whilst others felt a sense of excitement and others had noticed fear for their future having subsided. It was shown how the participants' changed circumstances were undoubtedly a contributing factor in many of them feeling hope. These changed circumstances are strongly suggestive of overcoming powerlessness, which is most likely, where LTE's whole approach to economic upliftment is founded on empowerment based on restoration of dignity[292].

In addition to feelings of hope apparent in the participants, suggesting escape from the 'web of lies', there was also empirical evidence of movement towards *shalom*. This refers back to Myers' (2011: 202) dual goals of transformational development being changed people, who have discovered their identity and vocation, and changed relationships (Section 1.5.6). The discovery of true identity and vocation will be canvassed below when examining the influence of spirituality at LTE. As far as

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[292] LTE's founding philosophy was emphasised by Mr van Wyk in Section 5.2.2.

relationships are concerned, Section 3.6.5 highlighted the relational aspect of *shalom*, according to Anderson (1982: 164) meaning wholeness and harmony in relationships. Therefore, following from the discussion in Section 3.6.5, if we wish to ascertain whether there is movement towards experiencing *shalom* by the participants, one of the factors would be an evaluation of their relationships, as Myers (2011: 97) maintains. The changed relationships were discussed above in respect of the code 'restored relationships', where many of the participants testified about previously fractured relationships being restored.

Aside from experiencing changed relationships on an individual level, there are also indications of improved relationships on a structural level where economic stability can result in structural improvement in relationships. Financial autonomy can mean that the participants are no longer excluded from institutions, such as the economic, political, judicial and bureaucratic systems.

Moreover, as the discussion of the code 'imaging of God in relationships' reveals, once the participants discovered their true identity and vocation, godly character attributes commenced developing in them. These new values and virtues enable them to live out their new reality in a way which promises a better future (Myers 2011: 179).

From an interpretation of the data, therefore, it can be stated that not only are the participants becoming changed people who have discovered their identity and their purpose, but that they have also experienced changed relationships. In these circumstances, there can therefore be said to be evidence of approaching *shalom* and the merit can be seen of Theoretical Construct 3: 'Escaping the 'web of lies' enables progression towards *shalom*'.

6.5 Impact of practising spirituality at LTE

The second part of this chapter deals with the practice of spirituality at LTE. With this section's exposition of the nature of spirituality practised at LTE, and its value, a foundation will be laid to argue that the practice of spirituality plays an influential role in meaningful social transformation occurring.

6.5.1 Spirituality within the study's theoretical framework

6.5.1.1 Gap of 'spirituality'[293] within development discourse

The issue of spirituality within development discourse is one of the elements of the conceptual framework of the study (Section 4.4). It is therefore intended to explore further how the practice of spirituality occurs at LTE and the extent to which it influences the participants in relation to topical views within scholarly conversation concerning development matters. The importance of this task is emphasised as it will be recalled that a reason for the undertaking of the study was the exclusion of spirituality within development matters until recently, and the consequent limited academic contributions, as illuminated in Section 3.3.

It was also pointed out (in Section 3.3.5) how this exclusion was queried by various development practitioners and scholars, such as Deneulin and Bano (2009: 10-11), who comment on how religious and secular traditions relating to development matters overlap in material ways, specifically as regards issues pertaining to human dignity and social justice. At stake, to which these scholars draw attention, is the benefit of harnessing the potential of faith traditions to contribute towards development perspectives. Aside from matters common to both religious and secular traditions, there has finally emerged within contemporary development thinking, far-reaching agreement that development must be based on a concept of 'well-being' (Rakodi 2012: 637-638) (as discussed in Section 3.3.5). Furthermore, it was noted that this 'well-being' was indeed a major component in people's conception of what constitutes living a good life and in shaping their values, and it was acknowledged that there was a possibility that this could be derived from their spirituality (Deneulin & Rakodi 2011: 48).

These comments illuminate the issue which must be addressed here, in exploring the outcomes of the study in relation to the gap identified in the development discourse: whether the practice of spirituality at LTE reflects the recent inclusion of spirituality within the development discourse as indeed being a welcome addition. In other words, are the benefits of embracing spirituality within development matters clearly identifiable? In the present study, transformation has been adopted as an appropriate biblical reflection of development within the development issues encapsulated by the

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[293] The intended meaning of 'spirituality' in this study is introduced in Section 1.5.1 and then elaborated on in Section 3.2.

case study of LTE (Section 3.6.5), with a kingdom of God emphasis (Section 3.6.6). As such, it must be ascertained whether the practice of spirituality at LTE furthers development aspirations within the parameters of transformation as indicated.

As far as this assessment is concerned, the three theoretical constructs formulated from the data interpretation and discussed above, together with their supporting evidence, lead to an inference that students' lives are being changed at LTE. Rakodi's (2012: 637-638) notion of 'well-being' was thus noticeable to such an extent that a *prima facie* conclusion can be reached of social transformation taking place. Moreover, the evidence which emerged from the three theoretical constructs is highly suggestive that the social transformation is attributable to the impact of practising spirituality at LTE.

6.5.1.2 Liberation theology and the attainment of justice

Social transformation, also a component of the study's conceptual framework, is informed by a kingdom of God theology and influenced by liberation theology, discussed in Section 3.6.2. The value of liberation theology's perspective on the goal of social transformation, as noted by Newbigin (1995:98), needs to be taken into account in the light of the data interpretation in determining the extent of social transformation at LTE. Concerning liberation theology's influence on the attainment of social transformation, LTE's approach subscribes to a number of features evident therein. For instance, their motto 'A hand up, not a hand out' (RvW48: 2) reflects black liberation theology's insistence on an emancipatory approach founded on kingdom liberation and *shalom*, rather than on a charitable approach to community development, as alluded to by Bowers du Toit (2018: 33) in Section 3.6.2.

When dealing with the influence of liberation theology on social transformation, the aspiration of achieving justice occupies a focal point. This was highlighted in Section 3.6.6 where it was noted how Jesus explicitly linked the kingdom with justice (Matt. 6: 33)[294]. When seeking evidence of justice being attained in the lives of the participants, one may immediately be prompted to react to the apparent lack thereof. The 'god-complexes' of the non-poor, discussed in Section 5.4.2, working in conjunction to keep those in poverty powerless (Christian 1999:122), are all too evident in society at

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[294] Beukes and Plaatjies van Huffel (2013) therefore ground their proposed theology of development impliedly on the link between the kingdom of God and justice.

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present. It cannot be denied that the holders of power continue to use systems such as government, the law and bureaucracies to entrench their rule over the economically deprived, thus 'playing god' in their lives (Myers: 2011: 123ff). It cannot be ignored that these evil structures of society, which Bosch (2011: 417) says requires "resolute commitment to challenging and transforming" them, are unfortunately still prevalent. Moreover, liberation theology may suggest that an organisation needs to operate at a level of addressing structural injustice, whereas it would appear that advocacy initiatives tackling 'god-complexes' are beyond the scope of LTE's endeavours.

However, in spite of this, I am suggesting that liberation theology's insistence on justice is seen to be fulfilled within the specific sphere of influence at LTE[295]. Indeed, I propose that the overall message conveyed by the data interpretation is that the attainment of justice can be viewed as a primary motivating factor in the work of LTE. Support for my opinion is to be found in Clarke's (2011: 126) view of liberation theology as focusing on eliminating suffering and exploitation and being attained by the coming of the kingdom of God on earth. His summary of liberation as meaning emancipation from economic, social and political constraints which result in oppression, as well as the assumption of control of one's own destiny, is a most salient description. In all of these facets of Clarke's précis of liberation theology, LTE can be found to be implementing the vision of social justice by focusing on elimination of suffering, economic emancipation and the ability to control one's own destiny, as described in the theological constructs herein.

6.5.2 Kingdom of God proclaimed through a holistic approach

As theory is translated into practice in the study, it needs to be illustrated how the data interpretation reveals the prominence of a kingdom of God theology in the practice of spirituality. From there will flow discussion of the effects of the practice of spirituality at LTE on specific facets of transformation, which have been observed from the data interpretation. Having already described above, the backdrop formed by liberation theology in striving for justice, the starting point for exploring how spirituality is practised at LTE is the implied recognition of the centrality of a kingdom of God understanding. Samuel (2020: 6) records how a kingdom of God theology is what has

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[295] It is conceded that liberation theologians may not be believe that the facts go far enough in supporting this argument.

guided transformational development since the outset of the concept and that the notion of God's rule entering human history has become a powerful theological theme.

A kingdom of God theology is essential for redressing issues pertaining to power, as explained in Section 3.6.6. Reference was made there to how Christian (1999: 191) asserts that power informed by a kingdom of God understanding is based on truth in the person of Jesus Christ (Jn 8: 36). It has been shown that, at LTE, Christ is proclaimed as the truth, as a result of which many of the respondents had said that they had a relationship with the triune God. In this regard, it will be recalled (from Section 6.2.1) that Mr van Wyk states that, whereas there was previously only "an affiliation" with the Christian faith, the Alpha Course[296] and the discipleship course which the students participate in at LTE, provide an opportunity for them "to consider having more of a relationship" with God (RvW48: 5).

Following from LTE's holistic approach to skills training, where the spiritual dimension of a person is addressed together with emotional, social and economic needs, in order to equip an unemployed person to turn his or her life around, according to Ms Lipp (BL45: 2), it can be seen how the kingdom of God is proclaimed. This emphasis on the vulnerable and marginalised of society is a reflection of the relevance of the kingdom of God on the economically poor and socially powerless, as discussed in Section 3.6.6, and articulated by Cray (1999: 30), in remarking how central to Jesus' teaching on the kingdom of God was Jesus' announcement that he had come to preach Good News to "the poor" (Lk 4: 18; 7: 22). In essence, in the kingdom of God, we witness an environment "shaped by love, grace, sacrifice and truth", which is the kingdom inaugurated by Jesus and represented by him, according to Samuel (2020: 7) and it is this notion and in this environment where the spirituality at LTE finds its source.

It has already been discussed fully in Section 5.2.3 how spirituality is practised at LTE[297] However, in the course of the practice of spirituality at LTE, the kingdom of

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[296] The interviews with Ms Madikane and Ms Joemath seem to suggest that they modify the content of the Alpha Course in order to contextualise it for their purposes. However, they mentioned using the videos, which feature British presenters in an affluent London setting, which raises the question whether LTE could adapt the course further for the local context.

[297] In summary, this is through discipleship classes, which are built into the students' skills training, where the Alpha Course, teaching about the Christian faith, forms part of the weekly curriculum. In addition, spirituality is practised when a weekly church service and worship sessions are held, together with daily devotions with prayer and scripture reading in the classes.

God is not only proclaimed through the communication of the Christian message in words during the discipleship class and expressions of worship. The data interpretation demonstrated a clear pattern of the kingdom of God being proclaimed holistically through the conduct of LTE staff. It is apparent that the kingdom of God is the motivating influence of each LTE staff member as they interact with the students, since following Christ is integral to their lives. The following substantiating sample of responses from staff to the question I posed, namely, "How would you describe the importance, if at all, of the Christian faith in your daily life?", is enlightening:

> Ms Madikane (BM49: 1): I believe Christianity is a lifestyle, not something that I can put on and take off when I feel like it.

> Ms Lipp (BL45: 2): It is essential to my daily life. I think without it I would be…floundering. It's what we use to guide our thoughts, our processes, our actions.

> Mr van Wyk (RvW48: 1): My faith is fundamental to my worldview, to the way I live my life. And it feeds into my passion for helping others, unemployed people, and has fed into the existence of this organisation.

In this respect, it ought to be noted that the missiological dimension of the study is clearly apparent. There would appear to be a correlation between the conduct of the LTE staff and Bosch's (2011: 293) insight into previous missiological awakenings that the Christians' actions were motivated by "a tremendous sense of gratitude for what they had received and an urgent desire to share with others, both at home and abroad, the blessings so freely shed among them". By virtue of the *imago Dei*, it is thus to be expected that the work of the LTE staff would collaborate with the *missio Dei* in reflecting the love of God and in creating a respectful and loving environment conducive to healing of 'marred identities'.

The kingdom of God convictions of the LTE staff members therefore undergird their entire approach towards the students. At its very essence is the second great command of Jesus to love our neighbours (Matt. 22: 39). In proclaiming the kingdom of God holistically, the LTE staff have contributed to the creation of an environment which the participants described as one in which they felt respected, loved, encouraged and supported, as discussed under Theoretical Construct 2. This is confirmation of the intentions of the leadership, as expressed by Mr van Wyk (RvW48: 3) as follows: "…the challenge before us is to model a Christianity that is different. One that is compassionate, caring, is not discriminatory or prejudicial".

Having identified the proclamation of the kingdom of God, as evident in the practice of spirituality at LTE, it now needs to be ascertained what value the practice of spirituality lends to the affirmation of human dignity and in attaining social transformation.

6.5.3 Practice of spirituality resulting in recovery of true identity and vocation

As discussed in Section 3.6, transformation is not centrally concerned with material development but is instead about recovering true identity and vocation (Myers 2011: 179). Where true identity and vocation are recovered, these are strong indicators of human dignity having been affirmed, as mentioned in Section 1.5.6. In the study, the empirical data has revealed that there has indeed been recovery of true identity and vocation amongst the participants at LTE, as described in the theoretical constructs above. This is attributable to the practice of spirituality because recovery of true identity and vocation occurs through healing of 'marred identities' (Christian 1999), and this takes place by virtue of the *imago Dei*, as well as the proclamation of the kingdom of God, discussed in Section 3.3.6. This observation refers back to Verster's (2012: 112) comment, that, because the kingdom of God permits those in economic distress to see themselves the way God does, they no longer need to be trapped in poverty with a distorted image of themselves.

Central to the Christian understanding of identity is the recognition of humans being made in the image of God. In this regard, at LTE, in expressly addressing human dignity and the need for 'marred identities' to be healed, reliance is placed on the *'imago Dei'* as the basis for communicating the inalienability of human dignity. This was most apparent in Ms Madikane's mentioning that "I keep on reinforcing that they are made in the image of God, they have value" (BM49: 3). In addition, it is clear that the message is communicated clearly in that the respondents understand and accept the doctrinal reference to the *imago Dei* as the basis for appreciating their human dignity, as appears from the following respondent's remark:

> **In Bulelani M. 4:13 ¶ 88.** *I think it's a phrase that says you are made in the image of God. That makes me feel alright, it makes me feel wonderful. No one can just sacrifice something for you, especially life for you, if you're worthless. So we are worth something, and I'm designed in the image of him so I should be proud of myself.*

A knowledge of the love of God was found to play a central role in the participants recovering their true identity and vocation. In support of this assertion, Theoretical Construct 1: 'Powerlessness is overcome through having purpose', elaborated on

recovery of true identity of the participants, in Section 6.2. In this regard, many gained a new understanding of who they were by finding their identities in Christ, through knowing the love of God, and a sense of purpose or vocation in terms of their destiny with God (Section 6.2.2). This, in spite of several of the respondents having previously excluded God from their lives because of feelings of anger or hurt, which accords with Christian's (1999: 57) observation that the image of God is frequently distorted in the minds of the impoverished.

Many of the respondents reported a dramatic difference in outlook and sense of well-being during their time at LTE, with several attributing this changed outlook directly to knowing God's love, as the extensive quotations in Section 6.2 confirmed. This finding is confirmatory of Clarke's (2011: 21) reference to the largest survey of the views of the economically deprived, (mentioned in Section 3.3.5 footnote), which reveals the important tie which spirituality and religious observance have with a sense of well-being. Moreover, the finding from the data of knowing God's love is explicit that the participants have recovered their vocation, as Section 6.2.1 indicates, by referring to scholars such as Badcock (1998: 123), who states that a calling to the love of God is an obvious feature of vocation.

Through the practice of spirituality at LTE, the participants recover their identity and vocation so that they understand who they are in God's eyes and the purpose for which God created them. As Samuel (2020: 7) sums it up: "Healed within and belonging to God's family is the Identity they seek". The participants' true identity and vocation is communicated intentionally through the use of biblical imagery and scriptures, as testified by Ms Madikane, whom it will be recalled is the discipleship and life skills trainer at the Khayelitsha campus (BM49: 2):

> *And I always believe that a person would not know who they are, unless they know the God who created them. And the reason why he created them. …they don't really know why they are here. So if you refer them to the Bible, tell them that you are wonderfully and fearfully made* [Psalm 139]. *So it doesn't matter if you are black, it doesn't matter if you are white, the fact that we are born, God had a purpose for you. So all you need to do is to seek God so that God can reveal his purpose in your life.*

In the same way, the message of recovered identity and vocation is communicated to the students at the Hermanus campus, through the practice of spirituality and specifically the use of biblical imagery and scriptures, as mentioned by the following participant:

> **In Lulama F 10:20 ¶ 162.** *But as I came here,* [LTE staff member] *gave us those scriptures, and when I read those scriptures, I feel like I've gained a lot of power and control over myself, and I, I know I am able to do anything, that I'm able to achieve my goals.*

In addition, Ms Pike (MP47: 4), branch manager at the Hermanus campus, confirmed this in the following statement:

> *I'll read* [scripture] *passages where God chose you when he chose creation. That goes to each and every person, you were not a mistake. Reading that and referencing it to them, you know, because when we grew up someone would say, 'I didn't plan you'. So when God says 'I planned you when I planned creation', then that is different.*

Apart from understanding their vocation as being destiny with God, due to knowing God's love, the data interpretation discussed in Section 6.2.2 showed how knowing God's love also caused the participants to experience purpose for their immediate life and for implementing plans for their future. In this way, Theoretical Construct 1 noted how a new sense of purpose had far-reaching consequences in overcoming powerlessness, specifically in stimulating an ability to produce income. Section 6.2.2 illustrated the variety of expressions of the participants' purpose, which included gaining employment, starting their own businesses, setting concrete goals for their future, making plans to study further and finding passion in discovering and using their talents.

In addition, this new sense of purpose had consequences positively impacting the participants' communities as the participants expressed eagerness to contribute to society, as discussed further in Section 6.2.2. These expressions were not empty words as indeed, some of them had already taken active steps of service to their communities, as the following quotations show:

> **In Daniel M. 8:22 ¶ 277.** *On Saturday, actually I was a volunteer uh, helping the homeless, making them food and dishing it out, which ended up taking long but I didn't actually complain about it because it was worth it.*

> **In Khanyisa F. 17:18 ¶ 245.** *There is another woman who was sharing with me about her marriage. Her story was very sad, but now when I'm here in LTE, I learn something. When people have a problem, you're not going to judge her. You must encourage, you must be talking nice to her. So I'm encouraging her and then I share also my story with her.*

> **In Maita F. 5:26 ¶ 122.** *So I've been just trying to impact a lot of people's lives. I try to inspire people. I've been drawing and I try to give back by drawing something for them.*

The willingness to contribute to society, demonstrated by the participants, mirrors Tinder's (2003: 47) argument on vocation understood as destiny (discussed in Section

2.7), whereby he sees individuals' destinies intertwined with a universal destiny. This, he explains is due to the great moral command to love one's neighbour which culminates in thinking about humanity rather than thinking as an individual. On the basis of Tinder's argument, it would be entirely within the understanding of the participants' recovery of vocation that they express a desire to look beyond their own needs and to contribute to their community's needs.

From the discussion above, it is revealed convincingly that the recovery of true identity and vocation is attributable to the practice of spirituality at LTE, by way of the holistic proclamation of the kingdom of God by LTE staff, and specifically, through an emphasis on the *imago Dei*.

