

Asset Enhanced Forum Theatre for Liberation: Combining Appreciative Inquiry and Forum Theatre in Addressing Xenophobia on Zimbabwean women living in Johannesburg, South Africa.

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Dedication

This thesis is dedicated to the late Prof. Kennedy Chinyowa who took me through part of the journey of this thesis. Professor Chinyowa, you taught me what research in the arts entails and you opened my eyes to the academic world of the Theatre of the Oppressed. I stood on the shoulders of a giant and maybe with my short legs I am also growing into the giant legacy that you left for me.

Warren Nebe, words come short of your praise: My mentor, my brother and the author of my hero's journey. Your Gandalf role sharpened within me the study of my own existence; it brought meaning to my migrant story. You gave me life skills to survive in a cruel world of binaries and you fought for my cause.

To the migrant women of the world who have suffered forms of oppression in foreign lands, this too is dedicated to you.

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List Of Acronyms and Abbreviations

Theatre of the Oppressed - TO

Forum Theatre - FT

Appreciative Inquiry - AI

Practice as Research - PaR

Applied Drama and Theatre – ADT

Key Words: Appreciative Inquiry, Theatre of the Oppressed, Forum Theatre, Practice-based, Practice as Research, xenophobia, conscientization, asset-based, deficit-based

Abstract

This research study explored the effectiveness of using Forum Theatre together with Appreciative Inquiry, as participatory methods to address the effects of xenophobia amongst Zimbabwean immigrant women living in Johannesburg, South Africa. The study was about merging Appreciative Inquiry and Forum Theatre to enhance women's agency to transform their individual lives and the communities they come from through the use of an integrated methodology, Practice as Research (PaR). The research brought into focus an emergent research praxis in the domains of practice-oriented research and challenged the binary habits of thought/theory and practice inherent in traditional research. The methodology was positioned as an instrument to assess the meaningful participation of the women in theatre. Augusto Boal's, David Cooperrider's and Freire's theoretical and conceptual frameworks guided and informed the study's epistemological and philosophical vision around the issue of xenophobia. The results of this study were interpreted and analysed through a thematic analysis approach. It was discovered that the methodological design including merging of the two methods (FT and AI) facilitated and influenced perspectives around the transformative nature of FT and AI. The study revealed that the women's bodies can be raised to critical levels of consciousness: Rehearsal rooms are symbolic conceptions for a rehearsal for a revolution: The women can move from margins of socio-economic rejection to recognition in the Johannesburg society amid xenophobia: The Joker's role and function is critical to the interventional and transformational facets of FT and AI. The study also highlighted the counter arguments to merging the two methods as practicable but idealistic.

Chapter 1

General Introduction

1.1 Background and Significance

Following the political tensions and economic tribulations during the 2000s, in Zimbabwe, there was a mass exodus of Zimbabwean citizens in what has been popularised as the 'Zim Diaspora'. The Zim Diaspora encompasses countries that, presumably, were to offer cushioning for the poverty-stricken and politically disenfranchised Zimbabweans. The exodus included Zimbabweans from all walks of life including women. The host countries included the first world countries such as the United Kingdom, United States of America and the economically thriving African country, South Africa. South Africa became an easy destination because of its close proximity to Zimbabwe. Many have (including the research participants) claimed that they chose South Africa because the living conditions are better than those of other African countries and their own country especially with regard to its democratic practices and economic standing.

While in search of greener pastures, Zimbabweans have been faced with unexpected hostility from their South African counterparts in the form of ethnic prejudice and xenophobia. Landau (2013), in her article entitled, *Xenophobic Demons Linger in South Africa* notes that years after the 2008 xenophobic attacks, xenophobia is still a cause for concern. She attributes this to the negative discourse and practice of certain sectors of society where immigrants/foreigners have remained an object of criminal suspicion. Newspaper articles keep reporting on how this hostility continues and escalates. Khumalo (2020), a reporter from DW Newspaper, reports that this hostility has continued and has reached new heights. He shows how this wave, in the first and second decades of the 2020s, has elevated the blame on the foreigners as being responsible for the economic down-turn of South Africa. Zimbabweans have been pointed to as the largest cohort of foreigners who have created an unease in this socio-economic decline.

Amid the spate of xenophobic violence and attacks, questions remained as to how women were affected by the violence and what role they played. Patel exposes how women were the most affected recipients:

...the [xenophobic] violence has been shown to impose a particularly heavy burden on the women, who are often left alone to negotiate its wake and steer a new generation through the hurt, panic and confusion. They wage a dual battle for survival, first as foreigners in SA and then as women in a violent, patriarchal society (2015:01)¹

In her article, Patel describes a woman, Fatima, from Malawi who was abandoned, together with her small child, by her husband who is also a foreigner during the xenophobic violence. She was left to fend for herself and her child amid the harsh conditions. She in turn wanted to give up her baby and leave her with camp volunteers at the displaced camp for foreigners. The perception here is that it would be easier for her to survive without the child since the male

¹ From DESTINY: Connect.com <http://www.destinyconnect.com/2015/06/22/xenophobia-in-sa-women-first-foreigners-after/> (accessed 13/06/2015)

breadwinner had vanished. This is one example of the many stories of how women face the gruesomeness of xenophobic violence.

Smith (2015), *Mail and Guardian* newspaper reporter, chronicles two stories of women who experienced shame from the hands of violent xenophobic men. Memory, a Zimbabwean woman, suffered shame and humiliation when her husband was clubbed in front of her and his children by about fifteen men. The men looted everything that they had including her HIV medication. Joanna, also a Zimbabwean, lost her home and became destitute with her sick child. In retelling her story, she remarked that South Africa had become, ironically, unsafe in spite of its democracy.² These are some of the stories that reveal the extent of the ethnic prejudice and xenophobia which can lead to acts of desperation, and the hatred among the perpetrators and the pain and panic on the affected. These stories are just the tip of the iceberg. There are more untold stories of women affected by xenophobia. This study seeks not only to unravel those stories and the effects xenophobia has had on women, it also seeks to show how the problem can be addressed and how their stories can be liberated from obscurity. This study focuses on the value and the ideal of their inclusion, equality and active citizenship in dealing with xenophobia.

In 2017, the Deputy minister of Police Bongani Mkongi made a public declaration that was seen as toxically and inflammatorily xenophobic, saying that 80% of central Johannesburg (especially Hillbrow) had been infested and dangerously taken over by crime perpetrated by foreign nationals and this was without evidence.³ On the 21st April 2015 the Johannesburg Central Business District including Hillbrow witnessed a historic march against xenophobia. The University of the Witwatersrand was part of the march that saw students and the general populace (both locals and foreigners) march to denounce recurring xenophobic attacks in South Africa⁴. These incidents show how Hillbrow has been the heartbeat for concerns regarding the xenophobia discourse in South Africa.

Tau Tawengwa (2015) reveals that the influx of foreigners into South Africa has provided aspiring and existing politicians with petty political populism. He warns that “the xenophobic occurrences in South Africa should serve as a forewarning to leaders across the continent. It is time we all roll up our sleeves and do what needs to be done to create jobs and to make our own economies competitive.” Although some of these politicians do this in the name of patriotism, their approach appears to be xenophobic because they instil rebellious attitudes on the participants that they select to take part in their movements. They do not approach it with a development and progressive focus. Desai (2008:49) also quotes Deputy Minister of Foreign Affairs in South Africa (2008) giving a warning about the need to understand how right-wing forces have used xenophobic language to advance populist movements in promoting the “lumpen-proletariat” against minority groups and to place them in the margins.

There is need for interventions that will deepen enquiry into how women can be capacitated to deal with xenophobia in a more positive and participatory way. The tendency with most xenophobia-based interventions has been to give

Her story is found here :²<http://www.theguardian.com/world/2015/apr/17/xenophobia-south-africa-brothers-violence-foreigners> her story is found here.

³ 17 July 2017 Times Live, You are fuelling xenophobia SAHRC warns Deputy Police Minister

⁴ 23 April 2015 BBC NEWS <https://www.bbc.com/news/world-africa-32432205>

emphasis on problem finding and exploring deficit-based solutions rather than asset-based ones. Deficit and asset approaches will be discussed later in this chapter. As such, this research sought to fill the gap by exploring methods that focus on a more positive and participatory approach to social change and the transformation of the Zimbabwean women affected by xenophobia. Because the term social transformation is broad and may be problematic, in the context of this study, it refers to individuals and groups gaining and understanding social awareness and consciousness to civic participation, critical thinking, and giving voice to the oppressed, to equality, and generating policies that are feasible and inclusive. These policies should promote social justice and the inclusion of all members of the community in decision making processes. These policies may include citizenship laws, identity documentation and foreign policies. They all encompass migration policies. The thesis will continue to focus on these policies when mention of policy is noted.

The summary stipulations of the policies:

Citizenship laws: 'Most significant, for our interest, was the insertion of the principle of gender equality over that of respect for customary law in the new constitution - a principle that enabled a substantive equal citizenship between men and women' (Seidman 1999: 294). Without such a clause, it is possible that the patriarchal structures of much of customary law would have undermined women's citizenship rights in real terms ... The generous scope of the South African Constitution is sharply contrasted with widespread incidents of xenophobia, in South Africa, throughout its independence. These incidents range from xenophobic comments from leading political figures (24), to widespread outbreaks of xenophobic violence, most notably in 2008 and 2015. Explanations for this xenophobia are varied: most commonly the poverty of South Africans is cited, with reference to foreigners usurping work opportunities; others point to a politics of fear cultivated by the state and media frequently pointing to mass immigration and using foreigners as a scapegoat for high crime and poor service delivery'. (Hobden, 2018: 8-14)

Identity documentation policy: 'The overarching importance of identity and identity management is evident and clear in this mandate. As observed in the White Paper, managing identity and the status of legal persons in a society, particularly in a modern society, continues to be essential for societies to organise work, distribute resources and ensure that people's rights and identities are protected. And where those looking for economic opportunities and those who claim asylum create a movement of people, managing migration means minimising risks while maximising the benefits of migration in terms of knowledge, productivity and trade'. (Government Gazette 2020: 24)

Foreign Policy: 'The Department of Foreign Affairs is, by definition, responsible for maintaining regular contact between South African government bodies and the international community. Role players should consider the manner in which a particular issue presents an opportunity for South Africa to promote the interests of the SADC region or the African continent'. (Foreign Policy for South Africa: Discussion document)

The combining of Appreciative Inquiry and Forum Theatre, as intervention methods, takes precedence in this study because the two methods are based on promoting social transformation and agency among participants at all levels. Cooperrider and Whitney (2005), pioneers of Appreciative Inquiry (AI), describe AI as an approach that necessitates a systematic discovery of what life is about from a positive perspective. The approach emphasizes change processes and values what is best in people, affirms their strengths, potentials and their successes. The inquiry part is about exploring and studying what gives life to people through "...relational ways of knowing" (Cooperrider and Whitney 2005:6).

The concept of relational ways of knowing is engendered in people getting to know their world through experiences and interactions with their reality and the world around them. Therefore, the inquiry is about people exploring their realities through affirmative ways of knowing that are embedded in narratives that give them life in a more positive way. The emphasis is on them asking questions about what gives them a kick in life and what are the human terms in giving them this life.

It is worth noting that AI is a corporate method. It is an approach to leadership development amongst all members of an organization while also focusing on organizational transformation. Everyone is seen as a leader in that organization. It is mainly used by companies to help their members to apply appreciative interviews and inquiry for positive strategic planning, increase momentum of work strength and boost innovativeness and initiative. While it is noteworthy that this is an organizational method, this study seeks to find ways of using it in theatrical settings. It is used against the backdrop of Forum Theatre techniques.

The AI process follows a 4 (four) part cyclical pattern that leads participants to arrive at the desired destiny. This is called the 4D model. It involves four stages of development: The Discover stage, Dream stage, Design stage and Destiny stage. Each stage progresses to next as a way for participants to explore their stories of progress through a process of discovery. Lewis et al (2011) postulate that these stages are about working in the spirit of inquiry. Each stage is contextualized by these questions:

Discover - What is best?

Dream - What might be?

Design - What should be?

Destiny - What will be? (Lewis et al 2011)

Forum Theatre (FT) which is under the umbrella of Theatre of the Oppressed was discovered and invented in the early 1970s by Augusto Boal (Ganguly, 2010). Augusto Boal (2003, 2002) explains that Forum Theatre is an interactive theatre form with an aim to help audience members identify their oppressions in order to begin to overcome them. Babbage (2004) describes Forum Theatre as unconventional theatre that gets the audience members to be initiators of meaning in their lives and agents of change thereof. Babbage places FT as unconventional because of the breaking of the fourth wall in theatre to allow for the innovativeness and inventiveness of the audience taking part in the play. This includes the audience taking the responsibility of solving the protagonist's problems. The protagonist is the character who portrays the dynamics in the suffering of oppressed people. Also unconventional in the sense that they question the status quo and challenge the realities of what the protagonists faces. They empathise with the protagonist character who epitomizes the lives of oppressed people. Babbage explains that, in practice, Forum Theatre presents the audience with an indecipherable problem of oppression. The problem, presented in the play, must be solved by the audience. The play is shown to the audience so that they may analyse it and take part in finding the solution to the problem. The process is facilitated by a Joker who is a master of ceremonies for the Forum Theatre event. The Joker also asks critical questions that get the audience to think deeply about the reality of oppression that is being presented in the play. The audience is invited to take part in the play, on stage, to solve the problem. Babbage explains that they go on stage to pit themselves against the antagonist characters to break the pattern of oppression. The inventiveness is in the

way they improvise the solutions and use the alternative solutions to plan for their real lives outside of the theatre experience. Like Appreciative Inquiry, FT is guided by critical questions, and questioning that propels the study and exploration of issues raised by participants. Babbage points out that the process is evaluative, hence it becomes a systematic exploration of people's lives. This study did not seek to make Appreciative Inquiry (AI) superior to Forum Theatre, but to find out if the asset orientation of AI can enhance Forum Theatre. Sometimes FT may appear to instigate trauma as participants start realizing the depth of their oppression. Appreciative Inquiry, may arguably, tone down the trauma with its positive approach and perspective.

The Joker is at the centre of the Theatre of the Oppressed and is an important aspect of Forum Theatre. Miramonti (2017) explains that the Joker's role is to facilitate the embodied and aesthetic conversations and dialogue between the audience and actors. The Joker acts as midwife who gives birth to new responses to the play that is shown. The midwife facilitates the difficult relationship between the oppressed character on stage and the audience who offer alternative solutions to the difficult problem (Boal.2002). In this case, the midwife enables the oppressed people to give birth to new ideas and thoughts on the conflict (Miramonti, 2017). He/she ensures that the process between actors and spect-actors is dialogic and not one sided as in traditional theatre set ups. He/she is in the service of the oppressed to protect them from those who want to dominate the weak. The powerless are given equal voices with those who dominate.

Forum Theatre (FT) and Appreciative Inquiry (AI) are both participatory methods that promote social transformation and solution finding. The methods of AI and FT cultivated change in the mindset of the women in them thinking that they are second class citizens. Women can be transformed to see themselves as equal to any of their counterparts in decision making. In most cases, they envision themselves as living on the margins of society, the methods can help them realise ways of moving from the margins. The methods can as well influence women to be active agents of their own change. The women may be enabled to find strategies of living as full human beings without the fear of being looked down upon as less human. The transformative power of the two methods is realized in the fictional context of the workshops. We cannot fully assume that the women were transformed to act out all these possibilities in real life. This would not be ascertained in real life except there be a post-workshop research. However, in the workshops, they went through some reflective moments where they were heard to have positively influenced by the process.

Forum Theatre as part of Augusto Boal's Theatre of the Oppressed was used as a tool of inquiry and method of addressing xenophobia among Zimbabwean women. This study asserts Forum Theatre as deficit based. Argued as an asset-based tool, Appreciative Inquiry was selected as a method that enhanced the deficit-based approach of Forum Theatre. It was as inquiry into how it could enhance Forum Theatre in its deficit-based approach to effectively address xenophobia among Zimbabwean immigrant women. While Forum Theatre promotes social transformation and gives voice to the oppressed, it dominates the audience member/spectator with conflictual language and perspective. The Joker, who is the facilitator of Forum Theatre, always asks, as critical questions, what the audience thinks is the problem or conflict and who is the most affected by the conflict. Such questions presuppose that the spectators' lives or realities are riddled with conflicts and that already sets a tone of conflict in the language of the forum.

Deficit-based approaches refer to interventions that are associated with risk, problems and negative outcomes (Skodol 2010). This means that from the beginning, the questions that are asked are problem oriented. They require the

participants to focus on that which is not working, fractured and needs them to be sensitive to and highly aware of the broken wheel. This is all propelled-on deficit thinking. “Deficit thinking is tantamount to the process of blaming the victim’. It is a model founded on imputation, not documentation (Valencia: x). Valencia argues that it is actually a way of trying to combat problems in a top-down approach that is paternalistic. In argument he posits that rather than eradicating the problem, we use a compensatory approach that points at blaming the victim to be inadequate of solving the problem. Deficit approaches are a form of oppression in themselves, “...a cruel and unjust use of power and authority to keep a group of people in their place” (Valencia:04)

Asset-based approaches are about focusing on people’s strengths and potential in solving their problems. It is an admission that problems exist, but to do better, we do not need to keep focusing on them to solve them - Let us rather find ways of mitigating them in a positive way. Wasiak and Cramer (2006) explain that asset-based approaches work in the way participants are allowed to absorb their reality, are given the means to perceive it objectively and filter it in a way that is not clouded with negativism. If, as change agents and facilitators, we can do that, it changes the participants’ lives dramatically. They focus on that which works rather than not. It tends to favour inspiration over desperation (Wasiak and Cramer).

As part of the Theatre of the Oppressed nomenclature, Forum Theatre may be found wanting and further promoting inherent conflict and binaries between the oppressed and the oppressors. This is in the sense that it may appear to give voice to the oppressed only and that may inflate the ego of the oppressed as victims in need of sympathy and attention. At the same time the oppressor may smart over the idea that he/she is being portrayed as a monster that is beyond redemption and so he/she may be adamant that this is the natural order of the world. This study sought to find out, if Zimbabwean women could address and deal with xenophobia without playing victim and not immersing themselves in conflictual language per se.

Furthermore, the stories of oppression selected for Forum Theatre are usually not selected collectively by community members. Forum Theatre companies usually identify the stories and plan interventions on their own and sometimes with a few gatekeepers. This is problematic in that the stories may not reflect every community member’s concerns whereas with Appreciative Inquiry (AI) stories are collected and shared by all members concerned. Moreover, the stories shared in AI do not focus on problems, but what works in that community⁵. The structure of Forum Theatre is linear (This is illustrated in the table in the methodology section in this chapter). Compared to AI, which takes a cyclical structure, FT does not go back to the drawing board to assess the value of transformation. This means that it is not sustainable. It may not be enough to give women awareness and power to transform their lives, it is also necessary for the project to be sustained by allowing room for re-planning so as to assess the value of change and empowerment thereof. As people who fear discrimination and being chased away from South Africa, there is need to employ strategies that are sustainable for immigrant women to be able to deal with xenophobia in future.

This study focuses on the Zimbabwean women’s oppressive reality while foregrounding the conditions of oppression. Historically, research on oppressed women has been about their conscientization to advocate the thwarting of passive

⁵Community in this study refers to a group of people who share common goals and values as informed by their geographical surroundings. Particular to this study is the community of women at the Goshen shelter in Johannesburg who come from Zimbabwe

participation in the process of social change. This study advocates for an approach that focuses on women as subjects of the research and as agents of their own change and action. Women have been subjected to passive participation that has left a continuity of struggles as the social norm.

The chapter begins with the background and initial research on the conceptions and stories of xenophobia which prompted the commencement of this study. It then explores the research perspectives that foreground and propel the advancement of the research process. These perspectives include the aim, research questions, theoretical and conceptual frameworks, rationale and methodology. The chapter brings forth and initiates the argument around the merging of Forum Theatre (FT) and Appreciative Inquiry (AI) as participatory tools for social and practice-oriented research.

1.2 Aims of the research

This study sought to discover the effectiveness of Appreciative Inquiry to enhance Forum Theatre in addressing and dealing with xenophobia among Zimbabwean immigrant women living in Johannesburg. It explored the combination of the two methods as participatory tools in social research engendered in practice perceptions. As such, the research project sought to employ Practice as Research as its methodology. Practice as Research (PaR) was selected as the research method because it recognizes the transformational and interventional perceptions inherent in AI and FT as well as their development of reflection upon action in their enquiry research processes.

The study also recognizes practical knowledge as essential in gathering information for the study. That is why praxis and critical awareness were brought as essential aspects to emphasise the participatory approach of AI and FT. Feeling powerless and unworthy are the most frequently recognized emotions among Zimbabwean immigrant women as illustrated by the story of Memory and Johanna in the Mail and Guardian (2015). Critical reflection may induce positive perception among immigrant women to reflect on such negative emotions in a way that they may start to perceive xenophobia as alterable.

The study aimed to explore how the sharing of both negative and positive stories would help to effectively address lingering effects of xenophobia. Whitney and Trosten-Bloom (2010), in Appreciative Inquiry, assert that people value stories when their lives are at their best and they become inspired to share and use the stories to build a better future. From the stories told, Zimbabwean women were aware of their problems. The aim of this study was to help them refocus on the stories that also work for them in Johannesburg. This refocusing enabled them to fix the problems they have. In light of this, the study also aimed to find out if the combining of the two methods could give voice to the women and help them realize that they are not victims incapable of speaking out for themselves. This is the beauty of Practice as Research - That not only is data and information gathered, but the process also becomes an intervention strategy.

The aim was also to carry out this research with both men and women living in the Johannesburg Central Business District (CBD). The women were the main subjects under study while the men gave compatriot support. Their views were valued as distinctively supplementary to the data collected from the women. The participants live in areas such as Hillbrow, Berea and Yeoville, these are areas mostly populated by Zimbabweans. Only one participant lived in Braamfontein with close proximity to Hillbrow. The aim was also to select participants who were drama ready and understood the principles and practice of drama workshops. It would have been too ambitious to expect people

without such a background to go through about 15 drama workshops if they did not understand this. However, a choice was made to present the Forum Theatre event to people without any specific knowledge of drama, but who lived in the Johannesburg CBD.

Taking into account the participatory nature of the two methods, this study was based on a Practice as Research (PaR) methodology to explore the merging of the asset-based and problem-based approaches of AI and FT, respectively. This was to ascertain if they could contribute to social transformation and justice among the socially disenfranchised Zimbabwean immigrant women in Johannesburg. The PaR model is articulated in the methodology section, but it essentially focuses on process more than product of the enquiry as it concentrates on experiential learning and participation of both the researcher and participants towards production of knowledge (Barrett and Bolt 2007).

In the context of PaR, practice informs the study. This means that the combining of Forum Theatre and Appreciative Inquiry made contribution to the advancement of knowledge and understanding on the experiences of xenophobia among the women. The issue of xenophobia among Zimbabwean women is an illustrative paradigm that demonstrated the effectiveness of combining the two methods. This study was not an end to itself, it allowed participants to gain knowledge and skill on how they could best help themselves and their communities deal with xenophobia.

The reason for selecting Forum Theatre and Appreciative Inquiry as frames of reference was that the two are symbiotic. Forum Theatre has participatory and conscientising merits. However, falls short of bringing about positive perspective to change that is intrinsic in Appreciative Inquiry. Appreciative Inquiry moves beyond conscientising people to giving them a whole positive and empowering outlook on life. The two methods both offer an experiential approach to solving problems. As such, by combining the two methods, it was hoped that the negative effects of xenophobia on the women will be challenged and diminished. The development of the research methodology was informed by the practice that was propelled by the workshop sessions.

As much as Forum Theatre has the power to transform participants' lives, it has been realised that there are limitations in how the oppressor and oppressed relationship binaries can be totally thwarted. This research does not only seek to combine the symbiotic methods, but also to show how AI can enhance the relationships between the oppressed and the oppressors. A stalemate between the two groups was noted in the workshops, particularly when and where audience members were involved - This is where there were both locals and the participants. In the "constraints in Boal's Poetics of the oppressed", Chinyowa (2014) argues that

However, Freire and Boal sought to transform unequal relations of power in favour of the oppressed and TO tends to ignore the contradiction between the oppressor and the oppressed...As Bruce Burton points out with reference to enhanced Forum Theatre, the limitations of FT lie in the over-riding imperative to solve the oppression rather than exploring it in depth. This structural shortcoming means that even the most complex forms of oppression are treated rather superficially without an exploration of the historical context of the at hand... It appears to construct the world as divided between black and white...self and other. The result is to gloss over more complex relations of power in which these categories are fluid rather than fixed. (Chinyowa, 2014:3).

While Chinyowa highlights these binaries, I argue that, holistically, when binaries are exacerbated in a Forum Theatre workshop, there is need to strategise towards cooling the conflict. Appreciative Inquiry brings forth the tactic. AI taps into historical contexts of oppression through its storytelling approach. The participants are asked to tell their past

stories of success so as to inform their present and work towards changing their future. In the initial workshops, the participants were asked to share both their stories of oppression and stories of strengths and successes. This is among some of the asset oriented techniques of AI that were tapped into to enhance Forum Theatre.

1.3 Research questions

1. How can the combination of Appreciative Inquiry with Forum Theatre effectively address xenophobia on and among Zimbabwean Women living in Johannesburg?
2. How can an integrated Practice as Research approach to Forum Theatre and Appreciative Inquiry give voice to Zimbabwean women affected by xenophobia?
3. To what extent does the asset-based orientation of Appreciative Inquiry enhance the deficit-based approach of Forum Theatre for the raising of consciousness of the women.

1.4 Rationale

Xenophobia has become a topical issue in South Africa and has received a lot of attention in the recent years. People have written articles, books and various forms of literature speculating, documenting and reporting possible solutions to the problem. This literature gave me the hunch to pursue this research. Amongst the leading authors are Neocosmos (2010); Landau (2012); Harris (2002); Hassim *et al* (2008); Kihato (2013), Nyamnjoh (2006); Crush et al (2017) and Mbiyozo (2019). However, some of the literature narrowly explores the experiences of immigrant women. In most cases the literature employs a certain patriarchal tone that perceives immigrant women as second-class citizens. It is understandable that men are exposed to xenophobic violence as shown in the newspapers, however it is limited to narrowly perceive women as an afterthought when real issues of xenophobia are dealt with. Furthermore, what is usually exposed in these writings is the plight of women as victims in need of salvation. Kihato (2013) underscores the need to validate the experience of women in the complex issue of xenophobia and migration as follows:

...breaking the silence on women's migration, the focus of literature has been disappointingly narrow, typically highlighting women's vulnerability to [only] trafficking, prostitution and coerced exploitative labour... While these observations are real, what they are silent on is how women negotiate these otherwise violent spaces. ..By looking closely at women's everyday lives, it is clear that these categories are disconnected from their experiences, and unhelpful in explaining lived experiences... They [too] have agency in the migration process. (2013:120)

This study advocates for what Kihato (2013) sees as a humanitarian and experiential discourse on women's agency in dealing with xenophobia and their lived experiences. It is not enough to just deal with women's victimization and victimhood, but overlook the extent to which they can be agents of changing the xenophobic status quo. An experiential discourse is that which values practice as inherent in dealing with topical issues that affect participants' way of life, in research patterns.

The above assertion proposes an argument that the experiential discourse is necessary for women's agency. It is without doubt that most of the literature has expounded on social change for women. Notwithstanding, there has been less focus on interactive, active and participatory social change. As argued earlier, the movement has seen women as passive agents of change. This research moved in the direction of active participation among the women to articulate the experiential discourse. Active and interactive participation, in this regard, involves the direct involvement of women in the process of change. Hence, the desire to explore the blending of participatory methods of Forum Theatre and Appreciative Inquiry through a practice-oriented approach.

Not much has been written on merging Forum Theatre and Appreciative Inquiry and still less has been articulated in dealing with the question of xenophobia among immigrant women. I have written (Bhebe 2013) about the merging of AI and FT for social change among the youth in an unpublished Master thesis. Maritz (2010) also wrote about this. The two authors celebrate both Forum Theatre and Appreciative Inquiry as methods that can provide meaningful experiential approaches for socially excluded young people. They argue that the two methods constitute dialogue, action and reflection which are imperative to social change. Augusto Boal (the inventor and founder of the Theatre of the Oppressed) (2002) points out that dialogue, action and reflection posit a critical enquiring of the burdens of oppression and questioning of the direction of change. In the same view, Cooperrider (The founder of Appreciative Inquiry) *et al* (2008) assert that dialogue, action and reflection engender new avenues of dialogic inquiry to foster social change affirmation and assurance. Hence, combining the two methods is the focus of this study. Not only did I want to see the merging of the methods as social transformation intervention strategies, but as methods that affirm arts intervention as a more experiential and sustainable approach.

The eagerness to carry out this study also stemmed from a personal persuasion. As a foreigner who has been living in South Africa, I have had encounters that have left me smarting over the claim of democracy and celebration of diversity in this country. First, I have received lewd comments about how I don't exhibit the same feminine demeanour that my foreign counterparts possess because of some vague reason or I have typical *makwerekwere*⁶ tendencies. I find the former comment as not a compliment because it scorns the celebration of diversity in its implicit vulgarity while the latter is harrowing in its unambiguous obscenity. Second, I have also been faced with the implied lack of safety as a woman in the Johannesburg vicinity. With this persuasion I sought to explore the reasons behind the hatred and prejudice through the sharing of experiences with fellow women in a space that engenders experiential participation in order to address these challenges.

The hope was that this study could contribute to emergent discourse in the field of migration studies as the broadening application of the methods developed here. Scholars in migration studies may find it interesting to find out how the stories shared in the workshops of combining FT and AI processes can contribute to the understanding that migrants can be capacitated to liberate themselves through participatory means. They could use this method to expand on capacity building projects for migrants in South Africa. This study also may contribute to the expanding and emergent approaches in Applied Drama and Theatre. The 21st contemporary Applied Drama facilitator, practitioner and scholar can be endowed with new concepts, theories and practice that drive the ADT pedagogy. In this instance, the combining of a corporate method (which is AI) with an arts method (which in FT) is progress in the direction of expanding the role arts in an interdisciplinary way. The arts can be a means to an end.

Lastly, I wish to acknowledge that there has been scholarly knowledge and research pertaining to migration and xenophobia in South Africa. Xenophobia has also been explored as a topical issue. However, this issue has not been addressed in a more experiential and efficacious way. Most scholars have explored xenophobia in terms of its causes and effects on both men and women, I intended to narrow it down to the participation of migrant women who I felt have been left behind in terms of citizen participation and excluded in decision making processes.

⁶A derogatory term for foreigners in South Africa.

1.5 Literature Review

a) Perceptions of xenophobia

As a term that has received much attention in the 21st century, xenophobia has been described by various scholars from its etymological meaning to its conceptual significance. In this study xenophobia will be discussed in a broader sense to include attitudes, contextual and conceptual signification. Caliendo and McIlwain (2010) describe xenophobia by starting with its etymological definition to the contemporary understanding of the term. They explain that xenophobia comes from the Greek compound word xeno and phobos: xeno means stranger and phobos means fear. If combined, the word literally suggests the fear of strangers. They further explain that the stranger, in the xenophobic discourse, has come to be associated and equated with the derogatory perception of foreigners. Intrinsic to xenophobia, fear is purported to be an attitude, which is closely linked to oppression, exploitation and discrimination. Bordeau (2010) concurs with Caliendo and McIlwain and adds that “the fear or distrust of foreigners is irrational as it is based on assumptions, stereotypes and prejudice” (2010:5).

Mashau (2019) alludes to the term (xenophobia) as causing a migration crisis in South Africa because it has been loosely used to perpetuate fear and serious hatred against foreigners. He argues that this kind of fear and hatred results in violence, loss of belonging and life. The definition attached to the word and linked with the description of foreigners, in South Africa, reverberates with intransigent prejudice in the ears and minds of locals. Mashau’s illustration points out how definitions of some words end up dangerous because of the connotations attached to them as derived from narrative lingo of certain locations.

When people fear other people, the tendency is to socially exclude them. This creates suspicion and lack of trust among people. Primarily, xenophobia becomes a social predicament and complication that brings a discordant order to being and belonging in the global village. When people are fearful and suspicious of each other they do not feel that they belong. This study argues that social exclusion is at the core of xenophobia and there should be ways that can be employed to deal with this problem in a manner that will enable immigrant women to analyse ways that they can be included as humans not strangers in Johannesburg.

Olowu (2008) and Clissold *et al* (2020) mention that xenophobic attitudes also incorporate prejudices that somehow promote the rejection and exclusion of members of a minority group and vilification by those of a dominant group. Clissold *et al* point out that these attitudes become worse in cases of pandemics as that of the Covid 19. When people display negative attitudes towards those that they deem to be foreigners/strangers they prevent or jeopardize social development and create antagonism. In the case of South Africa, such attitudes have even endangered economic stability. Capacitating Zimbabwean immigrant women to address these negative attitudes and antagonism may give them the rigour to take part in economic discussions that may contribute to the economic stability of the country.

Warner and Finchilescu (2003:36) suggest that “xenophobia as a term must be reframed to incorporate practice.” They argue that xenophobia is not just an attitude, it has become an activity where people have displayed violent tendencies to foreigners or the deemed strangers. They claim that it has resulted in bodily harm and damage. To a greater extent, I concur with Warner and Finchilescu’s suggestion because in 2008 and 2015 and the resultant years, xenophobic attacks escalated to murder and torture. The literature surrounding the description of xenophobia has been

shortcoming in that regard, hence the need to reframe it. Neocosmos (2010) states that there has been an increased hostility towards foreigners over the years and they have been denied some rights and entitlements in South Africa. Such hostility can be described not as an attitude, but as an activity. Employing the participatory methods of FT and AI blends in well here, because the women had to deal with the activity in a participative manner. FT and AI enabled the participants to take active participation in dealing with such hostility.

The concept of Makwerekwere receives attention in the xenophobic discourse. Nyamnjoh (2006) contends that the term is used derogatorily to the extent of seeing foreigners as less than human. Arguably, makwerekweres would qualify as savages and uncivilized barbarians who need to rise to South African standards of civilization. There is a claim in the streets from amongst people that I have conversed with that the term originated from the vocal distinctions of foreigners in their languages. Because the vocalization is distinct, they received scorn and denigration as people who are loud, queer and uncivilized. This is even made worse because most of the makwerekweres are from countries that are presumed to be culturally and economically retrogressive (Nyamnjoh, 2006 and Ibrahim *et al* 2020). If capacitated to deal with such vulgarity, Zimbabwean immigrant women can challenge this negative notion that coming from economically retrogressive countries does not mean they are savages or incomplete human beings.

The bitterness against the Makwerekweres is exacerbated by economic disparities where they are accused of stealing jobs from South Africans, accepting low wages and destroying the economy (Sichone in Nyamnjoh, 2006). For South Africans, this is against their struggle for liberation. Hence, COSATU⁷ advocated for stringent measures against foreigners entering the country and encouraged the Minister of Home Affairs to repatriate all foreigners (Nyamnjoh 2006). This scramble for economic resources is amongst the highest contributing factors of the xenophobic attitudes among the locals. Klotz (2013) states that these attitudes were encouraged by the former Minister of Home Affairs Mangosuthu Buthelezi as early as 1994 when he advocated that it will not be right for South Africans to compete with foreigners for scarce resources. When leaders of influence such as Buthelezi utter such sentiments, the populace indiscriminately complies and follows. It was worsened when history repeated itself; when, the Zulu King, Goodwill Zwelithini, uttered similar sentiments in 2015. Former Mayor of Johannesburg Herman Mashaba also uttered the same sentiments and displayed his bigotry and lack of understanding in migration crime and policing (Mail and Guardian 2019). The situation has worsened with the populist approaches of the Dudula⁸ movement leader, Nhlanhla Lux Dlamini (2020-22) and Minister of Home, Aaron Motsoaledi (2020 -). The two leaders have, arguably, led a more powerful force in the removal of foreigners in South Africa. Peter Bruce (2022 Sunday Times Newspaper) writes about how Motsoaledi has turned the South African Home Affairs into a populist pulpit. He claims that what the minister has done is to please the masses for his political traction and forgets the connection among Africa member states. Some of Motsoaledi's sentiments have provoked a protracted hatred of foreigners by some local followers. This study sought to advance knowledge on how, under such circumstances, Zimbabwean immigrant women can be capacitated to deal with such forms of human rights abuse and discrimination in a more critical way.

In the discourse of the oppressed, human rights constitute humanness and minus them the system is perceived as an oppressive one. Neocosmos (2010) also argues that xenophobia emanates from the hegemony perpetrated by a state in

⁷COSATU is an abbreviation for Congress of South African Trade Unions. The organization aims to improve the material and work conditions for workers in South Africa.

⁸ The Dudula movement is an operation to remove illegal and undocumented foreigners from jobs and from South Africa.

its failure to articulate the right discourse of nation building, human rights and citizenship. His argument is that post-apartheid, South Africa has failed to move beyond the politics of indignity to a more democratic political discourse. He contends that South Africa has failed to sustain its 'rainbow' vision in that regard. This criminalization of foreigners has led to their dehumanisation. The Human Rights Watch⁹, in the Times Live newspaper, (2020) reports that South Africa has failed foreigners in addressing this problem in its five-year national action plan. This failure includes lack of accountability of the crimes perpetrated by locals and the impunity thereof. Arguably, women have been dehumanized in the ladder of humanity; it is interesting to find out the extent to which they feel dehumanized when they find themselves as discriminated foreigners. In the discourse of Forum Theatre and Appreciative Inquiry, dehumanization is a process that should be thwarted and humanness promoted.

b) Zimbabwean Immigrant women in South Africa

It is important to provide a framework for the experiences of Zimbabwean immigrant women in Johannesburg. I will start by outlining literature that gives a general perspective on immigrant women then narrow it down to Zimbabwean women. This is because there is not much written about the women in particular. Kihato (in Gasa, 2007) explicates that the literature on women migrants has been found wanting in that it presents them as passive participants and victims. Arguably, not all immigrant women are victims. There are some women who have championed rights for their fellow immigrants and have even owned businesses that may have been otherwise owned by locals. Notwithstanding, the notion of victimhood has been exacerbated by the large throngs of desperate and undocumented women who have found refuge at the Methodist Church Centre in Johannesburg. Writers have used that scenario as a yardstick to measure victimhood and passivity among the women. Kihato goes on to aver that even the literature that seeks to move beyond this stereotypical assertion, still falls into the trap of categorizing the women as desperate, prostitutes, hustlers and victims of patriarchal oppression. Combining FT and AI enabled the women to challenge the stereotypical notion of victimhood in this case.

The justification in the literature is that within societal norms, women cannot cross borders and neglect marital and maternal obligations unless there is something wrong with them. These arguments, again, are founded on societal expectations and judgements that have promoted the oppression and exploitation of immigrant women in South Africa. Kihato argues that this illustration also endorses the continuity of women living under oppressive patriarchal and political conditions. This engenders their exclusion from participating in activities that seek to promote their cause as foreign women. Kihato and Dodson (2008) illustrate that the women's stories have a motif of fear, physical and emotional harassment, struggle for survival and loneliness. In this study, while I also sought to find out the effects of xenophobia on the women, I also attempted to find out where the prejudice stems from. The participants explored ways that can be used to address this issue. Kihato (2007) is quick to point out that new literature tries to move beyond these perceptions by introducing the notion that not all migrant women play victim or are victims. She reveals that women have agency in the migration process. It is this agency that this study sought to articulate through using an integrated approach to FT and AI. She articulates that there are immigrant women who have actively participated in decision making that has provoked change for the treatment of foreign women. These are the women who understand

⁹ The Human Rights Watch is an independent organisation that defends people's rights in the whole world.
<http://www.hrw.org/about/about>

that they are not in South Africa for pleasure, but out of necessity and the idea of remittances back home and poverty alleviation.

Crush and Tevera (2010), highlight that the number of female Zimbabwean immigrants is as high as that of men. Such statistics prove that life has changed for Zimbabwean women. Historically and traditionally women were perceived as home wardens who were restricted to the confines of their homes and migration was left for the men. Before the 1990s, the social and physical mobility of women was restricted especially in terms of crossing over to South Africa (Barnes, 1992). It was mostly men who ventured into crossing the Limpopo River¹⁰. There were fears that women would not be able to work in the hazardous mine jobs that were male oriented. At that time, most Zimbabwean women just practiced cross-border trade. The increase in women migrants has been necessitated by the economic and political instability in Zimbabwe.

“South Africa has a discourse of entitlement of rights and services...” (Kihato, 2013:89). However, foreigners are not entitled to everything even with the ‘right papers.’¹¹ Kihato points out, that migrant women have found it difficult to negotiate their lives in Johannesburg because they are basically not entitled to a lot of rights. She gives an example of foreign women’s experiences of xenophobic violence and attitudes from local police as challenging because they cannot hold them to account. If they dare, they risk deportation. These examples demonstrate the stifling of the women’s rights.

Another example is the exploitation of the women in the workplace. Nyamnjoh (2006) illustrates that domestic workers who are also known as maids in South Africa, in general, are subject to this challenge as they are in the margins of society and civil rights. Their local employers find it easy to exploit them because they know they do not have rights and protection from the state as compared to their South African counterparts. If and when they try to report this to the police, fear gets the better of them. Nyamnjoh (2006:21) says, “While [other maids] are most likely to be running to the police and related institutions to highlight their plight, Zimbabwean women are most likely to be running away from them.” This gives the local employers the authority to exploit them. This challenge even goes further to serious issues such as fearing to report rape and/or abuse. Even if they are abused by their own foreign husbands or partners, they dare not report because “they know that they are not a political constituency with influence in South Africa.” (Kihato 2013: 89). FT and AI propose empowering mechanisms that will help participants to rehearse actions and ways that they can use to fight against oppressive authoritative structures such as the police in this case. Without the empowering weaponry given in FT and AI women may remain subdued.

c) Combining Forum Theatre and Appreciative Inquiry

I include here a review of literature on combining FT and AI. As mentioned earlier, few scholars have written on the merging of the two methods. Apart from myself, Maritz (2010) also argues that Appreciative Inquiry can enhance the experience of community theatre ¹²through its asset-based approach. Both articles focus on studies on community theatre groups that were drama ready and the study used Theatre of the Oppressed (TO) as the frame of reference. This

¹⁰The Limpopo is a boarder river that separates Zimbabwe and South Africa. Zimbabweans cross over it to illegally enter into South Africa.

¹¹ ‘Right papers’ is used as street language to refer to legal foreign documentation in South Africa.

¹²Community theatre in this instance refers to theatre that is practiced in community settings by a group that is concerned with using theatre to address issues in their communities.

study also looks at how AI can enhance community theatre, but focuses on participants who are not entirely drama ready and who may not understand how theatre can be a tool for addressing their problems. Another point of departure is that the Maritz's and my Masters thesis deal with AI as an approach to Theatre of the Oppressed. This study sought to explore what it entailed to combine the two methods (FT and AI) on an equal scale not the other just being an approach to the other.

The argument is that both methods are capable of capacitating participants to be active agents of their change, but Forum Theatre appears to be deficit-based as compared to the asset-based approach of AI. In the context of this study, a deficit-based approach mostly identifies community problems. For example, the first thing that a Forum Theatre intervention seeks to solve is the problem of oppression that the community is facing. The approach treats participants as people that already are riddled with problems. They become reactionary to problems. A deficit-based approach focuses on the perceived weaknesses of individuals or communities such that the individuals become viewed as the problem (Skodol 2010). An asset-based approach begins with identifying strengths and opportunities in the community. It appreciates that there are problems, but uses the community members' assets as the starting point in solving the problems. These assets are their talents, strengths, skills and stories of success that can be used to improve their present and future lives. The idea is to invest in the members' capacity to solve their problems. Russell (2022) asserts that the asset-based approach offers powerful and authentic and autonomous response to individuals' lives as starting point for a sustainable life and future. He argues that people cannot know that they need before they know first what they have. His argument is that needs point out what is wrong, but assets point to what is strong. AI, therefore, supports individuals to develop their own potential. This is where change can only be realised by pointing out problems and not pointing to and at them. Table 1 shows a summary of the differences between asset and deficit based. Some of the information is taken from Moore's (2019) 'What is Appreciative Inquiry? A Brief History and Real-Life Examples'. I have also added some explanations as support to the illustrations.

Table 1: Asset-based vs Problem-based approaches

Problem solving Approach/Deficit in Forum Theatre	Appreciative Inquiry Asset Approaches
Felt Need (Identification of a problem) Problems are identified as the cause of misfortune in the community members' lives	Appreciating (Valuing the best of what is) The community values its skills, knowledge, positive relationships, capacity building and potential
Analysis of causes An investigation into problems. Individuals/communities already disempowered by the heaviness of problems. Serious scrutiny into the concept of problems. Problematisation at the core of analysis. Passive recipients.	Envisioning what might be The community is inspired to be resourceful and analysis of problems is positive and aspirational. They dream, with hope, that their knowledge and potential will help them cultivate growth and progress in solving and challenging situations.
Analysis of possible solutions Focus limited to analysing the problem. The idea is to fill gaps and fix problems	Dialoguing what should be Individuals continue progressively to identify, dialogue and build on the positive capacity.
Action Planning/Treatment The idea of treatment is a problem because the individuals are set on believing that life is a problem to be fixed. Although there is a degree of active participation, the community believes in being led by some people to fix their problems. This promotes dependency	Innovating what will be Individuals take on active participation in finding solutions. This involves the infinite capacity to co-construct a better world through innovating possible solutions. This promotes health and well-being.

The idea was to establish, after the investigation, if combining the deficit-based and asset-based approaches could work better in addressing xenophobia in a more effective way and how the asset orientation of AI could be used as an approach to Forum Theatre. This included finding out the effectiveness of the combination. In the context of xenophobia, I have explained (Bhebhe 2013) that the merging of FT and AI can influence tolerance building and challenge ultimate beliefs of a seemingly unchangeable world of xenophobia in Johannesburg. This suggests that Zimbabwean women can become constructors of a better future by virtue of acknowledging a positive outlook to life. They can change the negative story of xenophobia to a more acceptance and move beyond mere tolerance.

d) Practice as Research design

As the overarching research method, it is important to review studies that have developed PaR. Nelson (2013) also refers to PaR as practice-based research. Intriguingly, for some reasons, the academic institution has struggled to accept PaR as a respectable research method. It is mostly in the Arts that it has received its credibility. Robin Nelson, one of the distinguished authors who has written extensively about practice-based research methods, points out that there has been limited attention that has been paid to by institutions. These limitations:

...range from strong academic traditions which privilege theory, to divisions between theory and practice in the very structures of education (university vs. art school/conservatoire), and regulatory frameworks which in some instances effectively exclude PaR by inscribing 'the scientific method' into research regulations ... this resonates with much of what has been written, in particular the common aim to challenge the schism in the Western intellectual tradition between

theory and practice and to valorize what I shall call 'praxis' ... or what some call intelligent practice or material thinking. (Nelson, 2013:3)

Baxter (a theatre practitioner in South Africa) in Nelson (2013) also states the same, but brings the assertion closer to home. She asserts that the methodology is new in South Africa and mostly not yet officially recognized by the academy. As a society in transition, she argues that new methods of research need to emerge that encompass the work that focuses reclamation of cultural knowledge systems and would fill the gap that excluded the humanity of the people where research quantified human experience and not explored it. It would close the knowledge gap that resulted from colonisation and support the reclamation of cultural and identity diversity and heritage. She also contends that since South Africa is also coming to terms with issues of identity and cultural diversity, PaR, through performance, would suffice. Intrinsically, PaR would serve the, "... South African theatre- making fraternity better than other methodologies, because the society is geared towards lived and often communal experience as a way of knowing." (Baxter 2013:164).

Janse van Vuuren, a South African Applied Theatre practitioner and researcher, and Rasmussen, a Norwegian researcher, expand on the uniqueness of PaR in the southern hemisphere and in particular South Africa. They argue that Applied theatre researchers actually support professionalism in South African academic institutions. In a society that is in transition, PaR and Applied Theatre researchers have challenged the cartesian dualism thinking of the dichotomy between mind and body and exalting the mind/theory concept as the superior quality of knowledge. They bring to light the pertinent connections between aesthetic and academic potential of aesthetics in research. In South Africa, PaR has a tendency to involve cultural magnets that aim to produce indigenous knowledge inside and beyond the tenets of academia. This has been developed by the decolonial thinking culture that urges for inclusivity through aesthetic means that are valued as core to forms of practice-based research. As such, they argue that practice-based research, "...is being promoted as an alternative to the more traditional academic research paradigms prominent in the West" (Janse van Vuuren and Rasmussen 2021:75). The paradigm is based more towards a rediscovery of humanity in research and inclusion of indigenous knowledge. The embeddedness in social life and humanity in research is what South Africa should be looking into to perpetuate a culture of indigenous knowledge systems. The aim is to engage current social and political issues through critical reflexivity. Reflexivity seeks to strengthen decolonial arts research methods and pedagogy that engage the broader socio-political and cultural context of South Africa (Janse Van Vuuren and Rasmussen). Reflexivity enables participants to explore and analyse their cultural and social contexts. Thus, they factor themselves into the knowledge that they are also creating something. Knowledge does not become a stand-alone entity that is devoid of humanity.

I realised that I could not ignore the practice and cultural diversity that would be inherent in this research. Xenophobia constitutes an undertaking of experiential strands that involve human behaviour and most researchers have focused on its conceptual underpinnings more than the people's behaviour. