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**THE IMPACT OF PRIVATIZATION OF WATER SYSTEM
TOWARDS THE POOR.
A CHALLENGE TO PASTORAL CARE.
WITH SPECIAL REFERENCE TO THE RURAL COMMUNITIES OF
BUSHBUCKRIDGE**

BY

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DISSERTATION

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DECLARATION

I Titus Risimati Mobie (Rev) hereby declare that the dissertation which I submit for the degree Ph.D (Practical Theology) at the University of Pretoria is my own work and has not previously been submitted by me for a degree at this or any other university.

Signature:.....

Date:.....

T.R. MOBIE (Rev)



DEDICATION

“If I were to choose between studying for the sake of a degree, and studying for the sake of knowledge, I would choose studying for the sake of knowledge” (Rev NNJ Ngwenya).

*Ndzi nkhensa marito ya vutlhari yo fana ni lawa.
(Many thanks for these words of wisdom.)*

With Warm memories and thanks I dedicate this work to you my spiritual father and mentor the late Rev Ntlaweni Nchongi Joshua Ngwenya

1938-2006

Rest in Peace

TITUS RISIMATI MOBBIE (Rev)



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“I can do all things through Christ who strengthens me” (Philippians 4:13).

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LIST OF ACRONYMS AND ABBREVIATIONS

AACC	=	All Africa Conference of Churches
ABC	=	Abstain, Be faithful, and Condomise
ADB	=	African Development Bank
AGAPE	=	Alternative Globalization Addressing Peoples and Earth
AIDS	=	Acquired Immune Deficiency Syndrome
ANC	=	African National Congress
APF	=	Anti Privatization Forum
ARV	=	Antiretroviral
BWR	=	Basic Water Requirement
BEE	=	Black Economic Empowerment
CBOs	=	Community Based Organisations
CESCR	=	Committee on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights
CFA	=	Comprehensive Freshwater Assessment
CSD	=	Commission on Sustainable Development
CWSS	=	Community Water Supply and Sanitation Programme
DAWASA	=	Dar es Salaam Water and Sewerage Authority
DWAF	=	Department of Water Affairs and Forestry
e.g.	=	For example
ESAP	=	Economic Structural Adjustment Programme
Etc	=	et cetera
ESOP	=	Employee Stock Ownership Plan
FAO	=	Food and Agricultural Organisation
FBOs	=	Faith Based Organisations
FRELIMO	=	Mozambique Liberation Front
GATS	=	General Agreement on Trade in Services



GDP	=	Gross Domestic Product
GEAR	=	Growth, Employment and Reconstruction
GST	=	General Sales Tax
HIPC	=	Highly Indebted Poor Countries
HIV	=	Human Immune Virus
HSRC	=	Human Science Research Council
ICPI	=	International Centre for Public Integrity
IFLs	=	International Financial Institutions
IUCN	=	International Union for the Conservation of Nature
KNP	=	Kruger National Park
LCDs	=	Less Developed Countries
LPCD	=	Litres per capita per day
MDGs	=	Millennium Development Goals
MIIU	=	Municipal Infrastructure Investment Unit
MNCs	=	Multinational Companies
MNR	=	Moçambique National Resistance
NGOs	=	Non-Governmental Organisations
NIEO	=	New International Economic Order
NRLF	=	National Religious Leaders Forum
NEPAD	=	New Partnership for Africa's Development
NP	=	National Party
NT	=	New Testament
OAU	=	Organisation of African Unity
ODA	=	Official Development Aid
OECD	=	Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development
PLWA	=	People Living with HIV
PLWHA	=	People Living with HIV and AIDS



PRs	=	Poverty Reduction Strategies
RDP	=	Reconstruction and Development Programme
PTSD	=	Posttraumatic Stress Disorder
SACC	=	South African Council of Churches
SADC	=	Southern Africa Development Community
SACMUP	=	Southern African Churches in Ministry with Uprooted
SAPs	=	Structural Adjustment Programmes
IMF	=	International Monetary Fund
UN	=	United Nations
UNAIDS	=	Joint United Nations Programme on HIV /AIDS
UNESCO	=	United Nations Education, Scientific and Cultural Organisation
UNHCR	=	United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees
UNICEF	=	United Nations Children Fund
UNITA	=	United Total Independence for Angola
USSR	=	Union of Soviet Socialist Republic
WARC	=	World Alliance of Reformed Churches
RENAMO	=	Mozambique Resistance Army
RSA	=	Republic of South Africa
WB	=	World Bank
WCC	=	World Council of Churches
WDM	=	Water Demand Management



ABSTRACT

THE IMPACTS OF PRIVATIZATION OF WATER SYSTEM TOWARDS THE POOR A CHALLENGE TO PASTORAL CARE

The dissertation focuses on water, which has become the focal point of global debate today among nations. This is due to ever-increasing population and the insatiable consumer demands that the market makes on humanity, putting heavy stress on natural resources, especially water.