6.5.4 Practice of spirituality resulting in affirmation of human dignity

This recovery of true identity and vocation through healing of 'marred identities' is of great significance as it leads to affirmation of human dignity, without which, the authorities agree, escape from the 'web of lies' has limited success (Christian 1999: 191). Confirmation that human dignity is being affirmed at LTE relates back to the discussion in Chapter 2, where it was emphasised how human dignity, being grounded in the *imago Dei,* is attributed to all humanity regardless of personal circumstances, giving rise to 'irreducible' dignity, as stated by Moltmann (1984: 17). However, as explained in Section 2.9, this irreducible dignity becomes damaged in the vulnerable and marginalised when, owing to 'god-complexes', they are stripped of assurance that they have human dignity. Chapter 3 elaborated how human dignity is not something which can be withdrawn from those in states of vulnerability, as Koopman (2007: 178) stressed (See Section 3.6.4). Despite this, as stated, it is the correcting of a perception of human dignity lacking which needs to be addressed.

There emerged from the interviews undertaken in the study a clear awareness amongst the staff at LTE that feelings of a lack of human dignity in the students, need addressing. For instance, Ms Madikane informed me (BM49: 2-3) that "[most] men, most women come to LTE with their dignity broken already, because they are unemployed". She explained further that this stripped them of their right to decision-making in their extended households, with other family members commanding respect by virtue of their employment, and even children demeaning them because they were unable to provide towards the household. This attitude caused the unemployed

person to feel ashamed, prompting Ms Madikane (BM49: 3) to stress to the students that "your situation does not make you who you are".

This latter comment of Ms Madikane is significant since it illustrates how human dignity becomes a subjective assessment. This was alluded to in Section 2.9 by Verspieren (2003: 18) who observed that where a person, such as a marginalised, unemployed person in this instance, perceives that the projection of a positive image to the world is lacking, his or her self-esteem is negatively affected. Nevertheless, this perception of an absence of human dignity is not irreversible, as will be recalled from Bowers du Toit's (2017: 62) comments on this issue (See Section 2.10.3). She convincingly argues that worth can be imputed to those who have previously believed themselves to be lacking human dignity through awareness being generated of their understanding of who they are in Christ. Once they recognise that their worth is derived purely from the *imago Dei,* healing of 'marred identities' occurs. This is indeed what has occurred at LTE amongst the participants, through the practice of spirituality, where the value of the participants, rooted in the *imago Dei*, is communicated and emphasised. It has already been fully discussed how Mr van Wyk informed me that the whole philosophy behind LTE was built on restoring human dignity (See Section 5.2.2).

The data interpretation discussed in Section 6.3 above, and examples provided, under Theoretical Construct 2: 'A respectful and loving environment heals 'marred identities'', discloses unequivocally that the participants' perception of their human dignity was rectified and their human dignity affirmed at LTE. The relevance of the practice of spirituality is based on the respectful and loving environment having been created through the proclamation of the kingdom of God. It was illustrated in Section 6.3.1 how the participants described the positive effect that the respect which the LTE staff showed towards them, had on them, including the fact that the staff refrained from any judgmentalism. They were moreover shown love and hospitality, which made them feel like family. The participants described how they felt that they were in a supportive and encouraging environment, where the LTE staff expressed belief in them when others had given up on them (Section 6.3.2). In this loving and encouraging environment, the participants experienced healing of self-worth, which became obvious as their self-confidence increased, their self-esteem was restored and they felt fulfilment in attaining financial autonomy, realising their abilities and reaching

achievements which they previously thought they were not capable of doing, as described in Section 6.3.3.

It is proposed that the participants were able to find healing and correction of their human dignity perception due to the scarcity of experiences of love and compassion amongst those in economic deprivation. This proposal is based on the comment by Christian (1999: 131) that the "vacuum created by a lack of love" results in "greater appreciation among the poor for expressions of love". The participants are therefore more likely to respond positively to the loving, compassionate environment at LTE, which would facilitate healing of their self-worth, as has been demonstrated. These descriptions of the loving and encouraging environment at LTE is confirmation of what Mr van Wyk (RvW48: 3), informed me, how they were intentionally endeavouring to create an environment "that lives out passages such as contained in Ephesians, that there's no Jew, there's no Greek, there's no slave, there's no free. And that in Christ, we are one". It was therefore through the practice of spirituality, with the kingdom of God proclaimed by the LTE staff, and an emphasis on the *imago Dei*, that healing of self-worth could take place and human dignity affirmed in circumstances where the participants had recovered their true identities and vocation. The importance of the affirmation of human dignity cannot be under-estimated when viewed in the light of Koopman's (2008) views on the destructive effect of power in eroding the dignity of the marginalised and vulnerable of society.

6.5.5 Practice of spirituality overcoming powerlessness

LTE's ethos towards addressing powerlessness, in their emphasis on recovery of true identity and human dignity, is a clear reflection of LTE's adoption of a tacit, but certainly intentional, kingdom of God understanding of power. This interpretation is based on Christian's assertion (1999: 191), discussed in Section 3.6.6, that power informed by an understanding of *shalom*, proclaims truth about self and is built on clarification of identity. Instead of focusing on powerlessness due to entrapment in a 'web of lies', therefore, kingdom of God understanding of identity enables the participants to affirm that "in all these things we are more than conquerors through him who loved us" (Rom. 8:37). The state of powerlessness acknowledges dependence on God (2 Cor. 12: 9b), according to Christian (1999: 192). Kingdom power, according to Christian (1999: 193) seeks to break the 'web of lies' and proclaim liberty to the captives, who are those in situations of material deprivation. The means of this undertaking would be through

establishing truth to replace the lies, based on truth in the person of Jesus Christ (Jn 8: 36). As discussed in Section 3.6.6, central to Jesus' teaching about the kingdom of God was his focus on the economically poor and socially powerless (Lk 4: 18; 7: 22) (Cray 1999: 30), and, of significance is that Jesus explicitly linked the kingdom with justice (Matt. 6: 33). As stated in Section 6.2.2, it has been shown that, at LTE, Christ is proclaimed and, as such, the practice of spirituality is instrumental in overcoming powerlessness. In LTE's approach, we therefore see confirmation of Knoetze's (2019: 159) observation that empowerment as a theological concept is based on the understanding that all humans are created in God's image and have gifts, regardless of their economic circumstances.

As has been demonstrated in the theoretical constructs discussed above, the identity and vocation of the participants is restored and their human dignity affirmed at LTE through establishing the truth of who they are in Christ, what their worth is by virtue of being made in the image of God, and what purpose they were created for. Myers (2011: 179) indicates that, once people discover who they truly are, their story takes on a new path which cannot be altered, not even by "the cleverest of lies". He adds that the 'web of lies' is unmasked for what it is, "an enormous deception serving the interests of both the Evil One and the non-poor" (Myers 2011:180).

When seeking corroborating evidence of escape by the participants from the 'web of lies', from the codes under discussion within Theoretical Construct 3, the relevance of 'feelings of hope', illustrated under the code of this name, is significant. In this regard, what emerges here from the data interpretation is confirmation of how hope is one of the essential features of a recovery of vocation, according to Badcock (1998: 86), as discussed in Section 2.10.3. Moreover, as also mentioned, the presence of hope is an indication of affirmation of human dignity. Since hope, as a natural consequence of recovery of vocation, is also remarked upon by Migliore (2014: 257), it can be inferred that where hope, which was absent, has become noticeably present, as in the present instance, there has been affirmation of human dignity. This affirmed human dignity, marked by new hope, enables the participants to escape from the 'web of lies'. For this reason, it was proposed (in Section 2.12) that the presence of the ingredient of hope, linked to vocation's task of affirming human dignity, would be an important indicator of meaningful social transformation taking place.

Given all the testimony submitted herein, I accordingly argue that the participants have been placed in a position where they are able to escape the 'web of lies'. This equates to overcoming powerlessness. This result negates the hesitancy within development discourse about spirituality and lends support to the view of Buijs (2008: 229-239) about empowerment brought about by spirituality and contemporary development thinking acknowledging that development needs to be based on a concept of 'well-being' (Rakodi 2012: 637-638) (Section 3.3.5). It is through the practice of spirituality at LTE, with its emphasis on a kingdom of God understanding of power, that powerlessness is overcome. This finding lends support to Ver Beek's (2000: 32) insistence that spirituality provides people with a sense of power and hope, and shapes their decision-making, and that the omission of spirituality in development would result in inadequate, less effective interventions (Ver Beek 2000: 36), as supported by Lunn (2009: 940), and discussed in Section 3.3.5. In this respect, the benefits of valuing local contexts and knowledge over the imposition of Western-determined development priorities, grounded in modernity and colonialism, of what constitutes progress and development, has become apparent (as mentioned by Bowers du Toit (2020: 315) (in Section 1.5.5).

For many of the participants, having escaped the 'web of lies', thereby overcoming powerlessness, and having had their human dignity affirmed, through a recovery of true identity and vocation, there are indications of progression towards *shalom*. An argument can accordingly be presented for the occurrence of social transformation, as will be illustrated below. In the overcoming of powerlessness, it can therefore be seen the enormous value of the practice of spirituality at LTE.

6.5.6 Practice of spirituality as advancing social transformation

6.5.6.1 Holistic transformation

Finally, having seen the impact of spirituality on the recovery of the true identity and vocation of the participants, resulting in the affirmation of their human dignity and overcoming powerlessness, it is argued here that the practice of spirituality at LTE results in holistic social transformation occurring amongst the students. Myers (2011) notes the following key features of transformation:

> *the process that helps people to discover their true identity as children of God and to recover their true vocation as faithful and productive stewards of gifts from God for the well-being of all… seeking positive change in the whole of human life, materially, socially and spiritually* (Myers (2011: 17) .

From the data interpretation, it is apparent that Myers' key features are being fulfilled in the participants at LTE. Sections 6.5.3 and 6.5.4 describe how the participants are discovering their true identity as children of God and their true vocation as stewards of their gifts from God, and are experiencing holistic, positive change in their lives. This was directly attributed to the practice of spirituality at LTE. Furthermore, Theoretical Construct 1: 'Powerlessness is overcome through having purpose', highlighting the code 'knowing God's love', demonstrated that many of the participants, during their time of skills training at LTE, had experienced knowing the love of God, which leads to an inference of a discovery of their true identity as children of God, according to Myers. As Gorlorwulu and Rahschulte (2010: 200) observe, in relation to this characteristic of Myers' interpretation of transformation, it would suggest that "faith can be developed and nurtured in each person". This is the very approach of LTE as it has been seen throughout the study how deliberate LTE are in their inclusion of the spiritual dimension of a person's life in their interventions.

Gorlorwulu and Rahschulte (2010: 200), relying on faith's prominence in scripture[298] in effecting enduring change, elevate faith as a pre-cursor to transformational development, and even promote the spiritual element of transformational development above addressing material need. They find that spiritual change equips a person to deal with material elements of transformation. Therefore, in including discipleship in their skills training development curriculum, and in giving matters of spirituality prominence in their interventions, LTE would, according to Gorlorwulu and Rahschulte (2010), be giving transformational development the best possible chance of succeeding. Indeed, the discussion of the data referred to above, reflected Gorlorwulu and Rahschulte's (2010: 200) observations in that, once the participants experienced the love of God, in other words the spiritual dimension of change, it was shown that they gained a sense of purpose. The recovery of their vocation was elaborated on above in Section 6.5.3, where the data interpretation showed several aspects of vocation, all of which confirmed that vocation was recovered. This new sense of purpose enabled them to overcome powerlessness and to generate an income, which is the material, non-spiritual dimension of change.

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[298] For example, Matt. 17:20.

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Concerning Myers' factor of addressing a person holistically, including spiritually, it has already been mentioned in Section 5.2.2 how Mr van Wyk stressed that the approach of LTE to the upliftment of each individual was to address them holistically: physically, economically, socially and spiritually. Furthermore, as regards Myers' insistence on a holistic approach to the individual, in the aforementioned quote, according to Gorlorwulu and Rahschulte's (2010) opinion, implicit in 'recovery' of vocation is 'wholeness', which leads them to comment, "The root of wholeness is to understand vocation in terms of meaning, purpose or calling" (Gorlorwulu and Rahschulte 2010: 201). Signs of wholeness, as opposed to awareness of previous brokenness, were present in the participants' responses, as indications of a recovery of vocation, as appear in the following examples:

> *In Thozoma F. 12:13 ¶ 50. Sometimes we're broken into pieces. But when we hear the message of God it makes us as a whole….*
>
> *In Zintle F. 13:24 ¶ 133. In my heart inside, he* [God] *just started to wipe out all that negative self talk, you know, self- undermining, whatever. And then he just replaced that with peace, you know…*
>
> *In LTE life skills evaluation. 43:42 ¶ 74. I have learned that in every situation God is always there. I am now restored; every piece that was broken in my life God has restored and mends my life daily.* **LTE student 3, 2018.**

The discussion in Section 6.5.4 above revealed that 'wholeness', which can be equated to healing of 'marred identities', results in affirmation of human dignity. This is taking place at LTE through the practice of spirituality where the *shalom* of God is communicated and applied in the interventions intended to uplift the students. Where we see distorted identities being healed, in the case of the participants who testify to experiencing a new sense of self-worth, this reinforces Myers' (2011:178) declaration that "healing the identity of the poor is the beginning of transformation". Theoretical Construct 2: 'A respectful and loving environment heals 'marred identities'', has been demonstrated to have merit, through the data interpretation substantiation in that the participants have come to see themselves through the lens of the *imago Dei,* that they have intrinsic value by virtue of having been made in the image of God. This corrected identity restores the participants' perception of their human dignity and confirms what Myers (2011: 178) states about restored human dignity and recovered vocation being the focus of transformation. It must be stressed that restored human dignity, which is occurring through the lens of the *imago Dei*, means that the practice of spirituality is central in affirming human dignity.

The affirmation of human dignity leads to escape from the 'web of lies', as discussed above in Section 6.5.5, and thus enables social transformation to take place. Once again, the point must be made that the practice of spirituality is essential for social transformation, which can only occur with kingdom of God theology. The reason for this, as explained in Section 3.6.6, is that powerlessness needs to be addressed from a kingdom of God perspective so that the impoverished can become empowered. Here we saw an interpretation of the data revealing that powerlessness was overcome by the participants in the study. Theoretical Construct 1: 'Powerlessness is overcome through having purpose', affirms this in Section 6.2, and Section 6.5.5 emphasises the central role of the practice of spirituality in overcoming powerlessness. This statement would be confirmation of Buijs' (2008:229) recognition of spirituality being a "reservoir of tremendous power" in shaping the hearts and minds of people in a way that no development project, no matter how well-designed, is able to do, as mentioned in Section 3.3.5.

It is only through the practice of spirituality that those who have been trapped in poverty have been enabled to see their identity as being in Christ, thereby enabling them to escape from the 'web of lies' with their human dignity affirmed and having confident knowledge of their vocation. As a consequence, they are able to experience elements of *shalom*, which refers back to Bragg's (1987: 39) observation that, where identity and vocation are recovered, this will lead to a state where peace and justice are experienced and fractured relationships restored (as discussed in Section 3.6.5). Where we see aspects of *shalom*, therefore, in the lives of the participants, we can discern that human dignity has been affirmed and that social transformation is occurring.

6.5.6.2 Signs of shalom apparent

In seeking confirmation of meaningful social transformation in the lives of the LTE students, reference is made to Section 1.5.5 where guidance was sought for ascertaining movement towards social transformation[299]. In this regard, in the context of Practical Theology, it was symbolised as '*shalom*', the biblical concept of "human and societal well-being and flourishing" (Cochrane *et al.* 1991: 67). In the study, we

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[299] Cochrane *et al.* (1991: 3) describe social transformation as a process whereby society develops closer affinity to the vision and values of the kingdom of God.

may not be able to say that the participants are experiencing complete and absolute harmony, well-being, freedom, equity and justice, but there is certainly a relatively marked change as compared with their previous state of powerlessness and injustice. Theoretical Construct 3: 'Escaping the 'web of lies' enables progression towards *shalom*', discussed in 6.4, featured the various indications of *shalom* in the participants' lives, with particular reference to Anderson's (1982) emphasis on harmony and wholeness. Harmony, as an indication of *shalom*, is evident in the restoration of fractured relationships, discussed in Section 6.4.2. Harmony and wholeness can also be seen in 'imaging God in relationships', as discussed under Section 6.4.3, where godly values were being developed in the characters of the participants, enabling them to have more harmonious relationships. Wholeness, reflecting a recovery of vocation, is also apparent in the participants' newly acquired sense of purpose, which enabled them to use their God-given gifts and skills to produce income and to change their economic circumstances.

Of particular note is the participants' own agency in overcoming powerlessness and attaining financial independence, which is an essential factor in relation to meeting needs, according to Prilleltensky and Nelson (2002), as mentioned in Section 3.6.4. This factor would confirm Bowers du Toit's (2017: 64) suggestion that discovery of their true identity in those in situations of economic deprivation enables them to recognise their God-given agency, which in turn can enable them to contribute towards their communities. This feature of agency, therefore is an essential dimension pointing to social transformation. As dealt with further in Section 3.6.4, Myers (2019: 23) directly attributes lack of agency to sustained powerlessness due to the perception of materially deprived individuals of the permanence of their situation caused by 'marred identities'.

Moreover, as discussed, the wholeness, reflecting a recovery of vocation, instilled in the participants a new desire to serve their communities and to contribute to society, which are also signs of transformation. A consciousness of the well-being of others reflects Tinder's (2003: 48) opinion that this consciousness of the destiny of others is what imbues us with human dignity (See Section 2.7). This attitude would have connotations of *ubuntu*, discussed in Section 2.6 as a possible source of human dignity, and described as "a deep culture of sharing" motivated by acts of "compassion to those who cross our path" (Naude 2011: 502). Instead of *ubuntu* being distorted by

Enlightenment thinking in terms of individualism and materialism, here we see an *ubuntu* "reinvigoration", as called for by Tucker and Masango (2017: 156) (in Section 2.6), who maintain that it is only when *ubuntu* flows from a heart of love towards God and each other that *ubuntu* can be effective in taking care of society's most vulnerable, which is its intention.

In this vein, the element of changed intentions, use of talents and looking to the well-being of others, apparent in the participants, is also a reflection of Myers' (2011: 17) inclusion of being "faithful and productive stewards" in his description of elements of transformational development. This ties in with Myers' (2011: 61) remark that, based on the *imago Dei*, where human beings are God's actors with responsibility over creation, the vocation of humankind is also to make the earth fruitful for human well-being.

Whilst specific acts of stewardship have not been clearly illustrated by Myers, note Gorlorwulu and Rahschulte (2010: 200), what must be contemplated in the notion, according to these authors, is some use of resources for the benefit of the community and to the glory of God. In the present instance, there have been clear indications of the participants' desire to use their skills and gifts for the benefit of those around them, as the following respondents testify:

> ***In Dumisa M. 14:9 ¶ 104.*** *Because after the course I know I will manage to help… to give those who not have a skill to help their families. I see myself to do a school of baking. Yes, yes,… it will be a legacy. To pass to other people.*
>
> ***In Nandipha F. 6:31 ¶ 158.*** *I just want to take my knowledge that I learned here and plough back to them* [in the community].
>
> ***In Mbulelo M. 15:22 ¶ 181.*** *I'm planning to have my own business. But at the same time, not just a business that will benefit me alone.*

These attitudes and acts of stewardship are significant in highlighting how transformation has occurred. We can infer this because they reflect Myers' (2011: 172) observations that those experiencing material deprivation have been conditioned to believe, through 'god-complexes' and the sense of privilege of the non-poor, that they are supposed to be the servants of others more worthy. They therefore do not consider themselves able to be creative and productive stewards. Hence the presence of intention expressed by the participants to use their skills for the benefit of their community is confirmation of a recovery of vocation and an indication of transformation.

