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RESEARCH TOPIC: The motive of a South African male muti murder offender: A case study

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A research report submitted in partial fulfillment for the requirements for the degree of Master of Arts in Social and Psychological Research in the Faculty of Humanities, University of the Witwatersrand.

DECLARATION

“I declare that this research project is my own, unaided work. It has not been submitted before for any other degree or examination at this or any other university”

Sign: _____

Date: _____

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ABSTRACT

Traditional healers in South Africa are easily accessible to individuals who require their services. Traditionally, traditional healers would help their clients either by giving them advice or by giving them *muti* made from plants and/ or animal body parts. However, some traditional healers have adopted the practice of using human body parts in *muti*.

Traditional healers who practice *muti* murder believe that different human body parts have different "powers". The traditional healer who practices *muti* murder will often appoint someone to carry out the murder thus they are not directly involved in the murder.

There are various motives for committing murder and the current study utilised a single case study design to investigate the motives of Black South African males who commit *muti* murder. Due to the sensitivity of the topic, the researcher was able to recruit one participant. The participant was interviewed by the researcher in Northern Sotho. The researcher recorded and transcribed the interview. The researcher utilised thematic analysis to analyse the data. The current study identified two motives for committing *muti* murder, "cultural beliefs" and "financial gain". Future studies should recruit more participants and delve into the motive, financial gain.

Keywords: Cultural beliefs, Motive, Muti murder, South Africa, Traditional healers

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CHAPTER ONE:

INTRODUCTION

South Africa has one of the highest crime statistics in the world (de Wet, Labuschagne, & Chiroro, 2009; de Wet, Potgieter, & Labuschagne, 2010; Hodgskiss, 2004; Labuschagne, & Salfati, 2014; Salfati, Labuschagne, Horning, Sorochinski, & de Wet, 2014) and murder is the sixth highest cause of mortality in the world (Fazel, & Grann, 2004). The most recent South African murder statistics reflect a murder rate of 18673 for the year 2015/2016 (South African Police Service (SAPS), 2016). Most murders that occur in South Africa are said to occur between individuals who are acquainted with each other (Swart, Seedat, & Nel, 2015). According to the 2015/2016 SAPS Crime Statistics, 70.7% of offenders were known to their victims. In those same statistics 0.3% of murders were deemed to be related to *muti* or witchcraft. *Muti* murder victims are often known to the offender but victims may also be strangers to the offender (Bukuluki, 2014; Labuschagne, 2004; Scholtz, Phillips, & Knobel, 1997).

Muti murders are complex as they involve up to three offenders, all who play different roles in the process (Bukuluki, 2014; Labuschagne, 2004; Labuschagne, 2012). The client who seeks the *muti* made with human body parts, the traditional practitioner who prescribes the *muti* to the client and instructs the third offender, the murder offender (Bukuluki, 2014; Labuschagne, 2004; Labuschagne, 2012).

Traditional healers in South Africa are easily accessible to individuals who require their services (McFarlane, 2015; Roelofse, 2012). Traditionally, traditional healers would help their clients either by giving them advice or by giving them *muti* made from plants and/ or animal body parts (McFarlane, 2015). However, some traditional healers have adopted the practice of using human body parts in *muti*; this has led to the increase in *muti* murders in Black communities (HSRC, 2010; McFarlane, 2015; Bukuluki, 2014). The term Black is not used to

reinforce the racial categories from Apartheid but rather to contextualise *muti* murder. Black communities are townships and rural areas that are dominated by a Black population (McFarlane, 2015).

Muti murder is an under-researched topic in South Africa; therefore the findings from the current research will add value to the *muti* murder literature in South Africa.

Muti murder is an under-researched topic in South Africa. A handful of academic publications are available, such as De Jong (2015) who spoke about ritual murder; Federici (2010) that wrote about witch-hunting; Harmin-Dahl (2003) spoke of witch accusations; Labuschagne (2004, 2012) that wrote about muti murder from an investigative psychology point of view; Matthee (2014) who researched the tension between African culture and Western legal systems; MacFarlane (2015) that wrote of traditional healers and traditional medicine; Mlisa (2009) who researched traditional healers in the Eastern Cape; Petrus (2009), Scholtz et al (1997) that wrote about cultural beliefs in Limpopo; Wallace (2015) that wrote about witchcraft and religion in South Africa. The findings from the current research will add value to the *muti* murder literature in South Africa as it examines individual motives by means of an interview with a convicted *muti* murderer.

In chapter two, the concepts of traditional healers and witches will be discussed. In chapter three, the difference between a ritual murder and a *muti* murder will be highlighted. Chapter four will analyse the different motives for murders in general, and specifically *muti* murder. In chapter five, the research questions and research propositions will be set out. Chapter six will discuss the methodology used in this research while chapter seven will present the results. Chapter seven will be the discussion of results and chapter eight will conclude the research by highlighting some issues for further research.

CHAPTER TWO:
TRADITIONAL HEALERS AND WITCHES

To understand traditional healers one must first have an understanding of their beliefs, as their beliefs drive their practice. This chapter will briefly discuss African traditional beliefs followed by an in-depth discussion on traditional healers. The chapter will also differentiate between traditional healers and witches who practice witchcraft. It is important that traditional healers be discussed in order to give background on traditional healers and that they are not confused with *muti* murder offenders.

2.1. African traditional beliefs

"African traditions" is a blanket term used to refer to various African cultural groups (Kail, 2008). In South Africa there are nine dominant African cultural groups (Ndebele, Northern Sotho, Sotho, Swazi, Tsonga, Tswana, Venda, Xhosa and Zulu) and even though they share similar traditional beliefs they do have distinct differences (Kail, 2008; Roelofse, 2012). An example of this is that all African traditions believe that ancestral spirits can communicate with the living but how they do so differs between cultural groups (Kail, 2008). Ancestral spirits are believed to protect and guide their decendents but only communicate through traditional healers (de Jong, 2015; Kail, 2008). Therefore, when some Black people go through a difficult time in their life or have a reoccurring illness they will consult with a traditional healer as they believe that their ancestors know the root of the issue and can give them advice on how to deal with it (Campbell, 1998; de Jong, 2015; Truter, 2007).

2.2. Traditional healers in South Africa

In South Africa there are more than 27 million people who use African traditional medicine known as *muti* (Labuschagne, 2012; Matthee, 2014; McFarlane, 2015). African traditional medicine is received from traditional healers and it is reported that there are over 200 000 traditional healers in South Africa (McFarlane, 2015). Therefore, because there are high numbers of people who use the services of traditional healers, traditional healers are said to play a vital role in South Africa (Labuschagne, 2012; Zuma, Wright, Rochat, & Moshabela, 2016).

There are two types of traditional healers, *isangoma* [single: *sangoma*] who are mostly female and *inyanga* who are mostly male (Kale, 1995 as cited in McFarlane, 2015). *Isangoma* are diviners and communicate with ancestors in order to determine the cause of the illness in their client (de Jong, 2015; Labuschagne, 2012; McFarlane, 2015; Scholtz *et al.,* 1997). *Inyanga* are expert herbalists and have knowledge on medicine made from animals, thus they know which herbs and animal parts will best cure the illness of their client (Labuschagne, 2012; McFarlane, 2015; Scholtz, *et al.,* 1997; Wallace, 2015). Some of the *muti* made by *inyanga* has been scientifically proven to be beneficial and thus it is a growing practice in South Africa (McFarlane, 2015). An example of this *muti* is *Moringa* which is a herb that is believed to strengthen the immune system (Nweze & Nwafor, 2014). The history of traditional healers and *muti* is not well documented due to colonisation but it is known that the knowledge has been passed verbally through generations (de Jong, 2015; McFarlane, 2015; Wallace, 2015).

Isangoma are identified by their ancestors through receiving *"The Calling"*. *"The Calling"* is when an individual experiences hallucinations, dreams, and illness which cannot be healed by conventional medicine (Connor, 2010; Zuma *et al.*, 2016). Identified individuals must consult with a *sangoma* whom will determine whether or not the symptoms are an indication of being called by ancestors to become a traditional healer (Cumes, 2004). Once the *sangoma* has confirmed that the individual has indeed been called by ancestral spirits to practice as a

traditional healer, the individual must undergo *Twasa* which is initiation, failing to do so, their symptoms will worsen without healing (Cumes, 2004; Zuma *et al.*, 2016). Initiation is when the chosen individual is trained by a *sangoma* that is chosen by their ancestors (Zuma *et al.*, 2016). Initiation consists of different stages and can run over many years (Mlisa, 2009). During initiation the chosen individual is cleansed through methods of steaming and bathing in animal blood. Steaming involves the chosen individual covering their face with a towel over a bucket which contains a hot mixture of water and herbs. The individual inhales the herbs and sweats (Cumes, 2004). The chosen individual learns about humility, how to interpret dreams, the spiritual significance of *muti* and how to communicate with their ancestors (Cumes, 2004; Wallace, 2015; Zuma *et al.*, 2016). During initiation the chosen individual lives in isolation from the world, they do not have contact with their family or friends and they abstain from sexual activity (Campbell, 1998). At the end of the initiation period a goat is slaughtered for the ancestors in the presence of the community and the chosen individual is then recognised as a *sangoma* (Campbell, 1998). A chosen individual cannot become a practicing *sangoma* without completing initiation but at any point in their life, *isangoma* may be instructed by their ancestors to again complete a certain stage of initiation (Mlisa, 2009).