Since the 1980s, rich countries and the institutions they control, i.e. the International Monetary Fund (IMF), the World Bank (WB) and the World Trade Organization (WTO) have been forcing poor countries to implement policies and sign agreements that do them more harm than good (i.e. privatization of state assets such as water).

The debt crisis drove many poor countries into structural adjustment programs as a condition for receiving IMF and World Bank aid. These programs, under various names, contain policies that compel vulnerable countries to expose their social services to competition with big profit making corporations.

Through persuasion, threats, bullying and conditions attached to loans and aid, poor countries have been forced to:

- Open their markets in order to subsidize exports from rich countries.
- Stop prioritising domestic producers.



- Divert development efforts away from local food markets, and
- Privatize essential services such as water system, electricity etc.

These debt relief conditions and trade agreements are focused solely on making profit and not on improving the livelihood and welfare of the poor. The theory that the World Bank, the IMF and the WTO put forward is that increased trade will automatically be equal to improved welfare. This equality has not worked in practice as Raj Patel in a more or harsher description, that structural adjustment and other trade related policies could also be seen as a “weapon of mass destruction” (Znet, November 28, 2000).

The author concurs with Patel’s view, as according to UNICEF, over 500,000 children under the age of five died each year in Africa and Latin America in the late 1980s as a direct result of the debt crisis and its management under the International Monetary Fund’s structural adjustments programs. These programs required the abolition of price supports on essential food-stuffs, steep reductions in spending on health, education, and other social services, and increases in taxes. The debt crisis has never been resolved for much of Sub-Saharan Africa. Extrapolating from the UNICEF data, as many as 5,000,000 children and vulnerable adults may have lost their lives in this blighted continent as a result of the debt crunch (World Policy Journal, Volume XIX, No.4, Winter 2002/03).

Privatization and commodification of water system is the order of the day in many developing countries. It has raised survival issues



for the poor and the marginalized, causing problems such as scarcity of safe drinking water, pollution of water and soil, and destruction of agricultural sectors in other parts of developing countries.

This dissertation emphasizes that all people have internationally accepted rights to water *“all peoples, whatever their stage of development and their social and economic conditions, have the right to have access to drinking water in quantities and of a quality equal to their basic needs” (United Nations 1977)*. This right is being violated for millions of people around the globe, particularly in developing countries such as Africa, Asia and Latin America.

This dissertation reminds the church leadership, members of faith communities and all relevant stakeholders of their responsibilities to God-given gift of water. Both the Old and New Testament understanding of justice as taking the side of the poor and oppressed, and also seeking to compel us to action, i.e. to address the exploitative and oppressive systems that seek to hold the poor and their oppressive structures. We are inspired to strive for justice, each in our own place and according to our separate gifts. We are called to the struggle to make trade a means of sharing the bounty of the earth and the fruits of human labor, and to ensure that people’s rights to water is fully respected.

The dissertation emphasizes that **“water”** is the source of life, a gift of nature and that it belongs to all living beings and the rest of creation. God who is the creator gives this right to everyone. It is



not a private property but a common resource for the sustenance of all members of plant and animal kingdoms.



EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

CHAPTER ONE

The first chapter of this dissertation comprises of the introduction that covers the mission statement, problem statement, aim of study and methodology. In this chapter the author is concerned about the unprecedented privatization of water system by the multilateral international bodies such as the World Bank, the International Monetary fund (IMF), the World Trade Organization (WTO) including other international financial institutions because of their Economic Structural Adjustment Programme (ESAP) policies.

With these policies, developing countries are encouraged to privatize their services as conditions for compliance to be included among the list of Heavily Indebted Poor Countries (HIPC) in order to be eligible for debt relief. One of the services that these countries are forced to privatize is water supply, where profit is put ahead of social and environmental concerns, leading to greater indebtedness. The above process creates poverty among developing countries.

In this chapter, the author challenges these institutions that they are not there to help these countries, but to make profit in the name of helping them, where the poor who cannot pay are cut off and left without services at all, resulting in water related diseases and death (Agape 2005:42). Some foreign countries are also corrupting our African governments by giving money to the leaders while taking the lion's share of the wealth out of our countries. As a result good governance and respect to democracy is grossly violated.



In this chapter, the author introduces the aim of the study being that of raising awareness to the church, other faith based organization, government and other stakeholders of the negative impacts of privatization of water system particularly to the poorest of the poor. The research suggests that the church and the gospel should be seen as a solution to the human ills and national crisis otherwise it has no relevancy to the real world.

The review of literature on privatization of water reveals unpleasant side effects where safe drinking water is not affordable to the vulnerable, i.e. the poorest of the poor who are then left with no other option, but to use contaminated water for their needs from rivers, dams, wells etc, resulting in water-borne diseases and death. It is important for the reader to note that, neither human being nor plant can live without water.

In this research, the author who grew up as a shepherd of his father's flock, reminds the church of her shepherding role by taking Jesus Christ as a model where He is depicted as the great servant, or deacon (Mark 10:45 and John 13), and that his successors are called to carry on his service (diakonia) among the oppressed and the abused. The author uses Gerkin's shepherding model as the model par excellence (1997:28) in reminding the church of her responsibilities of shepherding. The researcher revolves around the Gerkin's pastoral and educative shepherding model in the attempt to challenge and inspire the churches, NGOs and the wider ecumenical movement to address current global problems regarding the privatization of water resources' issue. In this attempt, the analysis of the results of the chosen research



tools, the interviews and surveys among his subjects / respondents are supported by this model. The stories are in the context of the locality of study and are related with the aims of the study. These serve as eye-openers for readers to understand the pains and struggles of the people. The researcher's aim that this study will serve as "voice" of the voiceless people of their pains and struggles to the government, and to the world is well delivered in the selected stories. The gathered data has been summarized and concluded within the premises of the Gerkin's model.

Both the qualitative and quantitative methods are used in the data collection of this research. The researcher uses the descriptive-survey research design as his data collecting techniques, that is, employing the questionnaire and survey methods. The questionnaire is translated into Xitsonga, the local language, clearly stating survey questions. Both questionnaires are attached as appendices.

CHAPTER TWO

This chapter discusses the whole question of water, that it is God's gift and a vital resource for life. The question of its scarcity is also discussed where the following factors are seen to be causes: population growth, increased demand on agricultural water, inappropriate water management, industrialization, urbanization and climate change due to global warming.

The chapter also discusses the critical characteristics of water that:

- It fulfils multiple functions.



- It is needed for regional, local and global water imbalances.
- The distinction between need and demand of water resource need to be identified.
- It should be taken as the first thing in developmental strategies.
- All stakeholders should be engaged in addressing the issue of water. The author does not, however, agree with the commodification of this resource as it is the poorest of the poor who suffer the consequence.

CHAPTER THREE

Chapter three discusses the whole question of privatization of essential services, what it is, its various methods, and how governments benefit from it. The chapter also raises some arguments pro and against privatization policies. All in all, the fact is that governments have a lot to benefit out of this policy because of its economic gains from developed countries. The question to ask is: Does governments care about the poor? The researcher leaves this area of concern for other researchers to pursue.

It is the researcher's view that while it may be necessary for governments to privatize social services; some essential services such as water supply should not be privatized or commodified for economic reasons, as it has to do with human life and the rest of creation.

It is the researcher's view that the church should be encouraged to promote a non-commodity exchange community, based on a



sharing and caring principle, reflecting the economy of God's grace. Water is the basic source of life, which cannot only be considered in terms of its economic capabilities and potential, but as a necessity for human sustenance, hence the importance of its distribution to all, irrespective of their ability to pay for it.

CHAPTER FOUR

The chapter discusses privatization of water in relation to poverty. Food production is the main economic activity of most women and men in rural Africa (A Connor 1991:76). On the other hand, food is also the important critical dimension of African poverty (1991:76). Food production however, is made possible if water is available.

In the situation where there is scarcity of rain or where water is privatized, hunger is the order of the day, and it is the poor who suffer most because of lack of finance and other resources.

CHAPTER FIVE

This chapter deals with food, which is the first remedy for AIDS. People living with HIV and AIDS live longer as a result of good nutrition. This chapter discusses the importance of good feeding where water is seen to be very critical for the production of food, diet that brings about the necessary energy and nutrients. With privatization of water, the poor will not afford to access water in order to grow food such as vegetables, fruits etc.

CHAPTER SIX

The Chapter discusses the fact that the church exists to be prophetic in its ministry, protecting and defending those whose



rights are violated by others. These are the poor and the marginalized, who also have the right to live and enjoy life to the fullest. The mission of the faith-community should therefore be expressed in its diverse practices of engaging in social justice, communicating the faith as well as the administering of the word and sacrament. It is in this context that the Church is called to respond and reinterpret its mandate and mission. God is on the side of the poor, weak, marginalized, voiceless, defenceless, and the oppressed, and this is what the church should emulate. The Church and the gospel should be seen as a solution to the crisis, otherwise it has no relevance to the real world. It has a mission to be compassionate, and be a righteous community working globally for justice and peace.

CHAPTER SEVEN

Chapter seven consists of the conclusion and recommendations that there is no life without water. The dissertation has attempted to emphasize that both the poor and the rich need good and safe water since almost all human activities revolve around water. It should be made accessible to all since this will even help women and children especially the girl – child from walking long distances with big and heavy containers to sources where they could get portable water. It recommends good care of water. Water-borne diseases could be eradicated if people take good care of the water around them. This way, all living creatures would enjoy the life-giving gift from God, which is water, and that no private individuals or companies should be allowed to commodify it for economic gains or profit.



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