6.5.6.3 Social transformation through integrated spirituality

In identifying the role of spirituality at LTE, it emerges that spirituality is practised through holistic proclamation of the kingdom of God, as described herein. In responding to the question as to what impact the practice of spirituality at LTE has on the students, the indications unequivocally support a conclusion that meaningful social transformation is occurring at LTE due to the practice of integrated spirituality. I would argue vigorously that the human dignity of the participants is being affirmed, which enables them to overcome powerlessness and to embark on a path of experiencing meaningful social transformation. In this way, the case study of LTE confirms what scholars such as Deneulin and Rakodi (2011) and Buijs (2008) are claiming (as discussed in Section 3.3.5). This is to the effect that, despite the prior exclusion of spirituality from the development discourse, in recent times, it has become evident that integrated spirituality is a contributing factor in generating social change.

6.6 Conclusion

In this chapter, I undertook a thematic data analysis with regard to aspects of the study concerning indications of social transformation at LTE. In this undertaking, from the codes aligned with the three themes identified, namely 'LTE meeting economic need', 'LTE meeting emotional need' and 'LTE meeting spiritual need', three theoretical constructs were identified, following the approach of Saldaña (2016), and were discussed in order to extract corroboration pointing to social transformation.

Theoretical Construct 1: 'Powerlessness is overcome through having purpose' was formulated as a reflection of the data interpretation revealing how the de-humanising effects of powerlessness, described fully in Chapter 5, were overcome. This transition related to recovery of vocation and occurred through knowing the love of God. Finding their identity in Christ and their purpose in life improved the participants' sense of well-being. Their renewed purpose also enabled the participants to make concrete plans to improve their economic situation and to use their gifts and talents for the benefit of their communities.

Theoretical Construct 2: 'A respectful and loving environment heals 'marred identities'' emerged from the data where it was evident that the participants had experienced healing of their self-worth. The supportive and encouraging environment at LTE resulted in the participants becoming self-confident, where low self-confidence was a mark of 'marred identities', according to Christian (1999). The ability to generate

income and develop economic autonomy built self-esteem in a non-judgmental environment.

Theoretical Construct 3: 'Escaping the 'web of lies' enables progression towards *shalom*' was formulated upon discovery from the data that there were signs of transformation occurring in the lives of the participants. This was most apparent in the feelings of hope expressed by the participants, as well as the development of godly attributes which enabled them to reconcile where there were fractured relationships.

The influence of integrated spirituality was next examined in light of a kingdom of God theology. It was required that an assessment be made on the practice of spirituality at LTE in conjunction with the three theoretical constructs, in order to assess the benefit of integrated spirituality at LTE. From this exercise, it was confirmed that the practice of spirituality at LTE results in:

- recovery of true identity and vocation
- the affirmation of human dignity
- the overcoming of powerlessness.

As a direct consequence of the aforementioned factors, social transformation is advanced. It can thus be confirmed that the practice of spirituality fulfils the purpose which a number of scholars within the development discourse propose, in enhancing development goals. As far as the development perspective adopted in this study is concerned, namely that of transformation informed by a kingdom of God theology, it can be confirmed that the practice of spirituality is vital in leading to the advancement of meaningful social transformation.

CHAPTER 7.
KEY FINDINGS, RECOMMENDATIONS AND
REFLECTIONS ON STUDY

7.1 Introduction

The concluding chapter of the study commences with a summary of key findings. In this regard, I explore the role of the FBO in addressing poverty, using LTE as a case study, and seek to make recommendations as to how the LTE case study could be utilised in assisting scholars and practitioners to understand better the interplay between spirituality and development[300]. Having deliberated on the entity known as the FBO, and having raised awareness of the scarcity of knowledge of spirituality practices in FBOs, in Section 1.5.4, and on differing opinions on the theoretical role of FBOs in development issues, the present chapter will instead focus on the role of the FBO in addressing poverty, in practice. This assessment will be undertaken by exploring the interpretation of the data extracted under the three themes formulated in the previous chapter, namely 'LTE meeting economic need', 'LTE meeting emotional need' and 'LTE meeting spiritual need', in relation to the study's concept of social transformation, followed by the additional features observed in the empirical study, which were the initiation of social transformation and engagement in the *missio Dei*.

Thereafter, the research question and research objectives are responded to. A summation of the study follows, and justification presented therefor, whereafter the study's limitations are noted. Since the chapter incorporates Osmer's (2008) fourth core task of a practical theological interpretation, which is the pragmatic task, enquiring 'How might we respond?', it can be expected that recommendations will be made. According to Osmer (2008: 4), the pragmatic task includes "[d]etermining strategies of action that will influence situations in ways that are desirable and entering into a reflective conversation with the 'talk back' emerging when they are enacted". These recommendations will therefore be made to LTE, to other FBOs, to the church and to the academy, whereafter the value of the study is commented on. Finally, an analysis of the contribution of self-reflexivity to the study, as a dimension of the interpretive

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[300] This remaining element of the conceptual framework, the role of the FBO in addressing poverty, was dependent on the interpretation of the data in Chapters 5 and 6.

nature of the study, will be presented, together with self-reflexivity's challenge confronting the researcher and its transformative role. The chapter ends with concluding comments on the study being made.

7.2 Summary of key findings

7.2.1 Theme 1: LTE meeting economic need and affirming human dignity and vocation.

Through its core skills development programme, as outlined in Section 5.2.1, LTE intervenes in the income- producing capabilities of its students. This was shown to have a dramatic effect on the lives of the participants, as elaborated on in Chapter 6. The full impact of the difference LTE makes in meeting the participants' economic needs is evident when contrasted with their lives prior to LTE, where they found themselves in varying states of impoverishment. The exacerbating influence of COVID-19, discussed in Section 5.3.2, reflects with startling clarity the deterioration under the coronavirus pandemic of a life of vulnerability and unemployment, endured by the participants prior to their arrival at LTE. Against this backdrop of deprivation and powerlessness, the intervention by LTE, in teaching skills which enable the students to become employed or self-employed, is profound.

Aside from teaching various core skills which facilitate income-generation, LTE also equips their students in other ways, thus providing income-production support. A business skills course is taught so that the students are able to compile a business plan and to understand cash flow, budgeting and invoicing issues necessary for entrepreneurs. Moreover, the life skills curriculum enhances communication skills, teaches workplace responsibilities and basic employment rights (See Section 5.2.1). These skills, in addition to the core skills training, are extremely beneficial in equipping the students for employment in the formal sector and for becoming self-employed.

In all these ways of training and equipping the students, it is clear how LTE is empowering the students, enabling them to overcome the de-humanising effects of powerlessness described in Chapter 5. This would be what Chambers (1997) would refer to as 'livelihood security' and 'capabilities', giving rise to responsible well-being, as discussed in Section 3.3.4. It places an individual in a position to be able to meet basic needs and to cope with contingencies. In this instance, the skills acquired would be a 'capability' which would enable the participant to generate income, which would be 'livelihood security'. The structural dimension of overcoming powerlessness is also

apparent in facing up to 'god-complexes'. When LTE places its students in a position of financial autonomy, due to equipping them for income production, they are no longer excluded from economic, judicial and bureaucratic systems and institutions by the various holders of power, as noted by Christian (1999: 122) and discussed in Section 5.4.2.

From the illustrations presented in Chapter 5, (Sections 5.3 and 5.4), what can be discerned is how prominently the affirmation of human dignity in the lives of the participants features in the approach of LTE. This phenomenon is well-expressed by the Hermanus branch manager, Ms Pike (MP47: 5):

> *LTE restores a lot of people's dignity. And I've seen that with our students and their success stories. Students will come here down and out, being told they're failures; they leave LTE uplifted and being told they're the best of themselves, and they are uniquely made…. They're given tools as in how to handle life itself… how to communicate and stand up for themselves …we have seen lots of students coming with a low, low self-esteem. And within like, the sixth week, you see a different person. And they're so confident…*

Section 6.2.2 described the various ways in which the lives of the participants were transformed once they were equipped with a skill, from which it is obvious that this had made a significant difference in their lives. They commented on the skill enabling them to meet family responsibilities, to set goals for themselves, such as commencing a business or studying further, and to realise those goals. The sense of purpose and goal setting, whereby the participants envisioned a future, is indicative of a recovery of vocation. It can also be inferred that LTE promotes the agency of the students in the transformation of their lives. This reflects de Gruchy's (2015: 146) emphasis on agency in transforming the circumstances of those in economic deprivation, where he states "The importance of the agency of the poor lies in the fact that human dignity is rooted in the importance of both being and doing". De Gruchy thus links agency to recovery of identity and vocation and therefore to the affirmation of human dignity. In this way he stresses how the link between agency and human dignity is essential.

It can therefore be inferred that the convergence between LTE's philosophy of empowerment and building human dignity is most efficacious in progressing towards transformation. In this respect, LTE lives up to its motto 'A hand up, not a hand out',

aimed consciously at empowering previously unemployed individuals, since this philosophy feeds into instilling self-respect and human dignity (RvW48: 3).[301]

7.2.2 Theme 2: LTE meeting emotional need and affirming human dignity and vocation.

The prevalence of mental and emotional distress was identified in the participants, as described in Section 5.4.3.3. This mental and emotional distress took a variety of forms, including destructive and negative thoughts, anxiety, depression and even suicide, and was attributed to the stress of the fruitlessness of seeking employment and unmet financial responsibility. For many, the emotional suffering was increased owing to the burden of concealing their true state of mind caused by feelings of shame at their circumstances. LTE is aware of the existence of feelings of shame relating to different facets of their life[302]. As a result of the factors discussed, clear indicators existed of the participants' failure to appreciate their human dignity in light of the *imago Dei*. It was also recognised, in seeking understanding of poverty through a lens of trauma, how the participants are experiencing untold emotional stress through living in the shadow of constant violence and through the relentlessness of daily survival in not being able to provide food and other necessities (See Sections 5.3.3.3, 5.3.3.4 and 5.4.2.4).

LTE is aware of the necessity of responding to the emotional needs in the students. For instance, they address the emotional needs by engaging a social worker whose counselling services are made available to the students (GK50: 2). Moreover, it has been revealed how LTE recognises and addresses emotional distress through displays of compassion and love, as discussed in Section 6.3. In this way, LTE can be seen to be meeting a recognised need as they react to the observation made by Christian (1999: 131), who states that any analysis of poverty which ignores the emotional element is inadequate. He stresses that exclusion and captivity caused by 'god-complexes' take a heavy toll on those in economic distress. This makes displays

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[301] Included in instilling self-respect is how the students are required to pay course fees, albeit only a small percentage of the actual cost, in order to engender a sense of personal investment in their future, and are expected to be disciplined in their attendance at classes (discussed in Section 5.2.2).

[302] Ms Pike (MP47: 6), for instance, provides the following example: "Our students will say to us, 'we don't want to go to Zwelihle Clinic to get tested for HIV and AIDS. Because there's a space where everyone can see you if you are positive, there's a space for positive people'. So we have clinic sisters that are coming in our hall. And each and every student is able to come here and test without actually feeling shame. So we're taking away the shame people are actually experiencing out there".

of compassion and experiences of love, as evident amongst the LTE staff, all the more valuable in these individuals.

It has been shown how, as the participants were able to envision a different future for themselves, and able to live out their passion for newly discovered talents, they gained a sense of purpose which positively affected their mental and emotional well-being (Section 6.2.2). This too points to a recovery of vocation. Likewise, it has been shown how their ability to earn an income resulted in a better state of mind due to feelings of overcoming powerlessness (Section 6.2.3). In the loving and encouraging environment which LTE created, the participants were nurtured to such an extent that distorted identities were corrected and human dignity affirmed. The expressions of belief by LTE staff in the participants, who had frequently lost all belief in their own ability to transform their circumstances, and which was contrary to the messages generally conveyed to them in their lives, had an impact on the participants.

Other factors revealing the effects of the encouraging environment were an increase in self-confidence and renewed self-esteem, which improved their self-worth and reduced their emotional distress (Section 6.3.3). It was also discussed (Section 6.4.1) how feelings of hope dispelled fear and anxiety about the future. The respectful and non-judgmental environment had a positive impact on how they perceived themselves, which in turn had a bearing on the affirmation of human dignity (Section 6.3.3). Previous negative mindsets, which Prilleltensky and Nelson (2013: 19-34) observed to be expected as reflections of the psychological impact of poverty, were therefore overcome. In this way, some of the psychological damage, caused by trauma due to poverty, was remedied by LTE (Section 6.3.4). There was therefore uncontroverted confirmation of Theoretical Construct 2: 'A respectful and loving environment heals 'marred identities' (Section 6.3).

7.2.3 Theme 3: LTE meeting spiritual need and affirming human dignity and vocation.

For the sake of clarity and ease of reference, the parameters in respect of which the term 'spirituality' is used in this study, as discussed in Section 1.5.1 and Section 3.1, are repeated. In this regard, I have been guided by the articulation of Lunn (2009: 937) and Ver Beek (2000: 32) whereby 'spirituality' has the intended meaning of "a relationship with the supernatural or spiritual realm that provides meaning and a basis for personal and communal reflection, decisions and action" as well as "the personal

and relational side of those beliefs, which shape daily life"[303]. Since the study has its origins in Theology, the 'spirituality' referred to and which was explored at LTE, relates to the Christian faith. In very basic terms, therefore, it could be said that I am using the term 'spirituality' to encompass the practice of the Christian faith, where the triune God is worshipped, as guiding and impacting daily life. It should be noted that African spirituality[304] might have been viewed as integrated in their understanding of spirituality by many of the respondents, however, as the study did not specially look at how contextual spiritualities were practised with LTE, it has not been researched *per se*, and nevertheless warrants further study. African spirituality would fall outside the scope of the present study.

The data revealed how powerlessness resulted in a flawed perception of human dignity amongst those in material deprivation, which manifested itself as feelings of worthlessness, giving rise to spiritual need amongst the participants (See Section 5.4.3.2). As indicated, these feelings of worthlessness, because of powerlessness, are consistent with Christian's (1999) image of the 'web of lies'. If the participants' spiritual need is not met, they remain trapped in the 'web of lies', believing that they are not worthy of inclusion in society and that their circumstances are unlikely to change (Section 5.4.3.2). LTE recognises the central role played by meeting spiritual need, as Mr van Wyk stressed (in Section 5.2.2), that the approach of LTE to the upliftment of each individual was to address them holistically: physically, economically, socially as well as spiritually. This approach reflects the view of scholars such as Myers (2019: 23-24), who firmly promote the spiritual aspect of an individual's needs in the development conversation[305].

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[303] Following these and other authors, 'religion' is distinguished from 'spirituality' in that 'religion' has the intended meaning of 'an institutionalised set of beliefs and practices regarding the spiritual realm". 'Spirituality', on the other hand, embraces less emphasis on the institution and greater emphasis on the personal experience (Kruger & Williams 2003: 348).

[304] By 'African spirituality' is meant the indigenous spirituality which is passed down by the forebears of the present generation, consisting of collective inner consciousness of transcendence, whereby the connectedness and consciousness constitutes the source from which meaning for life is derived, according to Ohajunwa (2019: 8-9).

[305] Myers recently made reference to preliminary studies in Pentecostalism in the Global South, observing how the spiritual aspect of a person's needs can be an antidote to 'marred identity' and can bring about personal transformation. Instead of the fatalistic attitude often evident in the vulnerable and marginalised, researchers were able to see that they believed that they were destined by God for a brighter future and that God would empower them accordingly (Myers 2019: 23-24).

The data revealed how meeting spiritual need at LTE is accomplished through the practice of integrated spirituality. The nature of spirituality practised at LTE is through teachings of the Christian faith and, more importantly, through the enormous impact which the lives, character and behaviour of the Christian trainers and staff have in proclaiming the kingdom of God holistically. Following thereon, Section 6.2.1 vividly describes the consequences of knowing God's love, as recovery of true identity and vocation (Migliore 2014: 257), thereby overcoming powerlessness. The character of the participants is being transformed, enabling them to make life-affirming decisions.

LTE meets spiritual need by means of conveying the message of each individual's infinite worth. In this respect, the director stressed how the ethos of LTE consisted of instilling self-respect and restoring human dignity in unemployed people (as discussed in Section 5.2.2), through the *imago Dei*. In so doing, LTE is reflecting Myers' (2019: 29) entreaty to the church (in identifying its role in development work), to remind those suffering from material deprivation, repeatedly, that they have value in the eyes of God. This reminder is elaborated on thus, "…that they are loved and known personally by God, and that their poverty does not define them. They need to be told or reminded that their true identity is that they are children of God and that God has given them gifts that they can use to the well-being of all". It is argued that LTE is closely adhering to Myers' appeal in its approach to the students' spiritual need, including the need for human dignity and vocation recovery. This is apparent in the degree to which they experience healing of self-worth in relation to 'marred identities', as described in Section 6.3.3.

7.2.4 LTE initiating social transformation

The outcome of LTE meeting economic, emotional and spiritual need, thereby affirming human dignity and recovering vocation, is that social transformation is initiated at LTE. From the above discussion, in noting the key findings, based on the empirical evidence relating to the case study of LTE, the role of the FBO can be summarised in the following observations concerning those who are economically deprived:

- Powerlessness is overcome.
- Agency is activated.
- Human dignity is affirmed and vocation recovered.

- Psychological harm and emotional manifestations, as a result of poverty-related trauma, is addressed.

At LTE, a prominent factor facilitating social transformation is the reversal of the usual understanding of power, where power is not concerned with status or wealth but instead, following Christ's example, is concerned with self-giving love which focuses on the well-being of others. This observation accords with Osmer's (2008: 188-189) remark how Paul's use of the Servant songs of Isaiah in Philippians 2: 6-11 can be interpreted as Christ's reversal of the usual understanding of power. Osmer therefore reasons that Christian communities are not to emulate the interpretation of power of the surrounding culture relating to hierarchies and influence, but are instead to emulate Christ's example of sacrificial love. This feature has been noted in Section 6.3, where Theoretical Construct 2: 'A respectful and loving environment heals 'marred identities', was discussed and found to have merit.

When this reversal of power, from domination to care and seeking the common good, takes place in Christian communities, such as LTE, it opens limitless possibilities for social transformation (Osmer 2008: 191). As a contrasting society, those communities are a witness to God's rule in the form of a servant, thus reversing the conventional interpretation of power (Osmer 2008: 192). Osmer, therefore, is of the view that where a Christian community is able to reflect an alternative set of possibilities, instead of measuring power by resources and influence, its display of servant leadership may "have the effect of catalyzing social transformation" (Osmer 2008: 192). I suggest that the scenario contemplated by Osmer is indeed what is apparent at LTE.

7.2.5 LTE engaging in the *missio Dei*

Bosch (2011: 505) remarks that, whilst the church is missionary as its very life and calling, this does not equate to mission remaining in the domain of the church. Rather, mission is the *missio Dei* and trinitarian[306]. As he explains, this means that mission is mediating the love of God the Father, wherever in the world that may be, making present in the world God the Son, through the presence of the Holy Spirit, who blows where he wishes in the world (Jn 3: 8). In this way, stresses Bosch, mission concerns the world beyond the church, since it is the world that God loves and for the sake of

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[306] In this regard, reference is made to Myers' statement in Section 3.6.5, to the effect that a trinitarian focus on poverty and social injustice demands an interpretation of God working in an unjust world through the power of the Holy Spirit.

which Christians are called to be salt and light (Jn 3: 16; Matt. 5: 13). Appropriating Bosch's understanding of mission, it is not hard to see, from the data analysis in Chapter 6, how LTE is engaging in the *missio Dei* in serving the students and mediating the love of the triune God beyond the sending of the church.

In this way, in so far as development is concerned, LTE is carrying out a missional role, rooted in *diakonia*, which Hancox (2020: 242) identifies in relation to the CDO. Of importance is that she finds that a missional community exists because people feel a specific call from God to engage in an activity that will assist people living in difficult circumstances, which she describes as a calling to serve God by serving others with the love of God. Pointing out that obedience to God's call will always entail acting in love and compassion, or *diakonia*, she notes that, in so doing, the faith community carries out a missional role (2020: 249). These observations of Hancox accord with Bosch's (2011: 505) remark that mission means "serving, healing, and reconciling a divided, wounded humanity". Thus, for Bosch, the *missio Dei* embraces *diakonia*, and it is apparent that LTE's endeavours constitute participation in the *missio Dei*, which includes diaconal work. LTE's work includes "serving, healing and reconciling", as discussed above, where LTE was seen to be meeting economic, emotional and spiritual needs. In addition, it warrants repeating that the healing of 'marred identities', resulting in restoration of human dignity of the participants at LTE, was directly related to the respectful and loving environment created by LTE (discussed in 6.3).

Bosch's trinitarian understanding of mission as the *missio Dei* extending beyond the confines of the church is endorsed by de Gruchy (2015: 26), who remarks that the love of God that is known within the Trinity reaches out to the world in what we know as the *missio Dei* in a covenant of love and justice. De Gruchy finds the *missio Dei's* "most profound expression" to be in the vision of *shalom*. According to de Gruchy (2015: 28), God has called into being a fellowship of those who bear witness to the kingdom of God, or what Jesus called 'the abundant life', and who participate in the *missio Dei*. This vision is one of fullness and one of healing, nurturing and caring, where the desire is for *shalom*. In this statement of de Gruchy, we find confirmation of LTE's interventions amongst the economically deprived being interpreted as bearing witness to the kingdom of God in seeking fulfilment of *shalom*.

7.2.6 Conclusion on key findings relating to role of FBO

The clear identification of LTE as an FBO is an important factor, since its religious character and structure distinguishes LTE from its secular counterpart, the NGO (Clarke 2011: 16). The data discussed in this study has revealed that the contribution of LTE towards development is extremely meaningful, which links to Tomalin's (2013: 234) comment in the discussion in Section 1.5.4, that the reason there has recently been greater openness from traditional development practitioners to religious organisations is due to their contribution to development being recognised[307].

LTE is an example of an FBO exhibiting a strength identified by Clarke (2011: 19), which is the FBO's ability to form strong links within local communities, thus acting as agents within the development process[308]. Another important strength, noted by Occipinti (2015: 332), is motivational, as FBOs are frequently deeply committed to serving needy people. Here, the data reveals little doubt of the commitment and motivation of the LTE staff in their contribution towards alleviating poverty. Confirmation is therefore found of Bowers du Toit's (2019) observation of a high degree of commitment of FBOs to the attainment of social justice (Section 1.5.4). This commitment is directly linked to the centrality of the Christian faith in the lives of the LTE staff, as expressed ardently by several of them (in Section 6.5.2).

According to Clarke's (2011: 14) remark concerning the differing measures of religiosity in FBOs, there is no subtlety in the religious identity of LTE. On the contrary, what is apparent, is that LTE is an overtly Christian organisation, "wearing their religious colours prominently"[309] (mentioned in Section 1.5.4). In this respect, LTE's identity as an FBO completely aligns with Occhipinti's (2015: 331) observation that, for most FBOs, faith is not an 'add-on' to development but an integral part of it and frequently the main reason for engaging in the work. This is indeed confirmatory of

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[307] Duff and Manguerra (2016: 399) therefore state importantly "Secular actors are now focusing less on *whether* to engage with faith groups as partners in delivering development outcomes, and more on the question of *how* to engage".

[308] He notes how many FBOs have established a long-term presence in an area and therefore have developed trust and have a knowledge of local contexts, as has LTE done. Ms Pike (MP47: 3) gave an example of LTE's strong links to the Zwelihle community in Hermanus, in the following comment: "As a black person, and as someone that stays in the township [Zwelihle], when I came here, I wanted to make sure that each and every person in my community understands what LTE is about and how awesome this organisation is. Because I thought that people were just thinking, people come here and then do Bake for Profit and then leave. They didn't understand the life skills that is being given here, the hope that has been given here, so I made it my thing to actually advertise this awesome organisation for people to come here and understand".

[309] as alluded to by Clarke (2011: 18)

Bowers du Toit's (2019b: 6) finding that faith was central to the development work undertaken by South African FBOs in her study. Here LTE reflects Gorlorwulu and Rahschulte's (2010: 204) assertion that faith has to permeate an organisation whose purpose centres around transformational development. As such, they contend that FBOs ought to be faith-based, not merely in name, but also in practice. They remark that, since transformational development is a Christian concept, the Christian faith ought to permeate the organisation and leadership in order for change to be expected, given its over-riding consideration of the condition of the whole person being encompassed in the term.

To such a great extent is the Christian faith the reason for engaging in the development work that LTE would more accurately be classified as a "Christian Development Organisation" ('CDO'), as identified by Hancox (2019: 4), and as defined by her as "a civil society organisation that exists to promote human well-being through development activities, guided by its understanding and application of the Christian faith" [310]. This clear identification of LTE as a CDO is an important classification as it is beneficial in determining the role, not only of the FBO in addressing poverty, but more specifically the unique contribution of the CDO, as advocated by Hancox (2019: 4), in circumstances where she has found there to be limited studies of the value of organisations conducting development work under a Christian classification. Importantly, she notes "It is a practical faith that seeks, hopes and works for the well-being of people in difficult situations" (Hancox 2019: 7)[311].

With its faith dimension enabling LTE to draw on distinctive morals and values central to its existence, in addressing poverty, LTE has the ability to access resources apart from the secular development discourse, according to Clarke (2011: 16). Drawing on distinctive Christian morals and values which are central to their existence, such as those encompassed in the concept of the kingdom of God and *shalom*, LTE uses those morals and values as a vital element in its development work. As a result of drawing on these resources, LTE was able to meet the students' economic, emotional and

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[310] Whilst a "sacramental and doctrinal framing and positioning of their faith", with practices such as prayer and Bible study, are not requirements of a CDO, according to Hancox (2019: 6), these practices are nevertheless conducted at LTE, making their Christian identity exceedingly clear.

[311] What makes the transformational role of LTE so evident, according to the study of Hancox, would be their faith dimension's focus on "lived experience".

spiritual needs, as illustrated above. In this is implied a significant contribution to the alleviation of poverty within the sphere of influence of LTE.

Not only has it been established that LTE's endeavours have been fruitful in meeting the students' economic, emotional and spiritual needs, it has also been demonstrated how the students have overcome powerlessness, thereby initiating transformation of their own accord. Agency of the students as a focus of LTE, originating from its motto 'A hand up not a hand out', is an important factor in considering the contribution of LTE towards addressing poverty. An obvious interpretation of this agency of the students is that LTE has enabled them to resist structural causes of poverty in evading institutional exclusion and injustice through entering the economic sphere. Related to this comment is Swart's (2006: 19) challenge to churches engaged in "charity work", claiming that they are "trapped in an ideological frame of mind that made it impossible for them to progress to other stages of growth in social awareness". He draws attention to their unconscious but convenient preservation of "the position of power of the Christian middle classes themselves (social, political and economic) and by implication the societal and mental structures that safeguarded that position of power". The charity work amongst those suffering from poverty can rightly be seen as gestures of paternalism, doing little to address the issue of institutional power. On this point, Swart (2006: 19) impliedly refers to the 'god-complexes' of the non-poor in alluding to the "psychological comfort" derived by the middle class Christians from being the benefactors of the social process which sustains the dominance of the non-poor and impedes any transfer of power to the economically deprived.

LTE's approach to affirming human dignity, thereby facilitating autonomy in the students in their pathway out of poverty, is a necessary feature of its development involvement. In this way, LTE counters the criticism of Manji and O'Coill (2002) (referred to in Section 1.5.4), that most NGOs in post-colonialist African countries are guilty of paternalistic practices which do little to alleviate poverty. Instead, LTE's approach to community development is an enactment of Korten's (1995) 'people-centred development' which aspires to self-reliance. Swart (1006: 107) describes 'people-centred development' as a system of "diversified local economies that will be largely economically and ecologically self-reliant in meeting their own needs". Although the students at LTE cannot be classified as being part of an entirely self-reliant local economy, they, themselves, emerge from LTE with the skills and

emotional and spiritual tools to become self-supporting in meeting their and their families' needs. In this way, liberation theology's emphasis on empowerment through emancipation overcoming structural sin is apparent.

Finally, in extracting key findings of the case study and thereby presenting a view on the role of the FBO in addressing poverty, it is useful to measure this by applying the legal test of '*sine qua non*', (the 'but for' test) used in delictual cases to establish an indispensable requirement indicating a causal connection between an act and a consequence. In this instance, it is evident that 'but for' the intervention of the FBO, transformation would most likely not occur in the lives of the participants. It is argued that an indispensable causal connection is apparent between LTE, as an example of an FBO, and the social transformation of the students. It is evident that the organisation succeeds in attaining the level of development activity which Swart (2006: 93) insists is necessary, which "would have a more long-term, emancipatory and structural impact on the lives of the poor". Based on the empirical evidence presented in the study, it can be stated unequivocally that LTE plays a meaningful role in initiating meaningful social transformation.

Exploring the contribution of LTE, as a CDO, towards addressing poverty, has been a necessary dimension of this study in the light of Hancox's (2019: 1) observation (mentioned in Section 1.5.4), how entities which do development type work as an expression of a Christian faith understanding, have been the subject of limited theological research within the development sector.

7.3 Response to research question and research objectives

Brotherton (2011: 244) states that validity, or trustworthiness,[312] is concerned with how well the results of the research match the research question and whether the explanations of the researcher are plausible. In amplification she poses the question whether the conclusions reached by the researcher are warranted in light of the information presented in the study. It is therefore necessary to ascertain whether the research question and research objectives have been satisfactorily answered in the study. In this regard, the research question is:

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[312] Reference is made to the fact that validity or trustworthiness of the study was dealt with comprehensively in Section 4.14 and does not require amplification here.

What role does the affirmation of human dignity through a recovery
of vocation play in attaining meaningful social transformation?

The answer which has become apparent from the outcome of the study is that the affirmation of human dignity through a recovery of vocation plays an overwhelmingly significant role in attaining meaningful social transformation as described by the respondents in this study. This answer was ascertained through the empirical evidence from the case study of LTE, as illuminated in Chapter 6.

Next, the research objectives will be examined individually.

> *Discuss the role of spirituality in development and make recommendations as to how the findings of the LTE case study could be utilised in assisting scholars to understand better the interplay between spirituality and development.*

The role of spirituality in development was discussed in Chapter 3 and the practical outcomes of a focus on spirituality illuminated in Section 6.5. In essence, it transpired that where there was a focus on Christian spirituality in an FBO, this facilitated the restoration of human dignity in the eyes of individuals experiencing material deprivation, which led to social transformation. Recommendations to scholars follow in the next section.

> *Discuss human dignity and vocation as theological constructs as related to development as transformation.*

Human dignity and vocation as theological constructs as related to development as transformation were discussed in Chapter 2. It was determined empirically in Chapter 6 that transformation is about recovering one's true identity and vocation, which occurs through healing of 'marred identities'. This leads to affirmation of human dignity because of the *imago Dei* and an escape from the 'web of lies' so that people who are impoverished can become empowered. Finally, progression towards *shalom* is facilitated.

> *Explore the work of LTE as a Faith- Based Organisational case study.*

The work of LTE as an FBO was examined through the data collection and interpretation of the case study was detailed in Chapter 6 and analysed in Section 7.2 above. It was discovered how LTE's work with skills training of previously unemployed people, during the process of which the kingdom of God was proclaimed, resulted in

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affirmation of their human dignity through a recovery of vocation and progression towards *shalom*. Their work can be considered to be confirmation of de Gruchy's observation (2015: 27) that the *missio Dei* is about sustaining *shalom* and restoring it when it is absent, and that it is the kingdom of God, which Jesus incarnates and proclaimed, which is where this *shalom* is experienced.

> *Develop an understanding of the extent to which a focus on spirituality at LTE affirms the human dignity of students through a recovery of vocation and enables meaningful transformation to take place.*

The study found that a focus on practising Christian spirituality at LTE affirmed the human dignity of the participants through a recovery of their vocation, thus enabling meaningful social transformation to take place, as discussed in Section 6.5.

7.4 Summation of the study and justification

A practical theological interpretation of social transformation was selected as an appropriate theoretical framework in order to explore means of addressing South Africa's humanitarian crisis in the form of devastating and pervasive poverty. The reason for this suitability is the focus of the practical theologian on the development of transformative practices in the world through reflecting critically and theologically on situations (Swinton & Mowat 2006: 25)[313]. "The aim of Practical Theology is […] not simply to understand the world but also to change it", confirm Swinton and Mowat (2006: 27)[314]. Within Practical Theology, the study was positioned alongside the disciplines of Theology and Development, and influenced by Missiology, as it was explored how an FBO participating in the *missio Dei* extends the compassion of the triune God in the practice of *diakonia*.

As discussed in Section 4.2, an interpretive paradigmatic perspective was confirmed as apt, since I was interested in feelings, attitudes, beliefs and intentions, which are abstract sentiments with which interpretive studies are concerned[315]. A qualitative

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[313] Since the intention of the study was not merely understanding situations of poverty but rather the desire to contribute to remedying the situation, Practical Theology was a discipline which reflected this intention.

[314] Corroborating this statement, McGarrah Sharp (2014: 426) declares how Practical Theology has long been recognised as a beneficial discipline for engaging in matters of human suffering owing to its critical and reflective nature.

[315] An interpretive (or constructivist) perspective presupposes an intention to gain deeper understanding of a situation with the researcher sensitive to the role of context (Henning 2004: 16). In the present study, I intended to explore the meaning which the participants within the context of LTE ascribed to their own reality concerning factors relevant to human dignity and social transformation (Babbie & Mouton 2001: 33).

approach was the obvious approach, as discussed in Section 4.5, since, within an interpretive paradigm, the quest is not for objective fact but for deeper understanding of situations, where no definitive conclusions are drawn but "clear tendencies can be suggested" (Verster 2012: 31)[316].

A case study of LTE was considered to be beneficial as the study's chosen methodology (discussed in Section 4.6), as a setting in which to explore patterns and themes which would enable me to answer the research question and to explore the research objectives[317].   In this undertaking, patterns and themes relating to powerlessness of the participants were identified from an analysis of the data, as described in detail in Chapter 5.   Thereafter, patterns and themes relating to the affirmation of human dignity, vocation and social transformation were discerned in Chapter 6.

The notion of 'self-reflexivity' in practical theological interpretive studies was incorporated into the data interpretation.   Self-reflexivity was considered for its enhancing the richness of the study's finding, in adding another dimension, having recognised that the researcher cannot stand apart from the study. The transformative role of self-reflexivity was recognised and appropriated for the present study, as will be discussed below, and, in line with this transformative role, self-reflexivity was shaped by postcolonial consciousness.   In making such a decision to adopt postcolonial consciousness, I have attempted to heed the insistent plea of Tajima (2021: 4955), who calls on researchers to strive to be inclusive and responsive to issues of diversity.

From the outset, in planning this research study, I have been guided by Chilisa (2012: 298) who calls for the researcher to frame the research by making orienting decisions which will provide a conscious definition of the role of 'self' in relation to the researched. She suggests, amongst others, the following questions: Why do I do

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[316] The search for this kind of knowledge is a fundamental element of both qualitative research methods and Practical Theology (Swinton & Mowat 2006: 38).

[317] Because of Practical Theology's roots in human experience, it is seldom a systematic discipline. Instead it presents patterns and themes which transpire in a certain setting (Swinton & Mowat 2006: 12). In confirming that a case study was a suitable research method in the present instance, the more the research seeks to explain some contemporary social phenomenon or to require an extensive description thereof, the more relevant a case study will be, according to Yin (2009: 4). The present study, requiring an in-depth description of an FBO and students' experiences of poverty and social transformation, rendered it appropriate for the case study method, according to Yin's determination.

research with the formerly colonized, the oppressed and the disempowered? Will the research bring about change and transformation? For researchers who are outsiders to their researched group, as in the present study, Tajima (2021: 4959) stresses the importance of critically examining the researcher's purpose in the focus they have chosen.

In making orienting decisions during the planning of the study, I have attempted to respond to Chilisa's questions and to Tajima's comment, mentioned above, and have sought to be self-reflexive, both as I carried out the research and reported on it, as I believe the work to be an important contribution to the discourse with regards to development and spirituality. Data collection methods were intended to encourage actively the researched's frame of reference and sources of knowledge (mentioned in Section 4.7.2), although it is conceded that COVID-19 restrictions hampered these endeavours considerably. Adopting awareness of postcolonialism, as advocated by Chilisa (2012: 39), was considered apt in the present study given that the context of the research is amongst people who have suffered from colonialist oppression and the inhumane regime of apartheid[318].

A conceptual framework, or set of ideas about the nature of the phenomenon to be investigated (de Vos 2002: 36) was designed in order to provide a "boundary" and a "focus" for the analysis (Bazely 2013: 35). In terms of this conceptual framework, three theological constructs were used: the affirmation of human dignity, recovery of vocation and social transformation informed by a kingdom of God theology. The analysis was further bounded by the concepts of the role of the FBO in addressing poverty and the influence of spirituality in development discourse. In view of the fact that human dignity is the central notion undergirding this study, and considering the vagueness surrounding the meaning of human dignity, it was deemed necessary to undertake a literature review in which the notion was explored from both a secular and theological stance. The second literature review on spirituality within development discourse was required since it formed the basis of the gap in knowledge which was

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[318] I was in favour of a postcolonial focus which seeks to lessen oppression and increase justice through stressing the humanity of all persons and therefore has noble intentions (McGarrah Sharp 2014: 424). Furthermore, consciousness of postcolonialism in research is new to research methodology debates with sparse literature on the subject matter and minimal studies conducted using this approach (Chilisa & Tshepo 2014: 222; Held 2019: 2).

intended to be addressed, and in order to trace spirituality's progress from exclusion to tentative acceptance within the development sphere.

Details of the data analysis process were discussed up to the stage when propositions were advanced based on an interpretation of the data, as discussed in Section 4.12[319]. This presentation of propositions placed me in a position where I could respond to the research question and research objectives and to make recommendations, which will be undertaken hereunder.

7.5 Study's limitations

The fact that the interviews took place in English, which was not the first language of the participants, would be a limitation. Despite the fact that LTE insists on English being spoken as a means of empowering their students, for easy transition to the workplace where English is the dominant language, it is to be expected that not speaking in their mother tongue would have reduced the students' vocabulary and expression capacity. The university imposed prohibitions on research assistants, owing to the national COVID-19 lockdown restrictions, made this situation unavoidable.

As mentioned in Section 7.2.3, the study did not intend to conduct an exploration of traditional African spirituality practice at LTE, which appears to practise an evangelical form of Christianity. Since it is likely that indigenous African spirituality would be inherent in this context, it is recorded as a limitation that the study omitted African spirituality from its definition of spirituality and accordingly from its exploration of spirituality at LTE.

Postcolonial consciousness challenges the researcher to be astute to power relations between the researcher, who is formally educated, and the researched who is, in the course of a study of this nature, more likely not to be. Power relations, operating within identities of the researcher as 'knowledge imperialist' and the researched as 'object', are also extremely destructive (Chilisa 2012: 190-191). Tajima (2021: 4955) therefore calls for researchers to maintain continual self-reflection and commitment to advancing justice. As much as I, as researcher, was conscious of power issues, and attempted

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[319] Presenting propositions viewed as "a rich statement with accompanying narrative to expand on its meaning" was an aim of the data interpretation process (Saldaña 2016: 280).

to address the issues, through, for example, respect for the researched (Chilisa 2012: 34), power inequality is acknowledged as a limitation of the study.

Power inequality, more especially in South Africa, relates directly to issues of whiteness, mentioned in Section 1.3, and the white privilege of me, as researcher, must be registered as a limitation to the study. This would be especially true, given Sullivan's (2006: 325) view that white privilege ought to be construed as patterns of engagement with the world that operate without conscious attention or reflection. As such, they constitute the essence of behaviour so that white privilege fundamentally attaches to who one is[320].

A further limitation of the study was the effect of data collection having taken place during lockdown, due to the coronavirus pandemic and particularly due to the university and governmental nationwide restrictions, described in Section 4.10. However, the full effect of the pandemic's restrictions, as elaborated on in my field journal hereunder, ought to be exposed, since memories will fade and, once the pandemic has passed, its consequences for research during this time will be forgotten:

> [Interviewee's] *microphone was of such poor quality that it sounded as though she was under water much of the time. I glanced to the Otter transcription from time to time and I could see that it, too, was battling to make sense with the poor microphone. All I could see was gibberish. It's going to take forever to transcribe the audio into accurate text* (Field Journal 28 October 2020).

> *The technology is unworkable. Their* [LTE's] *bandwidth is only 3mbps and you apparently need 10 to be able to support a video call. The screen freezes and glitches constantly and the sound becomes inaudible. It is causing me such stress* (Field Journal 30 October 2020).

> *Chatting across a screen is hard when I do it with a friend, and so it's infinitely harder with a stranger. I feel disengaged and am awkwardly trying to make* [interviewee] *feel relaxed. When I realise that we are both still wearing our masks, I let her know that she can remove it and there's a slight improvement in making a connection when we can both see each other's faces* (Field Journal 2 November 2020)*.*

In spite of the considerable obstacles encountered by conducting research in such extraordinary times in the midst of a pandemic, I used my best endeavours and I trust that the Lord would nevertheless use my efforts for his transformative purposes.

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[320] It can be noted that de Villiers (2018: 18) disagrees with Sullivan, disputing that all whites are supremacist. He prefers to distinguish between being privileged due to political and economic factors, on the one hand, and having supremacist and bad attitudes on the other, the latter creating personal, moral blameworthiness.

7.6 Recommendations

In the sections below, I will make recommendations based on the outcomes of the study. For the sake of clarity, the recommendations will be separated into those which are relevant to LTE, those which could be beneficial to other faith communities, including FBOs, and the church, as well as those which I hope would be instructive to the academic arena, including, but not limited to, the practical theological academy.

7.6.1 Recommendations pertaining to LTE

7.6.1.1. Continue the practice of integrated spirituality

The recommendation made to LTE would be to continue their approach to addressing poverty and social injustice through skills development, incorporating acts of overt Christian worship. The data revealed unequivocally that their programme was an extremely effective intervention. LTE could, nevertheless, consider adapting certain of their Christian activities to focus more on African expressions of spirituality. Whilst the church gatherings would appear to be rooted in African expressions of worship, in that they are often led by the students themselves, it is noted that the Alpha Course, which they use for their weekly Christian discipleship, is a course originating in the UK[321]. It is proposed that, instead of using the British course videos, live talks could be developed for the local context and this adaptation would give greater relevance to the course through content with which the students can identify.

7.6.1.2. Communicate with donors and supporters regarding the efficacy of their work

This endorsement of the efficacy of their approach ought to be communicated by LTE to their sponsors and supporters in order to generate confidence in the value of their funding and support. The market-related core skills being taught, together with business and life skills, is placing the students in an advantageous position for acquiring employment and for entering entrepreneurship. When LTE places its students in a position of financial autonomy, due to equipping them for income production, they are no longer excluded from institutions by the various holders of power.

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[321] It would not appear that any contextualised studies of the application of the Alpha Course in a South African context have been undertaken to date.

7.6.1.3. Be encouraged and affirmed in facilitating social transformation

The LTE staff need to be encouraged and affirmed so that they recognise that their undertaking is empowering those experiencing the de-humanising effects of powerlessness, enabling them to regain their human dignity previously perceived to be lost, and facilitating the progression of meaningful social transformation. Healing of self-worth, through the *imago Dei* and the proclamation of the kingdom of God, resulting in discovering true identities and vocation, as discussed in Section 6.3.3 and 6.5.3, are important factors in movement towards social transformation.

7.6.1.4. Be encouraged and affirmed in creating a loving and respectful environment

It is specifically recommended that the LTE staff be affirmed and commended on creating a loving, respectful and supportive environment, discussed in Section 6.3, in which the kingdom of God is proclaimed through their words and their conduct, which serves as a vehicle in which transformation can originate.

7.6.1.5. Maximise its reputation in engaging in social justice advocacy

Whilst this recommendation did not emerge directly from the data, it is nevertheless made on the basis of LTE's longevity and reputation. In order to tackle institutionally caused poverty, it is proposed that LTE maximise the reputation it has earned, from thirty years of operation, to raise awareness in the corporate sphere, as well as in local government, of impediments caused by oppressive systems preventing escape by those who are suffering from material deprivation. What is contemplated is an intentional approach to resisting structural causes of poverty by initiating an advocacy arm of the LTE organisation. Opportunities could be identified for engagement with those in positions of power, who could be made aware of oppressive conditions negatively impacting the vulnerable and marginalised. It would be hoped that, in this way, change could result, which would facilitate movement out of poverty.

A current example would be to generate awareness with local government of the logistical impediments to COVID-19 vaccination amongst those in states of vulnerability. The present system, requiring online registration, fails to take cognisance that many have no internet access or technological devices. Moreover, it requires travelling to a vaccination centre, where the cost of transport makes this unaffordable. In circumstances such as the hard lockdown when LTE was aware of the suffering of their students, they could, in addition to handing out food parcels, have

reported the government's failure to implement their relief fund and the non-delivery of their government food parcels.

7.6.1.6. Remain informed of current development practice outcomes

The study could be used by LTE to understand better the outcomes of present development-related practice and policy and to inform future policy and practice, according to the recommendation of Rakodi (2012: 637). What is meant by this recommendation is that the study's findings could attribute confirmation to LTE of the efficacy of their policies and programmes, providing confidence to them of their outcomes in relation to present practice within the development sphere. In particular, it is recommended that LTE remain steadfast in its adherence to a Christian ethos, so openly displayed, in acknowledgement of, and in obedience to, the *missio Dei*. This recommendation is made in the light of the following insightful comment of Samuel and Sugden (1999: xi):

> *Since the world of development and social involvement is so dominated by secular culture through funding and government policies, it would be very easy for Christian agencies to lose their Christian undergirding and vision as to why and how they are involved in such ministry as part of their gospel obedience and as Christian mission.*

As such, because the secular nature of our contemporary era dictates principles and programmes in matters of development practice and social justice, this is likely to constitute an ongoing challenge to Christian FBOs such as LTE. There is therefore a constant need to resist the secular worldview, and to persist in articulating a kingdom of God vision which will inform holistic Christian mission. Myers (2019: 15) accordingly urges people of faith, and especially Christians, to regain their confidence "lost in the overwhelming corrosive power of modernity" and to recognise that they have something to offer the development dialogue at this time.

7.6.2 Recommendations pertaining to other FBOs

7.6.2.1. Distribute the findings of the LTE case study

It is recommended that the findings of the case study of LTE be conveyed to other Christian FBOs engaged in remedying social injustice. Whilst qualitative studies are not readily transferable from one context to another, they can nevertheless claim a degree of transferability, as discussed in Section 4.14, whereby the current study

would meet the criteria for transferability[322]. It is argued that the study has social relevance and practical value in that it is expected that the results may affect those in similar actual life situations as the participants of the study (Bless *et al.* 2013: 48). In the present instance, it can be inferred that the results of the study could well be transferred to other contexts where FBOs with a Christian foundation are engaging with those who are suffering from economic deprivation[323].

7.6.2.2. Engage in integrated spirituality practice

The recommendation to FBOs classifying themselves as 'Christian'[324] would be to follow the approach of LTE where a holistic approach to addressing the de-humanising effects of powerlessness is adopted so that the spiritual needs of an individual are prioritised as much as the economic and emotional needs. In focusing on the spiritual needs, the kingdom of God is proclaimed so that power from a kingdom of God perspective enables the individual to become empowered when that individual's true identity and vocation are recovered.

7.6.2.3. Be intentional about affirming human dignity and recovering vocation

Continue to share explicitly the message of the *imago Dei*, and one's true identity in Christ, as a basis for those who have been disempowered to understand their self-worth. Practical means used by LTE would include scripture references and biblical imagery, such as Psalm 139. In this way healing of 'marred identities' can take place. Through knowing the love of God, a sense of purpose, or vocation, in terms of their destiny with God, is formed in those who have previously had a distorted sense of their vocation. It is essential that disempowered, impoverished people, whose perception of their own dignity is false, reach an understanding of what their worth is, by virtue of

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[322] Moreover, in the context of Practical Theology, Swinton and Mowat (2006: 47) make the salient point that it may be possible to explore whether the experience or phenomenon "can find a resonance and a sense of identification with others" in similar contexts in that "the data produced frequently has implications beyond the immediacy of the research context".

[323] The basis for my proposal is derived from inductive logic used in qualitative studies, whereby inductive reasoning allows general instances to draw conclusions from more specific instances, according to Fouché and Delport (2002: 81). In the present study, inductive reasoning is therefore used to make suggestions about the practice of Christian spirituality in an FBO and the likelihood that it positively influences human dignity resulting in social transformation. Applying inductive reasoning, the premise moves from the specific, which is the FBO known as LTE, to the general, which would be other FBOs of a Christian character aiming to address poverty and social inequality.

[324] As discussed in Section 1.5.4, this is an imprecise classification which can vary according to the extent to which the FBO elects to display its faith.

being made in the image of God, and knowing the purpose for which they were created.

It is recommended that the kingdom of God be proclaimed consistently, since the message of Jesus focuses strongly on the economically deprived and socially powerless in Jesus' announcement that he had come to preach Good News to "the poor" (Lk 4: 18; 7: 22).

7.6.2.4. Maintain a respectful and encouraging environment

Staff can be encouraged to create an environment where those who are vulnerable and marginalised feel respected, loved, encouraged and supported, and they can be affirmed where this is already occurring. Refraining from judging, and treating everyone as having equal importance, creates this kind of loving environment, as is nurturing people in such a way that they sense warm hospitality, which makes them feel like family. Of importance is for staff to express belief in those who have been marginalised, as frequently they will have lost belief in themselves and in their ability to make something of their lives. When someone expresses belief in an impoverished person, his or her self-esteem increases and he or she develops self-confidence. Staff of FBOs in a similar sphere of influence as LTE with economically deprived, disempowered people, can be told how maintaining a respectful and encouraging environment, exuding love and compassion, heals 'marred identities', which results in human dignity being affirmed.

7.6.2.5. Give reassurance on progression towards community development

Once human dignity is affirmed, progression towards *shalom* occurs as signs of wholeness and harmony appear in the lives of those who have been in economic distress, including restoration of fractured relationships and indications of imaging God in relationships. FBOs can be encouraged by hearing how those immersed in poverty can, through their own agency, overcome powerlessness and become financially autonomous. Moreover, it can be shown how they can acquire a new desire to serve their communities and to contribute to society. Reassurance can thus be given to other FBOs, of the possibility of progression towards extensive community development as social transformation occurs.

7.6.3 Recommendations pertaining to the church

7.6.3.1. Proclaim the kingdom of God unreservedly

Naturally, a similar outcome can be expected when the church, as opposed to an FBO, engages in empowerment of those who are powerless. The recommendation to be made as a result of this study is therefore to encourage the church to proclaim the kingdom of God unreservedly in its social justice initiatives. The findings of the study concerning the practice of Christian spirituality in development matters would provide guidance to the church, which is hopefully both timely and practical, in circumstances where Myers (2019: 33), commenting recently as follows, observes a hiatus: "The landscape of religion and development and the churches is confusing, fragmented and sadly devoid of much practical research. We need more research in the field and deeper reflection and thinking" (Myers 2019: 33).

7.6.3.2. Form partnerships with FBOs

The recommendation would also be to the church to expand on its social justice initiatives, as an expression of the *missio Dei*, as it is apparent how transformation can and does occur. In addition, it is recommended that the church engages in dialogue and forms partnerships with FBOs, such as LTE, who are involved in development-type work, in order to support them in their poverty alleviation endeavours.

7.6.4 Recommendations pertaining to the academy

7.6.4.1. Spirituality is a beneficial feature for inclusion in the development arena

For scholars involved in the sphere of development, I would like to suggest that this study could be used to recognise the significant difference which the practice of spirituality in an FBO can make in a development context, as discussed in Section 6.5. This suggestion is made in the light of the limited study undertaken into spirituality and development, as discussed in Chapter 3, with recent tentative interest, as alluded to in Myers' (2019: 13) remark that "[t]he international development community, a generally secular and modern lot with suspicions about religion[325], has begun a slow process of engaging with those who are doing what has come to be called "faith-based development".

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[325] A reminder is included here that the terms 'religion' and 'spirituality' are used interchangeably in the literature and that religion encompasses spirituality (See Section 3.2).

7.6.4.2. The study provides a perspective unaffected by financial factors

The suggestion of the study's potential benefit to *academia* is also made in view of the limited research to emerge from a scholarly source which is not funded by any form of sponsorship, which could affect its perspective, according to the issue highlighted by Jones and Juul Petersen (2011). Whilst the authors acknowledge the valuable contribution of recent interest in religion in development, as appears from the increase in publications, they are nevertheless critical of the source of the studies, pointing out that the growing research contribution emanates not from universities and research institutions but from large multilateral and bilateral donors and development agencies (2011: 1292)[326]. Jones and Juul Petersen therefore have concerns about the extent to which recent research has been shaped by the narrow alignment of religion with development organisations. From their concerns expressed about the conceptualisation of religion and the origins of studies, it is evident that more research is needed which originates from a university source which is not funded by a development donor NGO or other form of sponsorship. The present study would therefore fit into such a class contemplated by Jones and Juul Petersen, and for this reason could be beneficial to scholars.

7.6.5 Recommendations for further study

This study was limited to a single case study, as I intentionally sought an in-depth exploration into LTE. It would nevertheless be worthwhile for future research to undertake studies into several Christian FBOs, in order to ascertain whether similar results are forthcoming. Future studies could also explore the role of indigenous African spirituality practices, which did not form part of the current study, as mentioned in Sections 7.2.3 and 7.5 above. Furthermore, it would be worthwhile to conduct research in a different geographical context, outside of Cape Town, and possibly even outside of South Africa, in order to determine the extent of transferability of the study.

Future studies would also most likely take place after the COVID-19 pandemic, which would have a positive effect on the data collection methods. Unlike the present study, in the future, participant observation and focus groups should take place, as well as

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[326] Citing numerous examples, they aver that universities' research projects have originated in response to funding initiatives, rather than having arisen in the natural course of academic research. They imply that research into the role of religion in development, originating with these donor organisations, is formulated to highlight the positive and the practical (Jones & Juul Petersen 2011: 1297).

face- to- face interviews, instead of across computer screens, enabling a closer rapport with the participants.

7.7 Value of the study

The study contributes towards exploring an area of research where a scholarly gap has been identified, namely the extent to which the practice of spirituality ought to be recognised in the development discourse, owing to its contribution in facilitating social transformation. In this respect, Rakodi's (2012:637) description of our understanding of religion in social transformation is as "fragmented and incomplete". In amplification of the lack of prominence of spirituality within development, Deneulin and Rakodi (2011: 52) insist that, in regard to this evolving area of development studies, "…religion needs to be 'brought back in' to development research so that our understanding of challenging development issues can be improved".

Furthermore, Hancox (2019: 4) (in Section 1.5.4) remarks how sparse the research is into development matters and the Christian FBO, termed the 'CDO' by her, which carries out its work as an expression of the Christian faith. This study, as research into the development work of LTE, a CDO because of its distinctive Christian morals, values and characteristics, would be classified as a study where relatively minimal research exists and would have value by virtue of that feature.

The study's value also lies in increasing understanding of how Practical Theology, within Theology and Development, and influenced by Missiology, as a discipline related to the field of Development Studies, can be used to make enlightening contextual findings. The use of human dignity within a theological interpretation has been demonstrated to be beneficial in circumstances where Chapter 2 revealed how vague and confusing the meaning of the term has become in a secular sense. Furthermore, in this regard, the use of human dignity, vocation and social transformation as theological constructs has been shown to yield insightful findings within a practical theological interpretation of a context exploring poverty.   The missiological dimension of the study, in the light of the findings of human dignity and vocation recovered, and social transformation occurring, would highlight for the church the necessity of its participation in the *missio Dei*. Here, Bosch's (2011: 507) assertive promotion of mission for practical theologians and for the church, made in the following ardent plea, is endorsed:

> *Then there is the missionary dimension of practical theology. Without this dimension, practical theology becomes myopic, occupying itself only with the study of the self-realization of the church…instead of having its eyes opened to ministry in the world outside the walls of the church, of developing a hermeneutic of missionary activity, of alerting a domesticated theology and church to the world out there which is aching and which God loves.*

In addition to filling a research gap, as this study has aimed to do, the value of the research can be recognised in its exploration of an issue pertaining to a critical segment of society, a criterion declared to be of importance by Bless *et al*. (2013: 46). According to them, a well-chosen and beneficial area of research will be timely and will shed more light on a concept or relationship relating to a wider population. Tajima (2021: 4955) would endorse this assertion as she urges researchers to focus on research which seeks to empower and which seeks social justice. The present study fulfils these additional considerations for having significance. It has been revealed how dire the present levels of poverty and unemployment are in South Africa and the segment of the population which the study focuses on is the most vulnerable, who are most in need of having their predicament addressed (See Section 1.1).

Finally, included in the value of the study, is its postcolonial indigenous consciousness by a researcher who is not amongst the formerly colonised or oppressed. Since postcolonialism in Practical Theology unmasks colonising privileges and colonising patterns of relating to one another as humans (McGarrah Sharp 2014: 424), as researcher, it has been essential to challenge myself to identify and reject instances where my "hearing is filtered through a complex web of privilege" (McGarrah Sharp 2014: 425). This postcolonial focus is necessary in light of South Africa's apartheid history, since the gross social inequality which exists cannot be viewed in a vacuum but ought to be recognised as the legacy of a brutal and oppressive regime. In adopting this stance in the study, Chalmers' (2017: 113) statement has meaning: "Colonisation tears things apart and has fragmented the world into discrete little pieces, and it is now a collective effort to put it back together". A postcolonial awareness therefore gives prominence to social injustice through repentance, restoration and reconciliation.

7.8 Self-reflexivity's enhancement of the data interpretation

Following on from the data interpretation undertaken in Chapters 5 and 6, self-reflexivity is the remaining aid to the study's interpretation. As discussed in Section 1.7, the endorsement of Bennett *et al*. (2018: 30) of a reflexive mode was adopted in

this study, as a valuable aid to interpretation since it enables a practical theological researcher to be challenged by confronting the study in the light of his or her worldview, thus enabling the researcher to be changed by the research. In this way, practical theological research becomes a dynamic, transformative process, encouraging self-awareness, where the journey is as important as the end goal, as will be illustrated below.

7.8.1 Self-reflexivity's challenge confronting researcher

This contemporary approach to practical theological study of Bennett *et al.* (2018), with its reflexive emphasis, placing the world the researcher inhabits under scrutiny, resonated with me and thus guided my research. In this way, for instance, Myers' (2011: 145) comment that it is not only the materially impoverished who experience 'marred identities', but that the non-poor also suffer from 'marred identities', had personal impact. Myers draws attention to how the non-poor can be captive to a 'web of lies' too when they 'play god' in the lives of individuals immersed in poverty and when they do not believe their vocation to be stewards of their gifts and position for the benefit of all, but instead for their own well-being. Myers' commentary highlights for me that my own quality education received is not a personal entitlement but that I am to be a custodian of this gift for the well-being of others. Inequality in education was a glaring feature of my examination of the de-humanising effects of powerlessness, as I contrasted the wholly unsatisfactory education delivered to most of the participants, with my own privileged education as a university graduate and the recipient of quality private schooling.

Self-reflexivity has also demanded that I examine how my personal history and underlying assumptions influence my approach to the research and what my responsibilities are to the participants, in circumstances where a disparity of power and powerlessness exists (Bennett *et al.* 2018: 42). Research amongst historically oppressed people is required to be respectful, which it is when it has moved from damage-centred research to that which "builds communities and restores hope and belief in their capabilities to resolve challenges that they encounter" (Chilisa 2012: 174). It has been illustrated how the present study builds up the community, and has the potential to do likewise to others, bringing transformation. The research demonstrates how those in economic distress are empowered to escape the 'web of lies', as a result of human dignity being affirmed, to be economically productive and to

be healed emotionally and spiritually. This kind of benefit to a community is an important reason for research to be done amongst the previously colonised and oppressed, according to Chilisa (2012: 298).

7.8.2 Self-reflexivity's transformative role

Through interacting with the data which forms the basis of Chapter 5, in the context of witnessing the destruction of peoples' lives at the height of the COVID-19 pandemic, I realised that the findings cannot be reported on dispassionately and unquestioningly, and that the study compels confrontation with my own life of privilege, which contrasts so dramatically with those of the participants. In this way, there were echoes of Dreyer's (2016) experience as a practical theological researcher in recognising researcher bias, subjectivity and positionality[327]. He thus labels himself frankly as a "privileged white person" with "a subjectivity tainted by colonialism and apartheid". Dreyer (2016: 132-133) continues with bold and frank confessions about researcher subjectivity and his concerns about "ethical issues related to power and knowledge, whiteness, coloniality, and the knowledge system itself".

Conversations about privilege, whiteness and exploitative power are not easy ones to have, but are necessary in a study such as the present one in the context of present day South African life with its gaping wealth inequality[328]. Chambers (1983: 131-135) recognises the awkwardness of the subject matter and, in his exploration of powerlessness, is prompted to make the insightful comment that powerlessness is often overlooked by the non-poor because it generates discomfort amongst the powerful. For Steyn (2005) (referred to in Section 1.3 as a South African authority on whiteness), it would appear that whiteness in the South African context encompasses three elements: white privilege, white supremacy and white ignorance. Her definition of 'white privilege' is the privileged position held by white people owing to economic advantage, as a result of colonial conquest and discriminatory apartheid policy (Steyn 2005: 121)[329]. 'White supremacy', as a dimension of whiteness, implies a sense of superiority, which is transferred from generation to generation. 'White ignorance' is

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[327] He acknowledges how his identity as a practical theological researcher has shifted from early years of practice within a scientific paradigm to his awareness that "due to our existential 'situatedness', our horizons of understanding, we will never be able to escape our subjectivities" (Dreyer 2016: 126).

[328] The World Bank report found that the top 10% of the population held 71% of the country's wealth, whilst the bottom 60% held 7% of the net wealth (Hurlbut 2018: xvi).

[329] This privilege also has a cultural dimension in terms of which western culture dominates former colonies.

used to imply circumstances in which white people experience their privilege as normal and are ignorant that their privilege is as a result of the "unjust pursuit of white group interests" in the past and structural maintenance of white privilege (Steyn 2005: 121).

Even where white supremacy and white ignorance are not attributed to a person, recognising the damage that structural white privilege has caused, demands a response from a white person. Shame is an inappropriate and counter-productive sentiment, according to de Villiers (2018: 21). Rather, manifestations of white supremacy need to be challenged and criticised by white people in the light of the theological concept of all having been created in the image of God. Structural issues, including cultural, political and economic institutions, which sustained white privilege in the past, and continue to sustain it and discriminate against blacks, need to be exposed by whites (de Villiers 2018: 18). According to de Villiers, white people should be "encouraged to acknowledge the negative role of such structures, to support their transformation and to contribute to the alleviation of the plight of those who are harmed by them".

Self-reflexivity in this study has compelled me to examine critically my complicity in powerlessness of the marginalised and vulnerable, owing to apartheid's lasting legacy of white privilege. This experience is beneficial in many respects but particularly, as advocated by de Villiers, in developing awareness of the importance of exposing structural issues of white privilege, and in using academic means, by way of this study, to contribute to the alleviation of the plight of those harmed by white privilege.

Self-reflexivity has enabled me to recognise how, having completed the data analysis, there has been personal transformation. For instance, I discern earlier judgment in my response to certain information divulged by the participants about their lives, such as in the following instance[330]:

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[330] Reference is made to Section 4.12 where it was stated that the anonymity of the LTE students was guaranteed, whereby pseudonyms, followed by the letter 'F' or 'M' to designate female or male, were attributed to students in the transcripts of interviews. These same pseudonyms, instead of the students' actual names are used throughout the study.

> *When Nandipha mentioned that she had 7 children, I laughed, which I was reminded of when I replayed the audio recording now. I have to resist the urge to judge her as I am incredulous that someone living in poverty can think of having such a large family which they cannot feed* (Field Journal 9 November 2020).

I notice in later journal entries shifts in my prejudiced attitude. Striking evidence has emerged of the non-poor 'playing god' in the lives of those experiencing poverty[331], keeping them captive in a 'web of lies' and self-reflexivity demands that my own involvement be acknowledged. I realise how I know absolutely nothing of the struggles the participants are facing and I am unqualified to project my own assumptions onto their situations. A pertinent example of this unfolding awareness follows from my interview with Sibabalwe, which my field journal once again divulges:

> *At one stage he says something like 'you know how it is in Khayelitsha?' and I had to respond frankly, 'No I don't know', and, as I reflect now on this, I realise how unfair it is that I will most probably never have to experience the deprivation which drove Sibabalwe to make the choices he did purely to survive* (Field Journal 18 November 2020).

As the awareness of struggles faced by the participants grows, I am able to place the concerns and needs of those interviewed before God in prayer, as discussed in terms of Osmer's (2008) spirituality of presence. Moreover, it becomes obvious how judgment and pity recedes and I am able to feel sincere empathy towards the participants, as appears in the following journal extracts after my interviews with Maita and Fezile.

> *Maita is the only participant so far who has become emotional. She is very tearful when she tells me how depressed she was before she came to LTE. My heart truly breaks for her and so I am able to express empathy. I will never know the extent of her desperation and, for her to experience this suffering at such a young age of only 21, is really terrible* (Field Journal 18 November 2020).

> *It must have been soul-destroying to have gone to so many interviews for just less than a year and always to be told that he lacks something: a driver's licence, computer skills or something else. How can he describe these potential employers as 'fair'? Surely he must have thought that it's unfair when he fits the advertised post description and he's qualified already as a plumber? Fezile seems positive though and keeps focusing on his new ability to make right decisions with God in his life. He sees himself differently; his dignity is clearly restored. When I ask him how he feels about the future, Fezile responds 'I'm no longer scared'. Inwardly, I feel overcome with emotion as he repeats this. I have so much admiration for this young man* (Field Journal 2 November 2020).

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[331] Educational exclusion has already been mentioned, as have visa and residential requirements and economic exclusion (in Section 5.4.2), and access to healthcare is another structural form of exclusion of those in poverty (Hurlbut 2018: 23).

It is clear that my attitude changed to one of immense respect, as the following journal entry reflects after my interview with Anathi, who has been the primary caregiver to her 6-year old brother since she finished school four years' ago:

> *I am struck by her maturity. I cannot imagine having to bear that responsibility at such a young age. I am in awe of her fighting spirit, her resilience. When she was down, she refused to remain there. She did something about her life* (Field Journal 30 November 2020).

This attitude of respect is also apparent from my journal after my interview with Khanyisa:

> *What would I feel like if my house burnt down with all that I owned? Worse is to think of having nowhere to go and to be literally out on the streets and having to make a plan to survive. I have immense respect for her and especially for her resilience* (Field Journal 2 November 2020).

Listening to the stories of the participants has shown me the value of Vice's (2010: 336-7) entreaty, in addressing white privilege, that whites listen and engage with different voices, especially those voices which are not white. The purpose of this listening is to learn how blacks are "embedded in a system of injustice" (de Villiers 2018: 22), which has become clearly evident.

In reviewing self-reflexivity's transformative role, I need to confront my personal intentions and aspirations. Specifically, how do I intend to approach the extensive poverty and social injustice which becomes more prevalent daily in Cape Town? Firstly, I need to acknowledge my privilege and repent of my prejudices and complicity in the 'god-complexes' which continue to cause oppression of vulnerable people. This acknowledgement arises from de Gruchy's astute observation (2015: 108), that where we are dealing with sensitive themes of development, like poverty, these are not neutral and we need to acknowledge that we come with our biases and our 'blind spots'.

Thereafter, I accept the responsibility conferred on me as a white person, as indicated by de Villiers (2018: 21), who urges white people to own up to their vicarious contribution to societal problems and to engage with the task of challenging structures that benefit them and which alienate black people. In this way, it is hoped to achieve the result mentioned by Van Wyngaard (2016: 7), who points out that those white Christians who disrupt whiteness in their actions inevitably become a contrast to white domination.

Next, I have taken to heart Swart's (2010: 135) call to privileged Christians to "revisit their relationship with the poor, become open to and listen to and learn from poor Christians and non-Christians alike, and, on this basis, participate and share with the poor in initiatives for enduring spiritual, economic and social renewal". Swart's comment ties in with McKaiser's (2006: 460) advice to white people, which is "to learn to engage blacks publicly, politically, without a sense of superiority…to engage blacks carefully and living in reflective self-awareness of how your whiteness…privileges you unfairly".

Finally, in taking into account the researcher's accountability towards the participants, I have aimed for adherence to the standard of Bennett *et al.* (2018: 51) who describe the researcher's accountability as being to produce the best research possible and, in this way, to display the highest level of respect towards the participants. My intention would therefore be to employ self-reflexivity's capacity to enable a practical theological study, with the researcher's role enhanced, to be a work of transformation. In this way it is hoped to generate research which is persuasive in recording the need for change and how things might be better (Bennett *et al.* 2018: 129). This outcome would correlate with my expressed desire of contributing towards meaningful social transformation through academic and practical means.

7.9 Concluding comments

Auerbach and Silverstein (2003: 32, 78) are of the opinion that, if interpretations are supported by data, such as examples of text, so that other researchers can understand it, there exists "justifiability of interpretation". I would suggest that I have attained justifiability of interpretation made in the case study of LTE, having provided extensive examples of text to support my theoretical constructs and conclusions reached. Moreover, in this study, I have motivated decisions made concerning theoretical framework, paradigmatic perspective, conceptual framework, as well as research design, methodology and data collection methods, providing satisfactory detail and rationalising why certain decisions were made and why other approaches were excluded (See Chapter 4). This rationalisation and justification increases credibility, according to Cassim (2017: 7-8). For this reason I would argue that the conclusions reached are justifiable interpretations and the recommendations made ought to be given consideration by scholars and actors in the field of development.

Having justified why the study's conclusions are reliable, I now make concluding comments, stressing the urgent need for interventions, such as those elaborated on in this study, in addressing poverty, which has reached dire levels as highlighted in Section 1.1. The following quotation from Colin Coleman[332], at the recent University of Cape Town's Vice-Chancellor's Open Lecture (delivered virtually), incorporating Rev. Dr Martin Luther King's powerful words, contains an astute synopsis of South Africa's poverty crisis:

> *As Martin Luther King said (May 8, 1967), "*It's all right to tell a man to lift himself by his own bootstraps, but it is a cruel jest to say to a bootless man that he ought to lift himself by his own bootstraps. It is even worse to tell a man to lift himself by his own bootstraps when somebody is standing on the boot*". South Africa, we have to take our feet off the boots, and necks, of the unemployed.* (Coleman 2020).

It is evident that those who are vulnerable and marginalised in society are unable to lift themselves up by their own bootstraps, due to the 'god-complexes' of the non-poor, who continue to use unjust structural and institutional measures to retain them in captivity to oppression. However, LTE is providing an intervention in taking feet "off the boots and necks" of the powerless and economically deprived, enabling escape from the 'web of lies'. From the case study of LTE, I have argued that it is only an understanding by a person of the *imago Dei*, and true identity and vocation, that can affirm human dignity. Our true identity and vocation is understood as "being God's children journeying towards God's kingdom" (Myers 2011: 176).

If the results of this study are to be of applicability elsewhere and transferable to other FBOs, the rhetorical question posed by Samuel and Sugden (1999: 193), concerning how we are able to identify where God is at work in persons, movements and structures, will also be raised. I would suggest that the following response, presented by Samuel and Sugden, would be pertinent: where we can detect God at work effecting transformation and bringing *shalom* is where we see the values of the kingdom replacing the values not of God. Of significance to the present study is that Samuel and Sugden specifically make mention of human dignity and vocation as indicators of God at work effecting transformation, as follows: "Where we see human dignity being

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[332] Colin Coleman is a South African who is a Senior Fellow at Yale University, the previous chief executive officer of Goldman Sachs for sub- Saharan Africa, and an expert on economic development challenges across Africa (jackson.yale.edu 2021).

affirmed and people discovering a sense of self-worth, self-acceptance and a sense of having something to contribute to the world and others, there God is at work".

Through the case study, I have discerned this statement to be applicable to LTE. I also hope that my efforts in this study would contribute in the future to its applicability to countless more FBOs, so that social transformation becomes increasingly evident in the city of Cape Town and in areas of need beyond. As de Gruchy (1979: 199) reminds those of us who profess to be followers of Christ, in following Christ's example of identification with the vulnerable and marginalised of society, we ought to feel "dissatisfied with anything less than God's righteousness, justice and peace in the world….restless with things as they are". If others can be persuaded through my research to envision a different future, where human dignity is affirmed and social transformation occurs, then that would be the best possible outcome of self-reflexivity's transformative capacity.

On a personal level, self-reflexivity has caused me as researcher to reach the end of this study into human dignity a different person to the one who set out on the physically, mentally, emotionally and spiritually challenging journey a few years' ago. The following reflections of Andrea Cornwall (2020: 45), on her role as a white researcher in the development sphere, resonate with me, whereby I conclude this study recognising the need to be "…unafraid to look deeply at the causes of injustice, [having] come to terms with [my] own privilege, and learn[ing] how to listen and act with compassion and humility". My most yearned for aspiration, to see the affirmation of the human dignity of the marginalised and impoverished of the society in which I live, finds its meaning in the following enlightened comment of Parhiala and Simango (2014: 340):

> *There is no human dignity for any of us while great inequalities and ongoing need and suffering proliferate in a world of plenty.*

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Addenda

Addendum A – Table depicting lockdown levels due to coronavirus pandemic during data collection with corresponding regulations

Level	Dates	Weeks	Key regulations and enforcement activities
5	26 March-2 May	5	Severe curtailment of freedom of movement. Enforcement by South African National Defence Force. Public gatherings banned, economic activity restricted and a 'stay home' order issued. After three weeks, curfew of 8pm to 5am implemented. Closure of schools. Banning of sales of alcohol and cigarettes.
4	3 May-30 May	4	Public gatherings banned. Limited economic activity and transport. Stay at home order in force but limited exercise allowed. Curfew 8pm to 5am. Schools remain closed. Banning of sales of alcohol and cigarettes.
3a	31 May-11 July	6	Public gatherings banned. Limited but marginal increased economic activity and transport. Stay at home order in force but exercise allowed. Curfew 8pm to 5am. Schools remain closed. Purchase of alcohol unbanned, but purchase of cigarettes remain banned. Compulsory mask wearing in public.
3b	12 July-15 August	5	Public gatherings banned. Limited but increased economic activity and transport. Stay at home order in force but exercise allowed. Curfew 8pm to 5am. Schools partially open. Purchase of alcohol banned again, and purchase of cigarettes remain banned. Compulsory mask wearing in public.
2	16 August-20 September	5	Public gatherings banned. Further increased economic activity and transport. Stay at home order in force but exercise allowed. Curfew 8pm to 5am. Schools open. Purchase of alcohol allowed Mon – Thurs and in restaurants, purchase of cigarettes unbanned. Compulsory mask wearing in public.
1	21 September-15 December	12	Public gatherings banned. Further increased economic activity and transport. No limit on personal movement. Curfew relaxed to 12am to 4am. Schools open. Purchase of alcohol allowed Mon – Fri and in restaurants, purchase of cigarettes allowed. Compulsory mask wearing in public. Certain international borders open on 11 November for tourism.

Table 1. Lockdown levels 26 March to 15 December 2020 (adapted from Faull, Kelly & Dissel 2021)

Addendum B – Interview questions

INTERVIEW QUESTIONS: STUDENTS

Good morning and welcome! My name is Susan Mellows and I am a post-graduate student at Stellenbosch University. I am not working for Learn to Earn or connected to Learn to Earn in any way.

Learn to Earn has been asked to take part in a study I am doing about faith-based organisations, such as LTE, and whether they can play a part in bringing about positive change in people's lives. I am wanting to find out if the Christian activities at LTE play any part in your well-being.

I would like to repeat what is in the consent form, that this interview is private and anything you tell me is confidential and will only be used for purposes related to my study. Your identity will not be revealed when my study is published, unless you inform me that you would prefer to be identified. You can let me know this at the end of the interview when you know what questions have been asked and how you have answered them.

Do you have any questions for me about the consent form which were not clear when reading it?

Thank you so much for taking part in my study. I am very grateful to you for sharing your story with me. I want you to know that it is a privilege for me to be able to hear about your life.

1. What is your name and where do you live?

2. Which course are you on at LTE and about how many weeks have you been doing the course?

3. Do you live on your own or with your family? Can you describe your family set up?

4. Are you only financially responsible for yourself, or for others as well? Who do you have to provide for financially?

5. How does this responsibility make you feel? (Are you able to do so? Can you provide the needed financial support?)

You may answer the next questions in any way that you feel best to get your message across. This can include: storytelling, poems, song, proverbs or sayings which have meaning to you, or by comparing something with something else. Or you can answer them with a direct answer.

Before you came to Learn to Earn ('LTE'):

6. Can you describe your life before coming to LTE? What were the problems in your life which worried you?

7. What made you decide to come to LTE? What had you heard about them? What difference to your life did you hope that LTE could make?

8. Before coming to LTE, did you consider yourself to be a person who believed in God? How did you think that faith was part of your daily life? Was that faith important to you in your daily life?

9. Before LTE, what form of religious activities were you involved in? For instance, did you attend church, attend religious gatherings or practise African Traditional Religion?

10. Before LTE, how would you describe how much control or power you felt you had over your life when you compared yourself to others? Did you feel it was possible to bring about change?

11. Can you explain how you felt about yourself before you came to LTE? Did you feel good about yourself or not? Why or why not? Did you feel that your life was worth something?

12. When I talk about 'human dignity', what I mean is that you think your life is precious, you think that others will think that your life is important, you think that others must respect you because your life has value. In the community from which you come, is there a proverb, a saying, or a way of explaining the idea of 'human dignity' or how well you think of yourself?

While you have been at LTE:

13. Can you describe the activities you take part in at LTE which focus on the Christian faith and how often do you take part in these activities?

14. Can you describe your experience (positive or negative, good or bad) of the Christian faith activities at LTE?

15. Have the Christian faith activities at LTE made any difference to how you see yourself?   If so, how? If not, why? I'm speaking here of the idea of human dignity: whether you think your life has value, is precious, that others will think your life has importance, that others must respect you because your life has value.

16. Is there anything you have done recently which makes you feel proud of what you have achieved, which you feel has to do with taking part in the Christian faith activities at LTE?

17. Do the Christian activities at LTE make any difference to the way you care about the well-being of those around you at home or in your community?

18. Have the Christian activities at LTE helped you, if at all, in discovering gifts, things that you know how to do, so that you can contribute to life at home or in your community? How? I'm not speaking of spiritual gifts here, more practical gifts or gifts to do with your character.

19. Has there been any change that you have noticed in your relationships at home, with your family or in your community, which you would say is because of taking part in the Christian activities at LTE? If so, which relationships? If not, please just state that.

20. Were there any ways that the Christian activities at LTE made you feel that you had the control or power to change things in your life which you felt needed improving?

21. Did the Christian faith activities at LTE make any difference in the way you feel about your future? If so, how?

That brings the interview to a close and I would like to thank you for your time and for giving careful thought to answering my questions. Your contribution is extremely valuable to me.

I want to remind you that everything you have told me is confidential and that you will remain anonymous when the information you have provided is used in my study. Is it your preference to remain anonymous or would you prefer your identity to be known?

Finally, I would be happy to send you a copy of the written interview record so that you can check it for accuracy. Would you like me to do so? If so, please may I have an email address. Thank you and goodbye.

INTERVIEW QUESTIONS: STAFF

Good afternoon and welcome! My name is Susan Mellows and I am a post-graduate student at Stellenbosch University. Learn to Earn has been asked to take part in a study I am doing about faith-based organisations, such as LTE, and whether they can play a part in bringing about positive change in people's lives. I am wanting to find out if the Christian activities at LTE play any part in the well-being of the participants.

I would like to repeat what is in the consent form, that this interview is private and anything you tell me is confidential and will only be used for purposes related to my study. Your identity will not be revealed when my study is published, unless you inform me that you would prefer to be identified. You can let me know this at the end of the interview when you know what questions have been asked and how you have answered them.

Do you have any questions about the consent form which were not clear when reading it?

Thank you so much for taking part in my study. I am very grateful to you for giving up your time to help me understand LTE better.

1. Firstly, what is your name, how long have you been at LTE and what is your role at the organisation?

2. How would you describe the importance, if at all, of the Christian faith in your daily life?

3. How do the programmes at LTE address the specific issues in South Africa today in terms of poverty and inequality?

4. What do students come to LTE hoping to be provided to them and what does LTE offer to students in the programmes which are presented?

5. Does our Apartheid past have any influence on the way that those particularly disadvantaged (in the past and in the present) see themselves?

6. How do you understand the concept of transformation or Christian development and its role in South African society?

7. Can you describe the Christian faith activities at LTE which you have observed, taken part in or been involved in organising?

8. What has been your impression of the way the students respond to being invited to participate in the Christian activities and roughly what proportion of the students take part in these activities?

9. What has been your overall impression of the effects of the Christian activities on students during the course?

10. Are you aware of any effects of the Christian activities on students after graduating, specifically in so far as their human dignity is concerned?

11. What are your perceptions of the effects of the Christian activities after graduating on the students' discovering gifts which enable them to contribute to life at home or in their community?

12. Have you been made aware of any improvements in students' family relationships, or other relationships, which could be attributable to their taking part in Christian activities?

13. Have there been any signs apparent to you of students' overcoming a sense of lack of control or powerlessness enabling them to change their circumstances?

14. Is there any other information which you feel is relevant to the Christian activities at LTE and their influence on the students which I haven't raised?

That brings the interview to a close and I would like to thank you for your time and for giving careful thought to answering my questions. Your contribution is extremely valuable to me.

I want to remind you that everything you have told me is confidential and that you will remain anonymous when the information you have provided is used in my study. Is it your preference to remain anonymous or would you prefer your identity to be known?

Finally, I would be happy to send you a copy of the written interview record so that you can check it for accuracy. Would you like me to do so? If so, please may I have an email address. Thank you and goodbye.

Addendum C – The SU Covid 19 Regulation

REC: Social, Behavioural and Education Research (REC: SBE) Communique: Researchguidance in the time of level 1 of the COVID-19 pandemic and beyond.

Target group: All researchers/ investigators who are actively embarking on, engaged in research, or required todo so (including undergraduate and postgraduate students and postdoctoral fellows), supervisors/ promotors and research support staff.

Purpose: To provide guidance on the continuation or commencement of in-person research in the context of lockdown level 1 and beyond.

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Authors: Executive Committee of the REC: Social, Behavioural and Education Research (REC: SBE).

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1. BACKGROUND

1.1. The SA Government declared a move to lockdown level 1 and has promulgated regulations with effect from 21 September 2020. [1]

1.2. While infection rates in the Western Cape and other provinces appear to have flattened and or declined, itmust be acknowledged that the pandemic remains unpredictable. Researchers thus need to be mindful of localized changes to infections rates and respond to such circumstances in a responsible and ethical manner. This implies a responsible approach to research in the context of COVID-19 which prioritises the health, well-being and safety of research participants, their communities and research staff and students over other considerations.

1.3. The REC therefore expects that researchers remain vigilant in the face of COVID-19, irrespective of the pandemic levels, inclusive of protecting participants and communities (especially those who fall within the vulnerable groups e.g. those older than 60 and/or with comorbidities) from risk and safeguarding themselvesagainst the transmission of COVID-19.

1.4. The REC: SBE position statement dated 20 March 2020 is still relevant and should be considered together with this communique (REC Position Statement.pdf). This document serves to supplement the REC: SBE's original position statement.

1.5. The REC: SBE may revert to its original position statement if the SA

Government reverts to lockdown levels2, 3, 4 or 5.

2. GUIDELINES FOR RESEARCH GOING FORWARD

2.1. The REC acknowledges the challenges faced by supervisors and postgraduate students needing to meet educational outcomes (for degree purposes) as well as researchers needing to meet deadlines set by sponsors.

2.2. Researchers are still encouraged to consider alternative ways of collecting data that do not involve physicalcontact or being in undue physical proximity with participants or communities[2]. These alternative activities may include desktop research, literature reviews, secondary data analysis, online or virtual data collectionactivities, individual or group interviews conducted via online meeting or web conferencing tools, such as Zoom, Skype, Microsoft Teams, etc.

2.3. Research that requires physical contact or being in undue physical proximity to participants during the COVID-19 pandemic, is still strongly discouraged, **unless there are very exceptional, and well- justified reasons to continue.**

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[1] For the latest updates on the COVID-19 pandemic in South Africa and information about SA's national regulations, pleasevisit https://sacoronavirus.co.za/

[2] Herewith referring to face-to-face individual or group interviews or any activity where in-person contact is unavoidable.

In these exceptional cases, the researcher must immediately notify the REC: SBE of their case and providea strong ethical justification for the approval of their in-person research during the COVID-19 pandemic and reasons why virtual or online methodologies cannot be used.

2.4. The REC: SBE will consider such cases on an individual-basis by doing a thorough risk-benefit analysis and by evaluating the anticipated benefits of the research and measures that the researcher will put in place toprevent the spread of the virus. The researcher will be required to submit a COVID-19 risk mitigation strategy to ensure that risks of transmission are minimised and controlled as far as possible.

2.5. **All in-person research will be treated as medium to high risk**, **depending on study design, methodology and data collection methods. The REC: SBE will review these requests at a convened meeting of the REC: SBE.** Researchers who wish to notify the REC of their case must firstconsult the REC: SBE's guidance for in-person research during the COVID-19 pandemic for guidance on how to proceed with their submission (see Annexure A below).

2.6. The REC: SBE would like to remind researchers who are bound by funding or other contractual deadlines/requirements to **proactively engage** with their funders, sponsors, and other relevant project stakeholders on the impact that COVID-19 and social distancing strategies will have on meeting project milestones and reporting deadlines. The suspension of human research that

involve physical contact or being in undue physical proximity to participants will have particular impact on existing contractual and service level agreements with research assistants, fieldworkers, and other project staff. Where possible, researchers should proactively engage with the funder/sponsor/relevant stakeholders regarding these timeframes and make the necessary arrangements.

2.7. SBE research that requires visits to the following research sites will only be allowed if the facility can ensure that they are compliant with the regulations and directions set by the government for visits to: Correctional Centres, Detention Facilities, Holding Cells, Military Detention Facilities, health establishments andfacilities, and older persons' residential facilities. Written permission should be obtained from the facility where the research will be conducted. The permission letter should be signed by an authorised person confirming that the facility is compliant with regulations and directions set by the government.

2.8. The REC wishes to point out the responsibility for managing and mitigating the risks to the multiple stakeholders involved in conducting in-person research in the current circumstances:

2.9.1 Risks to research participants

- Becoming infected by a researcher or fellow research participant that might beasymptomatic/symptomatic during a research-related activity.
- Becoming infected by a researcher that might be asymptomatic/symptomatic during a visit by theresearcher to his/her home, community centre or when meeting in a public place like a restaurant.
- Being infected due to handling objects contaminated by the virus during a research-related activity.
- Potential for being more severely affected by COVID-19 if over the age of 60 and/or having acomorbidity or an illness causing an immunocompromised health status.
- Carrying the virus from the research site into the home or community.
- Being fined or arrested for not adhering to appropriate lockdown alert level restrictions e.g. not wearingmasks, etc.

2.9.2 Risks to researchers

- Researcher/postgraduate student becoming infected by handling objects contaminated by the virus. More severely affected by COVID-19 if over the age of 60 and/or having a comorbidity or an illness causing an immuno-compromised health status.
- Researcher/postgraduate student becoming infected by entering a high-

risk COVID 19 area.
- Infecting co-researchers due to the aforementioned actions.
- Infecting own family members due to the aforementioned actions.
- Potentially being held legally responsible for research participants (and others) becoming infected.
- Being fined or arrested for not adhering to appropriate lockdown alert level restrictions e.g. notwearing masks, etc.

2.9.3 Reputational risks to researchers and/or the University
- Participants becoming infected by the researcher during the conduct of research and holding theuniversity accountable.
- SU researchers acting as a "super spreader" of the disease when visiting isolated communities that werepreviously not exposed to the virus.
- Researchers and postgraduate students becoming infected during research and all close contacts mustself-isolate for 10 days as per Government Direction.
- Researchers not adhering to national disaster and lockdown regulations.

Please refer to the REC: SBE's webpage for more detailed advice and guidelines on the protocols that researchersshould follow and useful resources: http://www.sun.ac.za/english/research-innovation/Research- Development/integrity-ethics/human-research-(humanities)-ethics

References and acknowledgements:
1. Health and Undergraduate Research Ethics Committees of Stellenbosch University (2020): HREC position statement dated 2020-03-20, HREC Communique 1 dated 2020-07-12 and HREC Communique 2 issued in October 2020.
2. Greeff, M. 2020. IMPLICATIONS OF ALERT LEVELS FOR RESEARCHERS AND POSTGRADUATE STUDENTS DURING THE COVID-19 PANDEMIC (VERSION 2). North-West University.

REGULATION ANNEXURE A: GUIDANCE FOR IN-PERSON RESEARCH DURING THE COVID-19 PANDEMIC

- This document serves to provide guidance for researchers who wish to apply for REC: SBE approval to conduct in-person research during the COVID-19 pandemic due to exceptional, ethically-justified reasons that preventthem from suspending their research or finding alternative ways to collect data.
- The document must be read in conjunction with the REC: SBE position statement published on 20 March 2020and the REC: SBE communique published on 01 October 2020.
- In the context of the COVID-19 pandemic, researchers and the REC: SBE must proceed with consideration ofthe principle of *primum non nocere* or 'first do no harm' and an ethics of responsibility. Researchers must adopta responsible approach to research in the context of COVID-19 which prioritises the health, well-being and safety of research participants, their communities and research staff and students over other considerations.
- The REC: SBE must carefully consider a reasonable ethical justification for in-person data collection in social science, behavioural and education (SBE) research to continue, especially where such research involves physicalcontact or being in undue physical proximity to research participants, without the prospect of direct benefit that could outweigh the potential harm of COVID-19 infection.[4]

1. *APPLICATION REQUIREMENTS:*

Researchers who wish to apply for REC approval to continue with in-person research during the COVID-19 pandemic must do the following:

1.1. Email the REC: SBE coordinator, Ms Clarissa Graham to notify the REC office of your intention to submita request to conduct in-person research during the COVID-19 pandemic: cgraham@sun.ac.za

1.2. Submit your online application (new application for new studies, amendment for existing studies) to the
REC: SBE for review and approval.

1.3. All in-person research will be treated as medium risk to high risk. The REC: SBE will review your application/amendment at a convened meeting of the REC: SBE. Please consult the REC agenda closing dates and meeting dates for your planning: http://www.sun.ac.za/english/research-innovation/Research-Development/integrity-ethics/human-research-(humanities)-ethics

1.4. The REC: SBE will consider applications for in-person research on a case-by-case basis by doing a thoroughrisk-benefit analysis and by evaluating the anticipated benefits of the research and measures that the researcher will put in place to prevent the spread of the virus.

1.5. The following information/documents must be attached to your application to the REC: SBE:

▶ A detailed COVID-19 risk mitigation strategy and protocols that will be put in place to protect participants, yourself, your research team, and others whom you may interact with during your research. This document must be written in plain language as it is expected that researchers share this document with research staff and participants (where applicable) before any in-person activities are planned.[5]

▶ If you intend to conduct in-person research on any SU campus or facility, please include the facility's workplace plan and walkthrough risk assessment. It is expected that you obtain permission from the facility manager before you apply to the REC.

▶ A COVID-19 contact register template to record the date, duration and nature of face-to-face contact,name and contact details for each person interacted with during the research. This register is a

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[3] The REC: SBE would like to thank Prof Minrie Greeff (North West University) for her guidance and permitting the REC: SBE to cite the COVID-19 Research Risk Assessment and Management Approach (Version 2).

[4] Note that the prospect of direct benefit during the COVID-19 pandemic applies primarily to certain types of clinical and therapeutic research and is unlikely to apply in a social, behavioural or educational research context.

[5] The REC does not have a specific template for researchers. This is to ensure that researchers develop a document layout and format that is accessible to their specific research context. The ethical considerations regarding accessibility, readabilityand translations apply.

- Precautions to assist with tracing if it becomes necessary. The register will contain personal identifiableinformation and must be secured and stored under the strictest conditions as required by the Protection for Personal Information Act. The contact registers must be securely saved for at least three (3) months after the interaction has taken place.

- In cases where in-person activities are contingent on the permission of gatekeepers or institutions,the researcher must provide evidence that the continuation or start of in-person activities wouldbe supported by the gatekeeper before the initiation of the study. Such gatekeeper permission is considered critical in the context of the COVID-19 pandemic.[6]

- In the case of sponsored studies, principal investigators need to submit written confirmation fromthe sponsor that they support that in-person data collection may commence for the study.

- Budget to enable the implementation of the proposed Risk Mitigation Plan (including costs of PPE, sanitizers, deep cleaning etc.) should, if applicable, form part of the budget submitted as part of the original application or amendment.

1.6. Each activity that involves in-person interaction with another individual during the course of the research must be scientifically and ethically justified, weighing up the risk of health and safety of the participant andresearch team with any direct benefit to be generated from conducting this research.

1.7. In the current COVID-19 context, in-person data collection from vulnerable communities, groups, and individuals such as the aged and persons with

underlying disease/co-morbidities or who are immuno- compromised are considered to be high risk. Online or virtual methods remain the only methods that willbe considered. Researchers must also be mindful of conducting in-person research with people who live with or are caregivers of these vulnerable groups or individuals.

1.8. The REC: SBE acknowledges that not all countries or areas have enforced strict lockdown regulations. If in-person research is planned outside of South Africa, the researcher must motivate face-to-face research in a specific country according to the most recent COVID-19 statistics in that area[7] and be cognisant of the current regulations on personal movement as determined by the government of that country. The researcher may need to provide some form of authorization or permission from local authorities stating that they may conduct in-person research in that country if there are strict regulations in place. Even if notrequired by the current regulations of that country, the researcher must keep a contact register of all participants.

1.9. The researcher must indicate COVID-19 infection as a potential risk in their research, in the research proposal and sections 5.21 and 10 of the online REC application form(s). The researcher must report anyinstance of infection (of a research team member or participant) as a serious adverse event.

1.10. Research Ethics approval of proposed in-person data collection does not override stricter requirements or other approvals required from relevant gatekeepers. Where stricter safety measures or precautions are required from any gatekeeper, such measures must be followed. The researcher must always comply with the strictest regulations or guidelines when interacting with institutions or organisations as various bodies, companies, schools, and institutions may have their own Occupational Health and Safety regulations, standards and guidelines related to COVID-19.

2. *PROPOSED COVID-19 MITIGATION TOOLKIT*

Please consider the following measures (where applicable) as part of your COVID-19 risk mitigationstrategy:

Required set of behaviours during research interactions:

- Wearing a mask (not shared and washed on a daily basis).
- Regular hand washing.

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6 The role of gatekeepers (such as provincial government departments, schools, companies, etc.) in advising researchers regarding the resumption, limiting or suspension remains invaluable as they possess information relevant to the specific context. Their guidance should be respected as access to a research site is not for the REC to decide.

7 Researchers should check the statistics on a daily basis and should keep themselves informed of the infection rates andtrends in the area that they plan to conduct in-person research. The REC recommends using the World Health Organisations' COVID-19 dashboard which is updated on a daily basis: https://covid19.who.int/table.

- Social/physical distancing of at least 2m (seen as the most effective way).

- Not to touch face.
- Cleaning and sanitising of surfaces on a regular basis.
- Ensure that all research team members screen themselves for symptoms daily before going out to dofieldwork. Use SU's recommended screening tool i.e. Higher Health Check: https://healthcheck.higherhealth.ac.za/login/?next=/
- SU researchers and students are advised to download the South African COVID-19 tracing app on their phones for the duration of research activities.[8] Researchers who are conducting in-person research in othercountries should check for recommended tracing apps available in the country of residence.

Some equipment needed:

- Own mask (you might even need several if you are spending the whole day in the field and have to touch yourmask or remove it in between data collection with participants).
- A visor for the researcher and the participant might be essential when observation of facial expressions duringresearch is essential.
- Masks for participants (even for others in the participants' homes if research is community based).
- Thermometer, where relevant (this will depend on the venue used for face-to-face data collection).
- Alcohol-based hand sanitiser (70%).
- Sanitiser for surfaces e.g. chairs, table.
- A4 size plastic bag to put informed consent documents or paper questionnaires in (this will be left in the plasticbag for a minimum of three days).
- Basic materials on COVID-19 prevention protocols (proper use of masks, proper hand washing, grounds forsocial distancing, reason for cough etiquette) to distribute to participants.
- Box of tissues.
- Bag for disposal of, for example, used masks, tissues or gloves (if applicable).
- Disposable plastic covers for cloth covered chairs.

Additional precautionary measures that may need to be put in place:

- Ensure research team members know how to be more sensitive and manage vulnerability created by COVID-19 in participants and the research team and that research team members have access to psycho-social care, where deemed necessary.
- Ensure that all research team members know how to apply the health guidelines during the conduct of the research and how to recognise the symptoms of COVID-19.
- Ensure that research team members know how to safely handle paper e.g. informed consent documentation orquestionnaires.
- Ensure that research team members know how to support and refer a participant or team member if suspectedof being COVID-19 positive.

- Ensure research team members know how to manage the rest of the participants or the research team if theywere in contact with the suspected COVID-19 positive team member or participant.
- Recognise the need for constant intensive monitoring by the project leader/study-supervisor(s) during the physical part of data collection to ensure that the research team adheres to all the precautionary measures.
- Plan for eventuality of one or more team members becoming ill on site and having to return home or be takento a medical facility.
- Emergency procedures – e.g. communication if no cell service, field safety plan, map to nearest health facility/hospital.
- Allow extra time for logistics and co-ordination.[9]
- Get permissions ahead of time and send protocols to participants or relevant gatekeepers ahead of time. To avoid awkwardness, include that it is University COVID-19 policy not to shake hands, to maintain physical distancing, use hand sanitizer and wear masks to ensure the safety of all present.

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[8] https://www.gov.za/speeches/president-cyril-ramaphosa-progress-south-africas-effort-contain-coronavirus-covid-19

[9] Be mindful of the curfew since you are not allowed to travel during curfew without a Form 7 permit.

- Establish if the team will be working with the public, contractors, or an at-risk community in less than idealspaces, e.g. refugees. Assess the current level of COVID-19 infections in the community being visited.
- Avoid engaging in any field research where you cannot maintain appropriate physical distancing (2m).
- Physical distance (2m) must be maintained between any individual, including other team members.
- Avoid as far as possible any field activities requiring face to face discussions with members of the public unlessphysical distancing can be maintained.
- Limit the duration of face-to-face activities as far as possible.
- Limit the number of participants per day and space meeting times. Disinfect surfaces before and after eachinterview.
- Limit use of group meetings and never more than 8 participants with 2 researchers, maintain 2m distancing.
- Ensure a psycho-social space (be caring, build trust and limit fear by explaining what is being done).
- Ensure sanitizing and cleaning measure when you get home before greeting and making contact with the rest ofthe family/friends sharing the home.
- Remember that the team will be seen as the face of the University and must be models of safe practice at alltimes.

(From Greeff, M. COVID-19 Research Risk Assessment and Management Approach (version 2), 17 July2020.)

Addendum D – Code scheme

ATLAS.ti Report

Human Dignity

Codes

Report created by Susan Mellows on 01 May 2021

○ *being respected*

Comment:
Def. Being treated in a manner which attributes dignity, being spoken to respectfully, having interactions which convey the impression that they have value and are worthy of respect, being made to feel loved and cared for.

2021/04/27, 15:44, merged with
belonging
Def. Being made to feel a valued member of a group, expressions of feeling like a family, deriving a sense of security from being nurtured.

○ *contributing to society*

Comment:
Def. Being aware of the needs of others, realising that they have something to contribute, helping in community, starting a community project, being willing to listen to someone in need.

○ *draining of hope*

Comment:
Def. Anything suggesting hopelessness, futility of even trying to get life to work out, feeling powerless.

○ *failing in relationships*

Comment:
Def. Signs of conflict in families, unresolved issues causing distance between family members, arguments which harm relationships, conduct which damages relationships or causes lack of communication.

○ *FBO providing*

Comment:
Def: any reference to providing skills training, life skills, business skills, income production. Positive comments about praying, worship, Christian activities which improve well-being.

○ *feelings of hope*

Comment:

Def. Looking to the future with positive thoughts, having a vision for the future.

○ *feelings of worthlessness*

Comment:
Def. No confidence, not worthy, needing to change. No self-respect, not feeling good about themselves, no appreciation of human dignity.

○ *healing of self-worth*

Comment:
Def. Mentioning of improved self-esteem, feeling a more worthy person, more confident.

○ *imaging God in relationships*

Comment:
Def. Treating others in a godly manner, reflecting loving, gentle, kind attributes.

○ *inability to meet responsibilities*

Comment:
Def. Any facts stated about not being able to meet financial responsibilities or not managing with parenting or running a household.

○ *knowing God's love*

Comment:
Def. Expressions of experiencing God's love and care, awareness of God's presence, knowing that they are God's child, growing in Christian faith.

○ *knowing purpose*

Comment:
Def. Feeling in control and empowered. Expressing feelings of being proud of how they are doing, taking concrete and active steps to do something about situation.

○ *lacking in purpose*

Comment:
Def. Aimless, no direction, life messed up, no idea of what to do with life, wasting time.

○ *lacking in skills/employment*

Comment:
Def. Not being able to find a job. Realisation of insufficient skills. Include engaging in crime as substitute for employment.

2021/04/27, 15:44, merged with
Covid fearing for survival
Def. References to Covid-related extreme hunger, increased emotional distress, heightened fear.

○ *producing of income*

Comment:

Def. Obtaining employment, starting own business, acquiring of additional skills or education.

○ *restoring of relationships*

Comment:

Def. Loving relationship restored, mutual respect, communication re-opened.

○ *stressing mentally*

Comment:

Def. Anything to do with feeling anxiety, fear, depression, or worry.

○ *supportive encouragement*

Comment:

Def. Being encouraged by staff, other students. Being complimented. Being made to feel pleased with their accomplishments.

○ *producing of income*

Addendum E – Consent form

UNIVERSITEIT·STELLENBOSCH·UNIVERSITY
jou kennisvennoot • your knowledge partner

STELLENBOSCH UNIVERSITY

CONSENT TO PARTICIPATE IN RESEARCH

Social transformation through affirmation of human dignity:

a case study of 'Learn to Earn'

You are invited to take part in a study conducted by Susan Mellows, from the Theology faculty at Stellenbosch University. You were approached as a possible participant because you have participated in spirituality practices at the faith-based organisation known as 'Learn to Earn'.

1. PURPOSE OF THE STUDY

The study explores the way people feel about their well-being and their lives when spirituality is practised in a faith-based organisation. The study seeks to understand the influence of a person's appreciation of human dignity on personal circumstances.

2. WHAT WILL BE ASKED OF ME?

If you agree to take part in this study, you will be asked to attend a focus group or an interview at Learn to Earn's premises in Khayelitsha, or at your home or place of work, at a time convenient to you. You will be asked questions about your feelings about yourself, and asked to describe spirituality practised at Learn to Earn. 'Spirituality' is intended here to mean the personal and relational side of the Christian faith as brought into day to day life. You will be asked about your response to spirituality practices and whether it resulted in any changes in your life. There will be some specific questions posed to you but you will be asked to speak freely about your experiences, much like storytelling. The interview will take a maximum of one hour and you will not be asked to return for any further questions.

I would like to spend time at Learn to Earn and capture dimensions of what takes place at the organisation. I would therefore ask that I be given permission to observe you, amongst other beneficiaries of Learn to Earn, in your everyday setting as you go about your skills development training and the spirituality practices.

I would like to make the request of you to grant permission for me to take photographs and video footage of spirituality practices at Learn to Earn, without showing faces or in any way enabling identification of persons shown in the photographs, as well as photographs and video footage of artefacts or symbols which may have meaning in the context of the spiritual practice, together with photographs and video footage of the skills development classes. The photographs and video footage would be used to facilitate understanding of context, my own included, and would aid in analysing the information. They would enhance our discussions as points of reference and ensure that I am able to capture what you mean with greater accuracy. I would like your consent to use the photographs and video footage in the publication of the study as well as in future workshops or presentations to organisations to assist individuals and organisations in understanding better how people feel about their well-being and their lives when spirituality is practised in a faith-based organisation.

3. POSSIBLE RISKS AND DISCOMFORTS

It is not expected that the interview will be accompanied by any risks, discomforts or inconveniences. Nevertheless, should you find that the interview causes you to experience any stress or anxiety, or any other negative feelings, you are encouraged to avail yourself of the free counselling and therapy services available from organisations in the vicinity. Famsa (Family and Marriage Society of South Africa) make their services available at 49 Sikizi Street, Khayelitsha and are contactable on 021 361 9098, Hope House are at 6 Long Street, Kuils River and contactable on 021 903 0521 and Lifeline's toll-free number is 063 709 2620.

4. POSSIBLE BENEFITS TO PARTICIPANTS AND/OR TO THE SOCIETY

Benefits to you personally from this study will include having the opportunity to tell your story about the influence which spirituality has on your sense of well-being, if at all, and on the way you approach life. Your voice will contribute to new knowledge which could influence the way other people in the

community approach their lives. It is also expected that there may be benefits to faith-based organisations such as Learn to Earn. The study could assist such organisations to understand better what role spirituality plays in people's feelings and lives. It could help with planning of their skills development training and what part spirituality plays.

5. PAYMENT FOR PARTICIPATION

You will not receive payment to participate in this study. However, you will be paid for the costs of transport to attend the interview. Payment will be made at the interview. If you decide to withdraw from the study after arrival at the interview, your transport costs will still be paid to you.

6. PROTECTION OF YOUR INFORMATION, CONFIDENTIALITY AND IDENTITY

You will be given the choice of not being identified. If that is your preference, you will be protected from having your identity revealed through any information you share during this study that could possibly identify you as a participant. This will be done by leaving out from the interview record your name and any facts which could identify you. Your confidentiality will also be protected in that the record of the interview will be sent back to you before finalisation so that you can alter any facts which you believe may lead to your identity being known. The data will be stored in a secure location and only the principal investigator and her supervisor will have access to the data. Learn to Earn will be named in the final research report but individual interviewees will be anonymous.

The information gathered from interviewees for this study will be released to the director of Learn to Earn but the names of those interviewed will not be included. The information collected may also be used for future publications but confidentiality will be maintained and the identities of those interviewed will not be disclosed. The information collected will be destroyed three years after finalisation of the report.

Interviews will be audio- recorded and you will have the opportunity, should you wish, to review the tapes. Permission is requested for photographs to be taken of spirituality practices whereby individuals appearing in the photographs will not be identifiable. You will have the opportunity, should you wish, to view the photographs. The principal investigator and her supervisor will have access to the tapes and photographs.

7. PARTICIPATION AND WITHDRAWAL

You can choose whether to be in this study or not. If you agree to take part in this study, you may withdraw at any time without any consequence. Should you choose to withdraw from the study at any stage, permission is asked for the information you have already provided up to the date of withdrawal to be used in the study. If you do not give permission, the information you have provided to date of withdrawal will be omitted from the analysis and destroyed for further use. You may also refuse to answer any questions you don't want to answer and still remain in the study.

8. RESEARCHERS' CONTACT INFORMATION

If you have any questions or concerns about this study, please feel free to contact the principal investigator, Susan Mellows, at 083 99 606 77 or suemel@cybersmart.co.za, and/or the supervisor, Prof. Nadine Bowers- du Toit, at 021 808 9111 or nbowers@sun.ac.za.

9. RIGHTS OF RESEARCH PARTICIPANTS

You may withdraw your consent at any time and discontinue participation without penalty. You are not waiving any legal claims, rights or remedies because of your participation in this research study. If you have questions regarding your rights as a research participant, contact Ms Maléne Fouché [mfouche@sun.ac.za; 021 808 4622] at the Division for Research Development.

DECLARATION OF CONSENT BY THE PARTICIPANT

As the participant I confirm that:

- I have read the above information and it is written in a language that I am comfortable with.
- I have had a chance to ask questions and all my questions have been answered.
- All issues related to privacy, and the confidentiality and use of the information I provide, have been explained.

By signing below, I _____ agree to take part in this research study, as conducted by Susan Mellows.

_____   _____

Signature of Participant   **Date**

DECLARATION BY THE PRINCIPAL INVESTIGATOR

As the **principal investigator,** I hereby declare that the information contained in this document has been thoroughly explained to the participant. I also declare that the participant has been encouraged (and has been given ample time) to ask any questions. In addition I would like to select the following option:

	The conversation with the participant was conducted in a language in which the participant is fluent.
	The conversation with the participant was conducted with the assistance of a translator (who has signed a non-disclosure agreement), and this "Consent Form" is available to the participant in a language in which the participant is fluent.

Signature of Principal Investigator   **Date**

Addendum F – Notice of approval:

5 October 2020

Project number: 14627

NOTICE OF APPROVAL

REC: Social, Behavioural and Education Research (SBER) - Initial Application Form

Project Title: Social transformation through affirmation of human

dignity: a case study of 'Learn to Earn'. Dear Ms Susan Mellows

Co-investigators:

Your response to stipulations submitted on 29 September 2020 was reviewed and approved by the REC: Social, Behavioural and Education Research (REC: SBE).

Please note below expiration date of this approved submission:

Ethics approval period:

Protocol	approval	date	Protocol	expiration	date
18	June		17	June	

SUSPENSION OF PHYSICAL CONTACT RESEARCH DURING THE COVID-19 PANDEMIC

Due to the Covid-19 pandemic and resulting lockdown measures, all research activities requiring physical contact or being in unduephysical proximity to human participants has been suspended by Stellenbosch University. Please refer to a formal statement issued by the REC: SBE on 20 March for more information on this.

This suspension will remain in force until such time as the social distancing requirements are relaxed by the national authorities to suchan extent that in-person data collection from participants will be allowed. This will be confirmed by a new statement from the REC:SBE on the university's dedicated Covid-19 webpage.

Until such time online or virtual data collection activities, individual or group interviews conducted via online meeting or web conferencing tools, such as Skype or Microsoft Teams are strongly encouraged in all SU research environments.

If you are required to amend your research methods due to this suspension, please submit an

amendment to the REC: SBE as soon as possible. The instructions on how to submit an amendment to the REC can be found on this webpage: [instructions], or you can contact the REC Helpdesk for instructions on how to submit an amendment: applyethics@sun.ac.za.

GENERAL REC COMMENTS PERTAINING TO THIS PROJECT:

INVESTIGATOR RESPONSIBILITIES

Please take note of the General Investigator Responsibilities attached to this letter. You may commence with your research after complying fully with these guidelines.

If the researcher deviates in any way from the proposal approved by the REC: SBE, the researcher must notify the REC of these changes.

Please use your SU project number (14627) on any documents or correspondence with the REC concerning your project.

Please note that the REC has the prerogative and authority to ask further questions, seek additional information, require further modifications, or monitor the conduct of your research and the consent process.

CONTINUATION OF PROJECTS AFTER REC APPROVAL PERIOD

You are required to submit a progress report to the REC: SBE before the approval period has expired if a continuation of ethics approval is required. The Committee will then consider the continuation of the project for a further year (if necessary).

Once you have completed your research, you are required to submit a final report to the REC: SBE for review.

Included Documents:

Document Type	File Name	Date	Version
Non-disclosure agreement	NDA - INTERNAL - FIELDWORKERS	30/03/2020	final
Data collection tool	videos and photos	30/03/2020	final
Budget	Budget for research	02/04/2020	final
Default	nbowersdutoitcv(7)	02/04/2020	final
Investigator CV (PI)	CV abbreviated	02/04/2020	final
Data collection tool	Interview questions	02/04/2020	final
Data collection tool	Focus group questions	02/04/2020	final
Data collection tool	Participant observation guidelines	02/04/2020	final
Recruitment material	Invitation to interview	09/04/2020	final
Informed Consent Form	Consent form	09/04/2020	Revised
Default	Invitation to interview	10/04/2020	final
Informed Consent Form	consent jul20	03/07/2020	Amended
Proof of permission	Gatekeeper's permission	03/07/2020	Final
Default	Second response to REC comments	03/07/2020	Amended
Proof of permission	gatekeeper's consent	21/07/2020	Signed final
Research Protocol/Proposal	Proposal REC amended 18116191	25/09/2020	REC amended

If you have any questions or need further help, please contact the REC office

at cgraham@sun.ac.za. Sincerely,

Clarissa Graham

REC Coordinator: Research Ethics Committee: Social, Behavioral and Education Research

Principal Investigator Responsibilities

Protection of Human Research Participants

As soon as Research Ethics Committee approval is confirmed by the REC, the principal investigator (PI) is responsible for the following:

Conducting the Research: The PI is responsible for making sure that the research is conducted according to the REC-approved research protocol. The PI is jointly responsible for the conduct of co-investigators and any research staff involved with this research. The PI must ensure that the research is conducted according to the recognised standards of their research field/discipline and according to the principles and standards of ethical research and responsible research conduct.

Participant Enrolment: The PI may not recruit or enrol participants unless the protocol for recruitment is approved by the REC. Recruitment and data collection activities must cease after the expiration date of REC approval. All recruitment materials must be approved by the REC prior to their use.

Informed Consent: The PI is responsible for obtaining and documenting affirmative informed consent using **only** the REC-approved consent documents/process, and for ensuring that no participants are involved in research prior to obtaining their affirmative informed consent. The PI must give all participants copies of the signed informed consent documents, where required. The PI must keep the originals in a secured, REC-approved location for at least five (5) years after the research is complete.

Continuing Review: The REC must review and approve all REC-approved research proposals at intervals appropriate to the degree of risk but not less than once per year. There is **no grace period.** Prior to the date on which the REC approval of the research expires, **it is the PI's responsibility to submit the progress report in a timely fashion to ensure a lapse in REC approval does not occur.** Once REC approval of your research lapses, all research activities must cease, and contact must be made with the REC immediately.

Amendments and Changes: Any planned changes to any aspect of the research (such as research design, procedures, participant population, informed consent document, instruments, surveys or recruiting material, etc.), must be submitted to the REC for review and approval before implementation. Amendments may not be initiated without first obtaining written REC approval. The **only exception** is when it is necessary to eliminate apparent immediate hazards to participants and the REC should be immediately informed of this necessity.

Adverse or Unanticipated Events: Any serious adverse events, participant complaints, and all unanticipated problems that involve risks to participants or others, as well as any research-related injuries, occurring at this institution or at other performance sites must be reported to the REC within **five (5) days** of discovery of the incident. The PI must also report any instances of serious or continuing problems, or non-compliance with the RECs requirements for protecting human research participants.

Research Record Keeping: The PI must keep the following research-related records, at a minimum, in a secure location for a minimum of five years: the REC approved research proposal and all amendments; all informed consent documents; recruiting materials; continuing review reports; adverse or unanticipated events; and all correspondence and approvals from the REC.

Provision of Counselling or emergency support: When a dedicated counsellor or a psychologist provides support to a participant without prior REC review and approval, to the extent permitted by law, such activities will not be recognised as research nor the data used in support of research. Such cases should be indicated in the progress report or final report.

Final reports: When the research is completed (no further participant enrolment, interactions or interventions), the PI must submit a Final Report to the REC to close the study.

On-Site Evaluations, Inspections, or Audits: If the researcher is notified that the research will be reviewed or audited by the sponsor or any other external agency or any internal group, the PI must inform the REC immediately of the impending audit/evaluation.