Isangoma believe that their ancestors dwell in an *induma* (healing hut) and it is for this reason that *isangoma* practice in an *induma* in order to channel their ancestors with ease (Cumes, 2004; Kail, 2008). *Isangoma* acts as a medium between the living and the spirit world. When clients consult with *isangoma* the client will not tell the *sangoma* what his/ her problem is instead the *sangoma* will channel their ancestors (either that of their own or that of the client) through throwing bones, interpreting dreams, or possession by ancestors in order to determine what difficulty the client is experiencing (Cumes, 2004; Kail, 2008; Zuma *et al.*, 2016). Should clients require *muti* the *sangoma* will usually refer them to *inyanga* (McFarlane, 2015; Wallace, 2015).

Muti is African Traditional medicine which is prepared by *inyangas* using botanical and/ or zoological and/ or mineral products (Kail, 2008; Van Wyk, Van Oudtshoorn, & Gericke, 2009). *Inyangas* have an extensive knowledge on plants which is acquired during initiation and by studying botany (Van Wyk *et al.*, 2009; Zuma *et al.*, 2016). *Muti* is prepared according to its method of use and there are six different methods in which *inyangas* can instruct clients to use *muti* (Van Wyk *et al.*, 2009). The six methods are: adding *muti* to bath water, drinking *muti* followed by self-induced vomiting, enemas, sniffing dried *muti*, placing *muti* powder or paste over a cut made by the *inyanga*, or by inhaling the steam from a mixture of *muti* in hot water (Van Wyk *et al.*, 2009). All six methods are believed to purify the client and *inyangas* choose a purification method based on the advice they receive from their ancestors (Van Wyk *et al.*, 2009).

In 2006 African traditional medicine was officially recognised and under the *Traditional Health Practitioners Act of 2007 (Act. 22 of 2007) isangoma* and *inyangas* gained legal status as traditional health practitioners. The Traditional Health Practitioners Council of South Africa (THPCSA) was inaugurated in 2013 (Government Gazette, No. 31265 as cited in McFarlane, 2015; Ramokgopa, 2013). It is required that traditional healers register with the THPCSA so that they are trained and licensed, and that their clients are adequately served and protected (Peltzer, 2009). However, not all traditional healers are registered with the THPCSA and there is no official procedure to accredit traditional healing (McFarlane, 2015; Peltzer, 2009).

2.3. Witches and witchcraft in South Africa

The Zulu word for witches is *Abathakathi* and is used to refer to people who are believed to inherit their ‘black magic’ through the bloodline, usually of the mother, or develop their power and skills with a deliberate intention to inflict harm on others (Matthee, 2014; Petrus, 2009; Wallace, 2015). They are then in direct contrast to traditional healers whose role it is to help

people. The belief in witchcraft is said to be driven by fear, jealousy, ignorance and poverty (Bukuluki, 2014; Matthee, 2014; Federici, 2010). The belief in witches and witchcraft is high in rural communities because poverty is prevalent, and people in these communities may turn to witchcraft to seek wealth or blame their poverty on another bewitching them (McFarlane, 2015; Petrus, 2012).

When one experiences unexplained misfortune the blame may be attributed to a witch bewitching them and when another appears to be receiving fortune, the fortunate individual is believed to be a witch and using witchcraft in order to gain success (Bukuluki, 2014; Matthee, 2014; McFarlane, 2015; Hamrin-Dahl, 2003; van Deventer, 2015). It is also believed that each person is granted a certain amount of good fortune and if another person appears to be more successful they are accused of using witchcraft to achieve that success (Labuschagne, 2004; Labuschagne, 2012; Petrus, 2012). Thus, people in power such as politicians are often accused of using witchcraft to gain power and wealth (Petrus, 2012).

Witches are not traditional healers and witches are believed to bring fortune only for themselves and misfortune for others therefore it is not common for witches to have clients (Bukuluki, 2014; Hamrin-Dahl, 2003; Petrus, 2009). It is believed that witches purchase their *muti* from *inyanga* and use it for witchcraft and to increase the strength of the *muti*, witches sometimes add human body parts (Harmrin-Dahl, 2003; Matthee, 2014). Witches are also believed to have supernatural abilities such as flying and talking to animals (Hamrin-Dahl, 2003; Matthee, 2014).

The community members in African communities are close-knit and isolating oneself from community members and activities is frowned upon and therefore it is often old ladies who live in isolation that are accused of practising witchcraft (Federici, 2010; Hamrin-Dahl, 2003; Matthee, 2014; van Deventer, 2015).

Black women who live in rural areas are living in poverty and may have been experienced abuse from their partner and or their work environment (Ally, 2013). The violence they experience is internalised and may manifest into anger however, not all will act on this anger (Ally, 2013). Women who choose to defy the norm of being oppressed and take charge may be marginalised and accused of witchcraft (Ally, 2013).

Communities, at times, killed witches by placing a tyre soaked in petrol over the victim's head and shoulders and setting it a light. This is known as "necklacing" (Hamrin-Dahl, 2003; Matthee, 2014).

2.4. Conclusion

In this chapter the different traditional healers, namely *Sangomas* and *Inyangas*, were discussed as well as the concept of 'witches' in traditional African beliefs. In the next chapter ritual and *muti* murders will be discussed.

CHAPTER THREE:
RITUAL AND MUTI MURDERS

This chapter will discuss how traditional African beliefs are practiced, specifically ritual killings. Ritual killings are discussed so that the differences between ritual killings and *muti* murder are made explicit and that the two are not confused. The chapter will then define *muti* murder and give clarity on the individuals involved in *muti* murder. An in-depth discussion on victims and body parts will be presented and to conclude, the chapter will discuss the client, who is the person who seeks the *muti* from the traditional *muti* murder practitioner.

3.1. Ritual killings

In some African cultures an animal or human being is killed in an act of sacrifice at a ceremony, and this is referred to as a ritual killing (Petrus, 2012; Roelofse, 2012). A sacrifice is made to an entity such as a god, or ancestors in exchange for one's or the community's desires such as rain, power or wealth (de Jong, 2015; Labuschagne, 2004; McFarlane, 2015; Roelofse, 2012). One common driving force behind ritual killings is the belief that each individual has a certain amount of luck in their life time; this is known as 'life force' (de Jong, 2015). When an individual's life force has run out they start to experience misfortune and go through hardships (de Jong, 2015). In order to restore one's life force, a ritual murder is performed and the life force of the victim is transferred to the offender or to any person who uses the *muti* that is prepared by an *inyanga* using the victim's body parts (de Jong, 2015). People can increase their life force to gain power and wealth (de Jong, 2015). Ritual killings are performed for chiefs in order to increase the chief's life force and strength because it is believed that the community's prosperity is linked to the chief's well-being (de Jong, 2015). In the Venda culture, ritual

killings are performed for a new chief because it is believed that the energy of the victim is transferred to the chief (Roelofse, 2012). The chief will sacrifice a young child and bury the body parts with the crops in order to ensure the prosperity of the community (de Jong, 2015; Roelofse, 2012).

In ancient times traditional healers would sacrifice a virgin in order to protect the village from evil spirits (McFarlane, 2015). However, today this practice is performed by some traditional healers in order to increase their healing power and gain wealth (de Jong, 2015; McFarlane, 2015).

3.2. Muti murder

3.2.1. Definition

The word *muti* means 'medicine' in the Zulu language (de Schryver, 2014). Human body parts are believed to be the most powerful form of *muti* and thus they are sourced by traditional practitioners in order to cure their clients or to increase their own *sangoma* or *inyanga* powers (Buthelezi, 2015; Labuschagne, 2004; Labuschagne, 2012; Matthee, 2014; McFarlane, 2015).

3.2.2. Traditional healers/ practitioners involved

It is important to note that not all traditional healers practice *muti* murder and those who do, do not necessarily carry out the murders themselves (Bukuluki, 2014; Labuschagne, 2004; Labuschagne, 2012; Scholtz *et al.*, 1997). Traditional healers who practice *muti* murder (from here onwards referred to as traditional practitioners) are trained traditional healers but chose to deviate from mainstream traditional healer practices and decide to use human body parts in their *muti*. These traditional practitioners who practice *muti* murder will do so out of greed because they charge a lot of money for their *muti*. These traditional healers are also at times referred to as 'witches'. Witch as defined by Wallace (2015) is someone who uses sorcery

relating to the use of plants and herbs, with spells, divination and looking for omens, specifically with demons and evil.

3.2.3. Murder offenders

Traditional practitioners will usually select a person to commit the murder and give this person a detailed description of who the victim should be and how the murder should be carried out (Labuschagne, 2004; Labuschagne, 2012; Matthee, 2014; Roelofse, 2012). Traditional practitioners will hire a person or a group of people to carry out the murder. The person or group of people that the traditional practitioner will hire receive monetary rewards after committing the murder and delivering the human body parts to the traditional practitioner. Alternatively, the person will be an apprentice of the traditional practitioner and will not receive monetary rewards for committing the murder because it will be seen as part of his training.

The person who commits the murder will cut off the body parts of the victim, usually while the victim is alive as the traditional practitioner believes that the victim's cries of agony preserves the life essence of the individual in the body part therefore increasing the power of the human body parts as *muti* (Hamrin-Dahl, 2003; Labuschagne, 2004, Labuschagne, 2012; Matthee, 2014; Roelofse, 2012; Scholtz *et al.*, 1997). It must be noted that instances of post-mortem mutilation have occurred.

3.2.4. The victim and their body parts use

Traditional practitioners believe that younger victims increase the strength of the *muti* (de Jong, 2015; Hamrin-Dahl, 2003). The victim typically either dies from blood loss or is murdered once the required body parts are removed (Matthee, 2014; Labuschagne, 2004; Scholtz *et al.*, 1997) but as stated above, it is preferable that the victim be alive when the body parts are removed. The body parts may be prescribed by the traditional practitioner who practices *muti*

murder to the client in order to heal a disease such as HIV (Hamrin-Dahl, 2003), or to bring the client good fortune, or they may be used by the client to bring an enemy misfortune (Hamrin-Dahl, 2003; Matthee, 2014; McFarlane, 2015; Petrus, 2012; Roelofse, 2012). *Muti* that is believed to bring fortune is said to be "good" and is wrapped in red or white material and *muti* that is believed to bring misfortune and is said to have evil magic, is wrapped in black or blue material (Labuschagne, 2012). Human body parts are often mixed with herbs and or animal body parts before they are sold to the client (Labuschagne, 2004; Labuschagne, 2012; Matthee, 2014; Roelofse, 2012). The core difference between *muti* murder and ritual killings is that *muti* murder involves removing body parts of the victim while in ritual killings the victim is killed as a sacrifice (Labuschagne, 2004; Petrus, 2012), and some *muti* victims have survived the attack after having had body parts successfully removed.

Traditional practitioners who practice *muti* murder believe that different characteristics (such as skin colour and, eye colour) of victims possess different powers; as a result victims vary and depend on the needs of the client (Labuschagne, 2004; Scholtz *et al.*, 1997). An example of this is that traditional practitioners who practice *muti* murder believe that virgins are pure, and their purity has the ability to cure HIV/ AIDS (Hamrin-Dahl, 2003). More generally, traditional practitioners who practice *muti* murder believe that certain body parts have certain magical powers (Hamrin-Dahl, 2003; Labuschagne, 2004; Matthee, 2014; Scholtz *et al.*, 1997) for example genitalia (Scholtz *et al.*, 1997) are believed to have the ability to cure infertility (Hamrin-Dahl, 2003; Labuschagne, 2004; Labuschagne, 2012; Roelofse, 2012), and brains can improve intelligence (Labuschagne, 2004; Labuschagne, 2012). Therefore victims range in age and gender but are most often Black, healthy and may be known to the offender (Labuschagne, 2004; Scholtz *et al.*, 1997). Hypothesised reasons as to why the victim may be known to the murderer, is that the victim is easily accessible to the murder offender and the victim fits the description (e.g. is a "lucky" person) of the victim required by the traditional practitioner who

practices *muti* murder (Labuschagne, 2012). Another hypothesis is that if the murder offender is going through initiation to become a traditional practitioner, the offender's mentor may instruct the offender to extract certain body parts from someone who is related to the offender (Hamrin-Dahl, 2003). This can then help explain why most victims are Black, as *muti* murders frequently occur in Black communities (Bukuluki, 2014; Roelofse, 2012).

3.2.5. The client

The client is someone who believes in traditional medicine (McFarlane, 2015) however the client does not explicitly demand body parts for the required purpose, the client will tell the traditional practitioner who practices *muti* murder, what he or she requires then the traditional practitioner will prescribe a solution which may in extreme cases involve a human body part (Labuschagne, 2004; Labuschagne, 2012; Wallace, 2015). The client is not coerced into taking the body part but propaganda may be used by the traditional practitioner who practices *muti* murder to convince the client that the body part is the only way he/ she can get what is desired (Petrus, 2012).

The client must be willing to allow the murder to be carried out (Hamrin-Dahl, 2003), but is typically not involved in the murder itself. Once the client agrees to using a body part, the traditional practitioner will give the client a date on which to return to collect the body part (the client must pay a fee prior to leaving) (Labuschagne, 2004; Petrus, 2012), this is to ensure that the client returns and that the murder is not carried out in vain. Alternatively, the traditional practitioner will already have the body part and immediately give it to client (Petrus, 2012) with instructions on how to use it (Labuschagne, 2004).

Therefore, the client is usually not directly involved in the murder of the victim, but the client stating their needs to the traditional practitioner leads to the murder of the victim (Hamrin-Dahl, 2003). However, it may be argued that the client may be selfish and greedy for allowing

the murder to be carried out for their own personal gain (Bukuluki, 2014; Labuschagne, 2004; Labuschagne, 2012; McFarlane, 2015; Petrus, 2012; Roelofse, 2012; Wallace, 2015). It may be also argued that when the client requests *muti* that leads to the death of an enemy that the client may in fact be directly involved in the murder (Hamrin-Dahl, 2003; Roelofse, 2012).

3.2.6. Murder Law in South Africa

Murder is the unlawful and intentional causing of the death of another human being (Snyman, 2002).

The legal doctrine of common-purpose is relevant when people act together to commit a crime, even if their participation is not necessarily equal. According to this principle it is not only the *muti* murderer who actually attacks and kills the victim who can be charged with murder, but also the traditional practitioner who instructed it but was not present at the time of the murder, as well as the client if he knew what his *muti* was going to entail. This is summed up in two specific principles:

1. If two or more people, having a common purpose to commit a crime, act together in order to achieve that purpose, the conduct of each of them in the execution of that purpose is imputed to the others.
2. In a charge of having committed a crime which involves the causing of a certain result (such as murder), the conduct imputed includes the causing of such result.

(Snyman, 2002, p.260)

Muti murders in South Africa are prosecuted under the common law crime murder or attempted murder of the victim survives (*Criminal Law Amendment Act 105 of 1997*). Offenders may at times say that the crime was motivated by cultural belief however their cultural belief is an

infringement on the victim's human right. Thus, their crime is not pardoned and instead it is punished (Matthee, 2014).

3.3. Conclusion

In this chapter ritual and *muti* murder were discussed. The different roles that people play in *muti* murder were discussed in depth. The next chapter will look at the motives for committing murder.

CHAPTER FOUR:
MOTIVES FOR COMMITTING MURDER

As literature on the current topic is limited, this chapter will look at literature that relates to murder offenders and motives for committing murder. Despite that previous literature does not look at *muti* murder offenders and their motives specifically, it is vital that these two topics (murder offenders and motives for committing murder) are discussed as to have literature to refer to when analysing the data and drawing conclusions. This chapter will lead into the research questions and propositions of the study.

4.1. Previous literature on murder offenders

In literature, the reasons an offender provides for committing a crime are often placed under the blanket term 'motive' (Hodgskiss, 2004; Kraemer, Lord, & Heilbrun, 2004; Scholtz *et al.*, 1997). Motive is defined as an internal psychological drive, or at least a known reason, for committing a crime (Kraemer *et al.,* 2004). Therefore, 'motive' broadly covers all possible reasons an offender may provide, including the mental and emotional state of the offender, as well as events that may have occurred prior to the incident which caused the offender to carry out the offense.

4.1.1. Socio-economic status

Research within South Africa has indicated that murders in South Africa commonly occur between Black males who are familiar with each other (Burrows, Swart, & Laflamme, 2009; Swart *et al.*, 2015), and that murders are usually the result of an argument (Centre of the Study of Violence and Reconciliation [CSVR], 2008; Harris, & Vermaak, 2015; Swart *et al.*, 2015) in public areas (Swart *et al.*, 2015). Wilkinson and Pickett (2010) state that males will respond to humiliation, disrespect and loss of face with violence. In an unequal society, those whom

are socio-economically disadvantaged people feel disrespected by those better-off than themselves, and this angers those whom are socio-economically disadvantaged people.

Unfortunately, when the opportunity arises for such disadvantaged people to lash out, it is around other similar people, which explains why the disadvantaged people murder disadvantage people and not the rich: this is increasingly occurring among Black males (Harris, & Vermaak, 2015). Thus, premeditated murders in South Africa are rare (Harris, & Vermaak, 2015) and murders are commonly perpetrated with the use of firearms or sharp objects (Burrows *et al.*, 2009; Swart *et al.*, 2015). Furthermore, known offenders are generally between the ages of 20 – 29 years (Swart *et al.*, 2015).

Various studies within South Africa (de Wet, 2005; Harris, & Vermaak, 2015; Mathews Jewkes, & Abrahams, 2011) have found that there is a positive correlation between socio-economic status (SES) and murder. The lower the SES of an individual; the more likely they are to commit murder (de Wet, 2005; Harris, & Vermaak, 2015; Mathews *et al.*, 2011). In previous research a measure known as the gini coefficient measure has been used, and this measure specifically identifies different countries income disparities (Harris, & Vermaak, 2015). The gini coefficient ranges from 0 to 1 were 0 implies that everyone earns the same income and 1 implies that one person earns the entire country's income (Vavi, 2016; "What's our true gini?", 2015). Research indicated that in countries where the gini coefficient is higher than 0.45, means that the country has large income disparities and has murder rates four times higher than countries with less income disparities (United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC), 2010:30 as cited in Harris, & Vermaak, 2015). The result of apartheid in South Africa is that it is now the most unequal country with a gini coefficient of 0.77 (Vavi, 2016; "What's our true gini?", 2015). In a study conducted by Mathews *et al.* (2011) within South Africa, they found that all their participants lived in poverty, in addition to poverty driving

some offenders to commit crime; poverty has also contributed to the development of emotional and psychological disturbances of the offender.

4.1.2. General Strain Theory

When investigating the possible reasons for acts of violence, Agnew's General Strain Theory (1992) states that strain is experienced by an individual when he/ she experiences an event or condition he/ she dislikes. There are three types of strain: the inability to achieve goals, losing positive stimuli (e.g. love), and when there are negative stimuli (e.g. abuse) (Agnew, 2012). When the strain is perceived as being unfair by the individual, the individual may develop feelings of anger; Agnew (2012) argues that anger is the driving force of violence. Thus, unequal societies such as those that exist in South Africa are angry and thus more prone to violence, where in extreme cases the violence is fatal (murder) (Harris, & Vermaak, 2015).

4.1.3. Masculinity and violence

South Africa is always one of the top three countries reported for murder (Glaser, 2009). The majority of South African working classes are unable to afford sophisticated private security, and thus they experience crime more severely. It is clear that South Africans feel vulnerable, especially to violent crimes and robbery (Glaser, 2009). Men are seen as perpetrators of violence towards men and women (Ratele, 2014).

The masculinity and sexuality of South African men is impacted by several factors such as unemployment, and poverty (Ratele, 2014). Poverty, unemployment, economic inequalities, race ideologies, corruption, cultural marginalisation, among other social, economic, and health issues, impact on boys and men. When these factors impact on men in a negative manner there are high levels of violence against women and children in South Africa (Ratele, 2014). Media has presents successful men by the amount of assests they have acquired. Disadvantaged men

who are unable to afford these assests may become angry at themselves and aggressive (Ratele, 2014). Some men will go to extreme lengths such as resorting to theft to acquire these luxuries (Ratele, 2014). These extreme lengths that men go to have negative consequences such as imprisonment (Ratele, 2014).

4.1.4. Muti and motive

When considering the current topic under investigation, available literature suggests that *muti* murder offenders often agree to harvest human body parts for traditional healers for financial gain (Labuschagne, 2012; Petrus, 2012; Roelofse, 2012). Financial gain means that the offender receives monetary compensation for committing the murder but the term has also been used to encompass offenders who believe that *muti* made from human body parts will help them succeed in a business venture they undertake (de Jong, 2015). Additionally, literature also suggests that because traditional healers are located in Black communities (Roelofse, 2012; Scholtz *et al.*, 1997; Wallace, 2015), the *muti* murder offender may be a resident of the community, where the murder occurs, as is the victim (de Jong, 2015).

It is also unclear if the *muti* murder offender believes in traditional healers and their *muti*. It is known that some *muti* murder offenders are trainees of the traditional practitioner and being trained in making *muti* (Labuschagne, 2012).

4.2. Conclusion

This chapter looked at the different motives for committing murder that previous literature identified, namely, a low socio-economic status, and the general strain theory. The next chapter will present the research questions and propositions.

CHAPTER FIVE
RESEARCH QUESTIONS AND PROPOSITIONS

The following chapter will list the questions the researcher identified and discuss the propositions of the study. The researcher added propositions to the study in order to narrow down the topic to have a set focus (Baxter & Jack, 2008; Yin, 2014). By narrowing the focus the researcher was able to complete the study in the given timeframe of 12 months. The study was given a timeframe of 12 months because the study was conducted at Masters degree level of study.

5.1. Research questions

The researcher has identified unanswered questions from reading existing literature available on the topic under investigation. The researcher has constructed the questions below which formed the cornerstone of the areas covered during the interviews with the participant, by means of the open-ended interview.

The aim of the research is to determine why *muti* murder offenders commit *muti* muder.

1. What was the *muti* murder offender's motive for participating in the offence?
2. Why do *muti* murder offenders think they are chosen by traditional healers?
3. Do *muti* murder offenders commit the offence only for financial gain?
4. Do *muti* murder offenders believe in traditional healers and their *muti*?
5. Do *muti* murder offenders view their offence as a crime?
6. Was the *muti* murder offender also the traditional healer?
7. Do the *muti* murder offenders have criminal records prior to the murder?

5.2. Research propositions

The following propositions are based on literature the researcher has read.

1. The motive that drives *muti* murder offenders to commit *muti* murder is financial gain where the *muti* murder offender receives money from the traditional healer who instructed him to commit the offence (Petrus, 2012; Roelofse, 2012).
2. Financial gain can also be achieved when the *muti* murder offender believes in *muti* and uses the *muti* to increase his wealth. This is achieved when the *muti* murderer obtains certain body parts from the victim and uses them in a ritualistic manner (rubbing it on the skin, burying it in the yard and so forth) as instructed by the traditional practitioner (de Jong, 2015; Petrus, 2012)
3. *Muti* murder offenders who do not believe in *muti* will view their offence as a crime because they are aware that they have committed murder. Theses offenders will even have criminal records.
4. Traditional healers will appoint someone to commit *muti* murder therefore, *muti* murder offenders are not traditional healers (Bukuluki, 2014).

5.3. Conclusion

It is believed that these questions and propositions will contribute to the understanding of the concept of *muti* murder. These questions will be answered in the findings chapter and discussed in the discussion chapter. The next chapter will cover the methods that have been implemented to answer the research questions.

CHAPTER SIX:
METHODOLOGY

This chapter will discuss the research methods that were employed to conduct the study. The research methods that were employed for the current study were best suited for investigation of the research topic, and to answer the research questions which would assess the research propositions. This chapter will discuss the research design which has two sub-sections, the philosophy of the research and the case study typology. Followed by a discussion on data collection, the participant, data analysis, trustworthiness, the process of the research and ethical considerations.

6. 1. Research design

6.1.1. Philosophy of research

The researcher used a qualitative case study design (Baxter & Jack, 2008) to explore *muti* murder within its context in South Africa and African culture using a semi-structured interview to generate data. The researcher was guided by Yin's (2014) philosophy of research. Yin's philosophical underpinning is a constructivist paradigm. The constructivist paradigm is one of two epistemologies of the relativist ontology (Milliot, 2014). The relativist ontology states that scientific reasoning is not universal but rather that it is relative to the context and each person, thus scientific reasoning is not objective, it is subjective and one phenomenon can have many truths (Kuhn, 1962 as cited in Milliot, 2014).

Le Moigne (as cited in Milliot, 2014) stated that the constructivist paradigm has five principles, these are (1) the principle of reality representativeness, (2) the principle of constructed universe, (3) the principle of projectivity, (4) the principle of general arguments and (5) the principle of action based on specific reasoning. The first principle states that objectivity is

absent from the researcher, thus leading to the second principle that the phenomenon being studied is not independent from the researcher. Principle three states that the research process is defined by the research study this means that there is interaction between the subject and the object of the research study. The fourth principle states that multiple explanations are possible for the phenomenon under investigation and the fifth principle states that each explanation for the phenomenon is crucial to identify possible methods to deal with the phenomenon.

The constructivist paradigm allowed the participant to tell his story and provide his views of reality which assisted the researcher to improve her understanding on the participant's actions (Lather, 1992).

6.1.2. Case study design

The current study is a single case study as it is an extreme and unusual case, and it represents a specific situation (Yin, 2014). The researcher performed research on a single group (see subheading 6.3. for description of group), on whom little research has been done on. Therefore, the current study was a case study design and results from this study may not necessarily be transferable and cannot be generalised.

The current study is also an exploratory case study as it had only one case of interest and the purpose was to improve the understanding of the reasons Black South African males commit *muti* murder in South Africa. According to Milliot (2014) the interest around an exploratory case study is strengthened when the existing theories around the topic of interest are incomplete. This is true for *muti* murder in South Africa.

6. 2. Data collection

The researcher conducted a narrative interview (Powell, Fischer, & Wright, 2005) with the participant. A narrative interview was conducted because the participant felt comfortable

enough to narrate his life to the researcher. The researcher would occasionally nod in agreement while the participant told his narrative and the researcher would ask the participant to clarify or elaborate on anything she did not understand. The researcher had specific research questions to answer thus, the researcher utilised a standard biographical questionnaire (Appendix A) to obtain demographic details of the participant. The biographical questionnaire was utilised in order for the researcher to know the pertinent information that was required for the current study.

To answer the research questions, the researcher used a self-developed, semi-open ended questionnaire (Appendix B). The questionnaire was developed by the researcher with assistance from her supervisor, a clinical psychologist who has experience in developing questionnaires to assess murder offenders. The interview schedule was utilised as a guideline to assess if the participant had provided the researcher with enough information that best answered the research questions. In addition, the interview schedule assisted to form a strong case study report. The questionnaire was not asked in numerical question sequence but rather when the participant had concluded his narrative on a topic but left out an area that was of interest to the researcher, the researcher would ask a question or questions from the questionnaire pertaining to that specific topic. Therefore, the researcher studied her research questions and questionnaires prior to conducting the interview with the participant.

The interview was conducted in Northern Sotho as this was the participant's first language. The researcher has professional working proficiency of Northern Sotho thus the researcher was able to understand the participant, and translate and transcribe the interview to English. As such the researcher did not require an interpreter. The researcher recorded the interview and did not write any notes during the interview in order to make the participant more comfortable.

6. 3. Sample (Participant)

The researcher used non-probability sampling, and a purposive sample was used because the researcher wanted to utilise a specific set of participants for her study and participants who did not meet the researcher's selection criteria were excluded from the study. The selection criteria were as follows; participants had to have appeared in a South African court, for committing one or more *muti* murders. Furthermore, participants had to be found guilty for committing *muti* murder and be currently incarcerated. To control for gender and cultural differences, participants had to be Black males. Additionally, literature has identified cases where *muti* murder offenders were Black males (Bukuluki, 2014; Labuschagne, 2004; Scholtz *et al.*, 1997). The participant had to be older than 18-years-old as consent would be required for participants who were younger than 18-years-old and this ethical clearance was not applied for.

The study initially looked to utilise at most five participants but due to the sensitivity and scarcity of the topic the researcher only managed to obtain one participant who met her selection criteria, in Gauteng province. The researcher conducted an open source search for participants and asked the South African Police Services (SAPS) Investigative Psychology Section (IPS) for additional potential participants. The SAPS IPS also provided the researcher with the incarceration status of potential participants. Only one participant matched all the selection criteria and was incarcerated at the time of the study.

The participant is a Black South African male. At the time of committing the *muti* murder he was 49-years-old and he is now 55-years of age. At the time of arrest the participant had been a practising traditional healer for ten years but he has ceased practising traditional medicine and is currently incarcerated.

6. 4. Data analysis

The researcher worked in an essentialist paradigm and thus reported the experiences, meanings and the realities of the participant. This was achieved by utilising inductive thematic analysis (Braun, & Clark, 2006) to analyze the data sources. Inductive thematic analysis was utilised because the themes generated from the data were heavily related to the topic under investigation (Javadi & Zarea, 2016). Thematic analysis was conducted at the semantic level where patterns in the data were identified to explain the data and the data was organised into content and summarised meanings (Javadi & Zarea, 2016). Furthermore, thematic analysis was conducted at the semantic level in order to theorise findings in relation to previous literature (Braun & Clark, 2006) on male murder offenders, African tradition, and masculinity, the motive of murder offender, *muti* murder and crime in South Africa.

Thematic analysis has six phases (Braun & Clark, 2006). In phase one the researcher familiarised herself with the data (interview recording, completed questionnaires, and the court documentation which was available on the internet) (Braun & Clark, 2006). The researcher conducted the interview, then transcribed the interview paying close attention to all the words the participant and the researcher said and where punctuation marks were used. It was important to note every word as at times the researcher would say “Mm” or “okay” which indicated to the participant that she understood what he was saying and he could continue with his narrative. In addition, the placement of punctuation marks is important as they have the ability to change the meaning of a sentence if placed incorrectly (Javadi & Zarea, 2016). The researcher then translated the interview from Northern Sotho to English. The researcher listened to the recording again and read over the translated transcript several times before moving onto phase two.

In phase two the researcher generated codes for her data (Braun & Clark, 2006), at this stage, she loaded her data onto Atlas.ti. (v. 6) for this purpose. Codes were generated for both latent and semantic meanings. Some of the data had multiple codes but never more than three codes. Once the data was coded the researcher moved onto phase three of thematic analysis.

In phase three the researcher searched for themes using the identified codes (Braun & Clark, 2006). Similar codes were collated under a potential theme. Themes were given a title and a brief description. The researcher then checked that codes were correctly grouped under each theme and that each theme had a meaningful and understandable title.

In phase four the researcher reviewed her themes (Braun & Clark, 2006) by checking that themes did not overlap with each other and that each theme was unique. Themes that overlapped were merged into one, retitled and the brief descriptions was modified. Themes that contained more than one theme were separated, retitled and the brief descriptions were modified. Themes that did not have sufficient evidence, from the data, to support them were deleted and codes that were under those themes were either placed under an already existing theme or deleted. Thereafter, the researcher produced a thematic map using all her themes and codes that were grouped themes.

In phase five the researcher defined and named themes on the thematic map (Braun & Clark, 2006). The researcher refined the titles of the themes and brought down the description of each theme to one sentence.

In phase six the researcher organised her themes in a logical manner to present them in her report (Braun & Clark, 2006). The researcher then inserted vivid examples of each theme. The researcher then presented her findings, including vivid examples, in her report in order to capture the points she was making in her discussion as well as to support her argument.

6. *5.* Trustworthiness

The researcher clearly stated what her research questions were in her proposal and remained the same in her current report. The research design, sampling strategy, data collection and analysis were appropriate for the study as they were approved by a university methods reader and the universities ethics board (Ethics Committee for Research on Human Subjects (Non-Medical)).

The researcher was required to do sufficient research on the current topic prior to conducting her study. The researcher consulted with people who had expert knowledge on the topic.

The researcher kept a reflexive journal during data collection and data analysis. The researcher took into her account her own cultural and religious beliefs by acknowledging that she did not hold African beliefs but had to disregard that in order to understand the participant from his perspective as a believer in African beliefs. The researcher also had to take into account the context the interview was taking place, in South Africa and in a correctional service centre with an offender. The researcher did not take many notes during the interview as this made the participant feel more comfortable and the converstion was recorded, transcribed then translated to English. The researcher's supervisor was in the room when the interview was taking place. The participant was aware that the researcher's supervisor could not understand the interview as it took place in Sepedi.

The researcher has included a reflexive piece in the following final report.

6. 6. Process of research

Once the study had received ethical clearance from the Ethics Committee for Research on Human Subjects (Non-medical) at the University of the Witwatersrand, the researcher utilised the internet to find offenders who appeared in a South African court for committing *muti*

murder/s, and obtained offender names from her supervisor and SAPS IPS. The researcher then applied for ethical clearance from the Department of Correctional Services head office to conduct her research in their correctional services centres. Once the Department of Correctional Services granted the researcher permission to conduct her research, the researcher contacted the Gauteng Regional Head. The researcher explained her study to the Gauteng Regional Head and provided him with the list of potential participants that the researcher had identified. The Gauteng Regional Head identified offenders that were still incarcerated and coordinated for the researcher to interview the participant at the correctional services department he was held.

The researcher explained to the participant the purpose of the research and gave him an information sheet (Appendix C). The participant agreed to participate in the research and read and signed the consent to be interviewed form (Appendix D) and consent to be recorded form (Appendix E). The participant was also given a letter stating that he participated in my research and aided in increasing the knowledge on the topic.

6. 7. Ethical considerations

The research project received ethical clearance from the Ethics Committee for Research on Human Subjects (Non-Medical) at the University of Witwatersrand (Appendix F) and the Ethics Committee at the Department of Correctional Services.

The recording of the interview was kept in a safe and the recording will be destroyed after five years. The identity of the participant was known by the researcher and her supervisor, however, the participant is anonymous in the research report.

6. 8. Conclusion

It is believed that the research methods discussed in this chapter are rigorous and thus when employed to a study, the results of the study can be trusted. The next chapter will discuss the findings of the study and provide answers to the research questions.

CHAPTER SEVEN:
FINDINGS

In this chapter the findings from the case study will be discussed. First a brief description of the *muti* murder committed by the participant will be provided. Then the themes that have been identified by the researcher will be discussed in detail and extracts from the interview will be used as evidence. This will be followed by the answers to the research questions.

7.1. A description of the muti murder committed

The participant invited his younger sister to his house under false pretences, he informed his sister that they were going to perform a ritual for their incarcerated brother. At the time, the participant's son was living with him. The participant states that he was instructed by the leaders at his initiation school to acquire the private parts of a close female relative. The participant waited for his younger sister to fall asleep after which he snuck into her room and bludgeoned her with an axe. The participant left her to die before he used a knife to cut out her private parts. The participant states that on his way to his initiation school, he was arrested, in possession of body parts. The participant adds that his son was not aware that he was killing his sister nor did he assist him however, both the participant and his son were arrested. His son was later released but the participant remains incarcerated.

7.2. The themes identified

The researcher identified four main themes around the participant's *muti* murder which are discussed in detail below.

Main theme	Sub-theme	Definition
Denial of responsibility	Religious beliefs	The participant beliefs that his actions are because he initially went to initiation school
	Parental blame	The participant blames his parents for taking him to initiation school
Lost in belief	Christian beliefs	The participant has recently converted to Christianity and has strong faith in God
	Cultural beliefs	The participant is still familiar with his African beliefs
My relationships with my family	The child within the family	The participant claims that he had a close relationship with his family
	The man of the family	The participant protects his son from criminal charges
Death in the family		The participant has lost a few of his family members
Poverty		The participant is of low socio-economic status

7.2.1. Theme one: "Denial of responsibility"

In language the expression "What I did" is used by an individual when he/ she wants to disassociate themselves from their actions or when they feel sheepish of their actions (Mandel, & Dhami, 2004). In the interview, the participant often refers to his *muti* murder as "What I did" and never titles what he did. In the start of the interview he acknowledges that what he did is a crime and that it is murder.

Interviewer: Please tell me about yourself

Participant: About that crime I committed

Interviewer: You can start wherever you want to

Interviewer: When you think about it, was it a crime? Do you view what you did as a crime?

Participant: It is a crime obviously! I know it is a crime what I did

Interviewer: why is it a crime?

Participant: It's murder what I did

From there onwards he refers to his crime as "What I did". However, the participant never once acknowledges that what he did was *muti* murder. He states that he is in disbelief of his actions and tries to find the root cause for what led him to commit *muti* murder.

7.2.1.1. Religious beliefs

The participant blames the *muti* murder on his African traditional beliefs, taking it back to when he went to initiation school. *"Now, another thing that caused me to do this, is because I went to initiation during 1987 – 1988."* Thus, indirectly implying that if he had not gone to initiation he would have never committed the *muti* murder.

The participant places almost all the blame on African traditional beliefs, specifically those related to traditional healing.

7.2.1.2. Parental blame

The participant never acknowledges that there may have been other influences that may have caused him commit *muti* murder and that he had a choice of whether or not to commit to the murder. *"…those people's things made me do what I did…"*

The participant states that he had to drop out of school because his parents could not afford to pay for school fees *"No I didn't complete school, I dropped out in standard 8…I dropped out in the middle…because my parents couldn't afford it…because of money"*. The participant then mentions that in 2010, prior to committing *muti* murder he lost his job and had to move back to his parents' home *"…in 2010, I lost my job. So I didn't want to stay there so I moved back home"*, this could have left him stranded for money but, the participant does not appear to acknowledge that fact.

The participant also shows signs of shame and regret for killing his sister and acknowledges that his sister could have assisted him financially in the future if he had not murdered her, *"I asked God to help me, what is this thing I did, what will it help me with?…You see, it won't help me with anything. I killed her and maybe she and I were going to help each other because we could've been better friends…because we all struggle, it doesn't matter where you come from…maybe we could've assisted each other."*

However, the participant never states that when he became unemployed that could have led him to commit *muti* murder because he states *"My initiation was completed…they said they were going to use it for amapandla."* The participant knew that the genital organs of his sister would be used to enhance his "traditional healer abilities" but he did not know the process that would be followed.

It should also be noted that this is in contradiction to what the appeal states;

"The appellant had been practicing as a Sangoma for ten years prior to the offence. As part of his final initiation, he had to obtain the genital organ of a close female relative."

7.2.2. Theme two: Lost in belief

7.2.2.1. Christian beliefs

The participant was a traditional healer at the time of the incident and in order for one to be a traditional healer, one must believe in ancestors. The participant states that he received signs from his ancestors to go to initiation *"Ancestors, ancestors, yes there were signs...that I must go to initiation…"* and he doesn't talk much about what happened at initiation or his time as a traditional healer.

In comparison, when the participant talks about his belief in God (Christianity) he talks about it in detail *"I don't want to get touched. Leave me alone to pray the way I want to pray* (believe in). *I no longer want to be touched by humans. I don't even shake people's hands"*

7.2.2.2. Cultural beliefs

The participant is familiar with the beliefs around *muti* murder but reinforces that he does not identify with the beliefs; *"Now they say you cut the private parts while the person is alive, No, I cut the private parts when she was dead."* However, leading up to him committing the murder, the participant had African traditional beliefs because even though he was not entirely sure of how the private parts of his sister were going to be used *"I didn't even know what amaphandla meant, what happens?"* he carried out the murder knowing that it would benefit him.

Amaphandla is a spirit of an ancestor that the leaders at initiation school put in traditional healers once they have completed initiation. This happens immediately after initiation and before the qualified traditional healer can start practising traditional healing and/ or medicine (D. Kgomontsho, personal communication, June 1, 2017).

The participant tends to link his African traditional beliefs with Tjakastad, which is the place where his father is from and where he completed his initiation. The participant was taking his sister's private parts to Tjakastad when he was arrested. The participant knew that a traditional healer must complete initiation before he/ she can start practising traditional healing or medicine.

Interviewer: So, did you believe those people who said you had to complete your initiation. They, said you were a traditional healer for many years.

Participant: My initiation was completed

The participant is still in contact with the people from his initiation venue but does not want to be in contact with them because they want the participant to hold on to his African traditional beliefs but the participant does not want to. Although, the participant has traded his African traditional beliefs for Christian beliefs *"...I thought it is better that I leave these* (African) *beliefs and I decided to pray."* The participant still holds some African beliefs or at least his new beliefs resembles his old beliefs *"I tried to break it* (necklace around his neck) *off...Someone (an ancestor) said to me put it back on. I don't know who said that…After they said "Put it back on" I put it back on and I was okay."*

The participant's African beliefs also come through when he talks about detesting his wife going to hospital when she was ill. In this regard he stated *"My wife was sick, she was coughing, then she went to hospital, I didn't want her to go to hospital…I refused for her to go to hospital…I said: "Don't go to hospital!"*. As Truter (2007) states that people will go to traditional healers rather western doctors as they believe that illness arises from a supernatural cause and is an indication that their ancestors are unhappy with them.

7.2.3. Theme three: My relationships with my family

7.2.3.1. The child within the family

The participant stated that he was close with his family and mentions stories to support his statement. The participant's relationship with his father's family was strengthened by the participant going to initiation school in Tjakastad where his father's family resides. The participant is also close with his ancestors which are from his father's clan.

The participant had to acquire the private parts of a close female relative and he chose his sister which confirms that they were indeed close, he even states this a few times during the interview *"...her and I were close."* and *"...maybe she and I were going to help each other because we*

could've been even closer friends." Ergo, it was easy for the participant to lure his sister to his residence without her having any suspicions.

The participant also appears to have the strongest bond with his twin brother in comparison to his other siblings as the participant states that he was the only one who visited his twin brother in a correctional service center and his siblings didn't; *"…they couldn't even go and visit my brother who was in prison for committing rape…they didn't go, only I went to visit him."* However, none of his siblings have visited him while he is in a correctional services center, not even his son visits him and this may be because his son was initially accused as being a participant in the *muti* murder; he stated*"…they arrested me with my son, they thought he helped me commit it."*

7.2.3.2. The man of the family

Charges were withdrawn against the participant's son. The participant continuously protects his son by mentioning that he was not at all involved in the *muti* murder and that he is completely innocent. Regardless, that the participant swears by his sons innocence, his son has not visited him at all while incarcerated. The participant's close relationship with his son has weakened after the *muti* murder, in fact all the participant's family relationships are weakened by his *muti* murder except his relationship with his father's family in Tjakastad who still contact him; *"They* (referring to people at the initiation school) *say I should stop praying and come back to their things* (referring to traditional healing)*..."* and his daughter who visits him and assisted him with the appeal process. This is not surprising given that the participant's friend married his daughter.

The participant also had a close bond with his mother's family, as this is where he used to go to to seek refuge during difficult times such as when his wife passed away; *"I used a bus to get to my parent's home."*, and when he lost his job; *"I didn't want to stay there so I moved back*

home." The participant's safe place of refuge no longer seems to be intact or at least he cannot get there but his family from there have also not visited him. Most of the participant's close relationships seem to have been weakened or broken after he murdered his sister which is understandable as the participant and his sister share the same relatives and their relatives are more sympathetic to the death of his sister and hold resentment to the perpetrator (the participant).

7.2.4. Theme four: Death in the family

There are quite a few deaths in the participant's family that the participant mentions either in brief or in detail. The participant struggles to recall the exact date that his wife passed away, *"She passed away in 2000 or 2002 around that time."* but, he can recall the exact date he was arrested, *"They arrested me on the 21st…"* The participant is however, able to describe both events in detail, *"…my wife she was sick, coughing, then she went to hospital, I didn't want her to go to hospital…They gave her an injection, after they gave her the injection she passed away. I refused for her to go to hospital…I said "Don't go to hospital" Then she went to hospital, when other people asked her if she's been to hospital, then they said it wasn't far. The two of us caught several taxis to get there. When we got there they gave her an injection. Then she passed away."* Regarding the arrest *"…my daughter had left, so I was alone with my son so, they arrested me with my son…That time I had cut the private parts…No one helped me. Now they say you cut the private parts while the person is alive, No, I cut the private parts when she was dead…amapandla, now that's why I did such a thing* (killed my sister). *At that time I was taking it to Tjakastad but I got arrested on my way there. They caught me there…I was getting a taxi to Middleburg. But they arrested me there."* Thus, the participant has not suppressed the memory of his wife's death but rather may have forgotten the date because of

retrieval-induced forgetting (Ward, 2015), which implies that the participant was unable to recall the exact date of his wife's death as he had already recalled many other dates.

7.2.5. Theme five: Poverty

There are many people in South Africa who live in poverty and as the participants in Mathews *et al.* (2011) study all lived in poverty, so does the participant in the current study. The participant was raised in a disadvantaged family *"No I didn't complete school, I dropped out in standard 8…I dropped out in the middle…because my parents couldn't afford it…because of money"* and continued to live in poverty *"While we were building the shack…"* The participant resided in low socio-economic-status (SES) areas *"I stayed in Tjakastad for my initiation."* and *"…they lived in Diepsloot with me."* Diepsloot is an informal settlement. The participant had a low SES job *"I worked at a security company"* as did his wife *"My wife was a domestic worker…"* The participant's wife passed away which meant he and his family lost a breadwinner which was followed by the participant losing his job. The participant still experiences financial difficulties *"I don't have money"* which are exasperated by the abandonment of his family.

The participant committed the *muti* murder in 2011 shortly after he became unemployed. Even though the participant does not openly acknowledge that his financial status could have led him to commit the offence it may have been a motive. The fact the participant believed in ancestors and traditional healers and traditional medicine, may be obscuring his judgement as to what his true motive for committing the offence was.

7.3. Answers to the research questions

1. What was the muti murder offender's motive for participating in the offence?

According to the participant, his motive for committing the *muti* was for *amaphandla* which falls under the motive of "the participant believed in traditional African beliefs".

2. Why do muti murder offenders think they are chosen by traditional healers?

This question doesn't fit the circumstances because the offender was the traditional healer. This question will not be discussed in the discussion chapter.

3. Do muti murder offenders commit the offence only for financial gain?

According to the findings, no, as discussed under question one.

4. Do muti murder offenders believe in traditional healers and their muti?

In the current study, yes, because the participant had been a practising traditional healer for ten years prior to being incarcerated.

5. Do muti murder offenders view their offence as a crime?

The participant does view his *muti* murder as a crime.

6. Was the muti murder offender also the traditional healer?

Yes, the participant was a traditional healer

7. Do the muti murder offenders have criminal records prior to the murder?

No, the participant did not have a criminal record prior to his offence.

7.4. Conclusion

This chapter discussed the main themes identified and answered the research questions. The following chapter will discuss the findings of the study.

CHAPTER EIGHT:
DISCUSSION

The current study investigated the motive of a South African male *muti* offender. The study had research questions it aimed to answer and study propositions. The discussion chapter will firstly present the researcher's reflexive piece so that it be clear in which paradigm the researcher placed herself during the research process and how she achieved this. The chapter will then proceed to give insights into the research questions and study propositions and, this will be achieved by utilising the study findings and literature included in this report.

8.1. Researcher's reflexive piece

The researcher used rigorous research methods as discussed in the methods section above. The researcher did not identify with Traditional African beliefs nor Christian beliefs. The researcher had done research on the topic prior to data collection. Therefore, it was easy for the researcher to place herself in an essentialism paradigm throughout the entire research process. One of the major advantages of this approach was that the participant was able to give his narrative without feeling that he was being judged by the researcher. This was evident by the fact that the participant provided the researcher with a detailed narrative about his life including the *muti* murder with very limited probing required from the researcher.

The findings of the current study may not be transferred to the population of *muti* murder offenders as this is a single case study. However, it does provide us with insight on the topic.

8.2. Insights into the research questions and propositions

Although the participant cannot see or admit it, it appears that he committed *muti* murder for financial gain on account of the *muti* murder was committed shortly after he became

unemployed. The *muti* that would have been produced for him by his initiation school leaders was going to strengthen or increase his traditional practitioner abilities.

In concurrence with the General Strain Theory (Agnew, 1992) the participant experienced strain when he lost his job, and he was angered by the situation, this could have led the participant to committing the violent act of *muti* murder.

The participant in the current study was complex in that he was both a traditional healer and the *muti* murder offender as a result, he had multiple reasons for committing *muti* murder.

It is clear from the interview that the participant did not perform a ritual killing in that he did not sacrifice his sister to his ancestors, the murder was for the purpose of obtaining human body parts for use in traditional African medicine. The participant murdered his sister for *muti*, hence he is incarcerated for committing a *muti*-related murder. Consistent with literature (Labuschagne, 2004; Scholtz *et al.* 1997) the current victim was Black and known to the offender. The current study supports the hypothesis that the victim is known to the offender because the victim is easily accessible to the offender. The current study also supports Hamrin-Dahl (2003) theory because the participant was instructed by the leaders at his initiation school to extract the body parts of his relative.

Although the participant was a traditional healer, during the *muti* murder he did not take on the role of the traditional healer who prescribes the *muti* instead this role was taken on by the leaders at his initiation school. The participant only carried out two roles, the client who seeks the *muti* and the murder offender who harvests the body parts. The current study coincides with Labuschagne (2012) that there are at least three parties involved in *muti* murder and even though the current participant was two of the three parties, all three parties were present in the *muti* murder.

Consistent with McFarlane (2015) the client who was the participant in the current study, believed in traditional medicine. Contrary to literature (Hamrin-Dahl, 2003; Labuschagne, 2004, Labuschagne, 2012; Matthee, 2014; Roelofse, 2012; Scholtz et al., 1997) the participant did not cut off the genital organs of the victim while she was alive but rather when the victim was dead. Although, in accordance with literature (Labuschagne, 2004; Matthee, 2014) the victim died due to blood loss. Nonetheless, the situation becomes confusing because the participant had African beliefs but failed to harvest the body parts while the victim was alive. The participant may have failed to harvest the body parts while the victim was alive because it was his younger sister because he may have had compassion towards her but given the fact that he murdered her conveys that his own needs superceded his compassion for his sister.

The participant knew that the body parts had to be harvested while the victim was alive but it appears that he knew that the source (close female relative) was sufficient to make the *muti* work.

The participant mentioned that in his ten years of being a traditional healer, he had never utilised human body parts in his own practice prior to committing *muti* murder. The participant's current use of human body parts indicates a strong desperation within the participant. The participant motive leans towards financial gain although from his perspective his motive is African traditional beliefs.

The participant was 49-years old at the time of committing *muti* murder which is significantly older than the age range of murder offenders in South Africa, 20 – 29 years (Swart *et al.*, 2015). In addition, as rare as premeditated murder is in South Africa, in the current study, the murder was premeditated as the participant lured his sister to his residence. The participant views his *muti* murder as a crime and states that he did not have a criminal record prior to committing the *muti* murder.

The participant states that he received signs (feelings) from his ancestors to become a traditional healer but the participant rapidly deflects away from the subject and begins to elaborate on his Christian faith. This may indicate shame and guilt, as the participant elaborated on major events in his live but failed to elaborate on when he received signs from his ancestors and what happened at initiation school.

8.3. Conclussion

In an essentialism paradigm the researcher was able to investigate all possible reasons for the participant to commit *muti* murder and the strongest motive appears that the participant committed *muti* murder for financial gain. Prior to committing the *muti* murder the participant mentioned that in his ten years of being a traditional healer, he had never utilised human body parts in his own practice. The purpose of the *muti* murder was to obtain human body parts of a close relative to use in traditional African medicine. The participant only carried out two of three roles of a *muti* murder. The participant was the client who seeked out the *muti* and the murder offender who harvested the body parts.

Some of the features were consistent with existing limited literature, and some features were different to existing literature. This illustrates the complexity of the phenomenon of muti murder and raises the question of whether or not deviation from literature makes an incident such as this one, less of a muti murder? If one brings the discussion back to the basic definition of a muti murder [insert your definition here, I couldn't find it], this does qualify as a muti murder, as the purpose was to obtain body parts for their use in traditional medicine, but its manner of expression may have differed from some of the typical features seen and described in other muti murders. Ultimately future researchers may want to consider a typology of often noted muti murder features instead of a singular understanding of muti murder.

CHAPTER NINE:
CONCLUSION

The current study aimed to investigate the motive of South African male *muti* murder offenders. The researcher was only able to obtain one participant and thus conducted a single case study. The chosen research design enabled the researcher to gain rich data to answer the research questions.

Unfortunately, the researcher could only obtain one participant and had a short period to conduct the study.

There are several motives for committing *muti* murder and this was apparent in the current study. One individual may have multiple motives for committing *muti* murder. The two motives that arose in the current study were "cultural beliefs" and "financial gain". However, the participant was only aware of one motive, cultural beliefs, and he wasn't aware or at least did not explicitly state that the other motive, which appears to be the main motive, was financial gain. Although these two motives are not the only motives, they are the most common amongst *muti* murder offenders.

Recommendations for future studies are that they use more participants in order to explore more motives that may exist. Future studies should also investigate the root cause of the motive "financial gain" and investigate if it differs from offender to offender.

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APPENDIX A

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BIOGRAPHICAL QUESTIONNAIRE

1. DEMOGRAPHICS
1.1. Participant number:
1.2. Nickname:
1.3. Date of Birth:
1.4. Gender:
1.5. Race:
1.6. Language:
1.7. Area of residence at time of arrest:

2. EDUCATION & EMPLOYMENT
2.1. Highest level of completed education:
2.2. Reason for ceasing education:
2.3. Employment status (at time of arrest):
2.4. Employment history:
2.5. Previous convictions before the muti murder:

3. FAMILY INFORMATION
3.1. Number of older siblings:
3.2. Number of younger siblings:
3.3. Was your mother alive at the time you were imprisoned?
3.4. If yes, what was your mother's employment status at the time of your arrest?
3.5. Was your father alive at the time you were imprisoned?
3.6. If yes, what was your father's employment status at the time of your arrest?
3.7. Describe your relationship with mother:
3.8. Describe your relationship with father:
3.9. Describe your relationship with siblings:
3.10. Marital status at time of arrest:
3.9. Relationship history:
3.10. Number of children:
3.11. Gender & age of children:

APPENDIX B

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SEMI-SRTUCTURED INTERVIEW SCHEDULE

1. Reason for being incarcerated:
2. How many years are you serving?
3. Date of incarceration:
4. Are you a traditional healer?
5. [IF YES ASK] What type of traditional healer are you? [FIRST ALLOW THE PARTICIPANT TO ANSWER, IF HE DOES NOT STATE INSANGOMA OR INYANGA IN ANSWER THEN ASK] insangoma or inyanga?
6. Are you a traditional healer in training? [IF YES ASK QUESTION 5]
7. How many muti murders have you committed?
8. How many victims did you have in total from committing muti murders?
9. Did you know any of your victims?
10. How did you choose your victim/s?
11. Did you have an accomplice/s?
12. Are your accomplices in prison?
13. Which prison are your accomplices in?
14. Besides committing muti murder, have you committed any other type of murder? [IF ANSWERS YES ASK FOR DETAILS]
15. Have you committed any other crimes?
16. Who instructed you to commit muti murder/s?
17. Is (name of instructor) a traditional healer? [IF ANSWERS YES TO Q 18, ASK] What type of traditional healer? [FIRST ALLOW THE PARTICIPANT TO ANSWER, IF HE DOES NOT STATE INSANGOMA OR INYANGA IN ANSWER THEN ASK] insangoma or inyanga?
18. And why did you agree?
19. How much were you paid to commit muti murder?
20. [IF THE PARTICIPANT WAS INSTRUCTED BY SOMEONE ELSE TO COMMIT THE MURDER ASK] Did (name of instructor) know that you had/ had not commit murder before?
21. [IF YES ASK] how did (name of instructor) know?
22. Why do you think (name of instructor) choose you to carry out the muti murder?
23. Do you believe in traditional healers? [IF YES/ NO] Why?
24. Have you ever consulted with a traditional healer? [IF YES/ NO ASK] Why?
25. [IF YES TO Q24, ASK] how frequently do you consult with a traditional healer and do you go to the same traditional healer [YES/ NO FOLLOW-UP WITH WHY]?
26. Is the person who asked you to commit the murder the same traditional healer you consult with [ONLY ASK IF HE CONSULTED WITH TRADITIONAL HEALER]
27. Do you believe muti works? [FOLLOW-UP YES/ NO RESPONSE WITH WHY IF PARTICIPANT DOES NOT ELABORATE]

28. Do you believe human body parts are a form of muti? Why?
29. Have you ever used muti? [YES/ NO, ASK WHY]
30. Did the muti, that you used, contain human body parts? [YES/ NO WHY]
31. What are you views/ opinions on muti murder? [IF RESPONSE IS INCOMPLETE, PROBE] [IF GOOD/ BAD DO NOT ARISE IN Q 31 ASK] Do you think muti murder is good or bad and why?
32. Do you think muti murder is a crime and should you be punished for it, why?

APPENDIX C

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Participant Information Sheet

Dear Sir,

My name is Khali Thenga. I am currently a Psychology Masters student at the University of the Witwatersrand. I am conducting research for the purpose of obtaining this degree. The purpose of my research is to explore the motive of convicted South African male muti murder offenders.

I would like to invite you to participate in my study. Participation in my study will include being interviewed by myself. The interview should take approximately 2 hours. Participation is voluntary, and you will not be advantaged or disadvantaged in any way for choosing to participate in the study. Everything you say during this interview will be kept confidential. The interview will be tape-recorded and only I and my supervisor will have access to the tapes. The tapes and transcripts will be kept at the university in a locked cupboard for one year. This is primarily because we will publish the findings of the study. After one year they will be destroyed. Although your identity is known to me confidentiality will be maintained by not disclosing any information that is of a personal nature in the report or any information that will identify you as a participant. I will assign a pseudonym to your information in the report, for example, Participant A or Respondent B. You have the right to withdraw from the study at any time. You also have the right to refrain from answering any question should you wish to do so. Participants will not receive any benefits by participating in the study.

If after the interview, you have need for psychological assistance, I will refer you to the psychologist/counsellor that is available in your correctional facility.

Please read through and sign these two consent forms before commencement of the study continues. These forms just confirm that you are aware of everything that we have discussed concerning purpose for the research study, how information received will be used in the research report, confidentiality, anonymity, and the process of the research.

Kind Regards

Khali Thenga Prof. Gerard Labuschagne

_____ _____

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Publications, Research reports: Ms Kasturi Naidoo – (011) 717 1237

Legal advisor: Eleni Flack-Davison: (011) 717 1328

Human Ethics (non-medical): Ms Lucille Mooragan – (011) 717 1408

APPENDIX D

Psychology
School of Human & Community Development
University of the Witwatersrand
Private Bag 3, Wits, 2050
Tel: 011 717 4503 Fax: 011 717 4559

Consent Form (Interview)

I, _____ consent to being interviewed by Khali Thenga, for her study the motive of South African male muti murder offenders. I understand that:

- Participation in this study is voluntary.

- I may refrain from answering any questions.

- I may withdraw my participation and/or my responses from the study at any time.

- There are no benefits associated with this study.

- If there is a need for further psychological assistance after the interview, I can inform the researcher who can refer me to the relevant individuals

- All information provided will remain confidential, although I may be quoted in the research report.

- A pseudonym (Respondent X, Respondent Y etc.) will be used and not my birth name.

- None of my identifiable information will be included in the research report.

- I am aware that the results of the study will be reported in the form of a research report for the partial completion of the degree, Masters in Psychology.

- The research may also be presented at a local/international conference and published in a journal and/or book chapter.

Signed:_____

Date: _____

Appendix E

Psychology
School of Human & Community Development
University of the Witwatersrand
Private Bag 3, Wits, 2050
Tel: 011 717 4503 Fax: 011 717 4559

Consent Form (Recording)

I, _____ give my consent for my interview with Khali Thenga to be audio recorded for her study. (Please tick one box)

Yes	No

I understand that:

- The tapes and transcripts will not be seen or heard by anyone other than the researcher and her supervisor/s.

- The tapes and transcripts will be kept in a safe place for one year and will be destroyed thereafter.

- No identifying information will be used in the transcripts or the research report. - Although direct quotes from my interview may be used in the research report, I will be referred to by a pseudonym (Respondent X, Respondent Y etc.)

Audio recording: Please tick one box

Signed: _____

Date: _____

APPENDIX F

Research Office

HUMAN RESEARCH ETHICS COMMITTEE (NON-MEDICAL)
R14/49 Thenga

CLEARANCE CERTIFICATE	**PROTOCOL NUMBER: H16/06/37**
PROJECT TITLE	The motive of South African male muti murder offenders
INVESTIGATOR(S)	Ms K Thenga
SCHOOL/DEPARTMENT	Human and Community Development/
DATE CONSIDERED	24 June 2016
DECISION OF THE COMMITTEE	Approved unconditionally
EXPIRY DATE	17 July 2019

DATE 18 July 2016 **CHAIRPERSON** _____
(Professor J Knight)

cc: Supervisor : Professor G Labuschagne

DECLARATION OF INVESTIGATOR(S)

To be completed in duplicate and **ONE COPY** returned to the Secretary at Room 10005, 10th Floor, Senate House, University.

I/We fully understand the conditions under which I am/we are authorized to carry out the abovementioned research and I/we guarantee to ensure compliance with these conditions. Should any departure to be contemplated from the research procedure as approved I/we undertake to resubmit the protocol to the Committee. **I agree to completion of a yearly progress report.**

_____ 21 / 07 / 2016
Signature Date

PLEASE QUOTE THE PROTOCOL NUMBER ON ALL ENQUIRIES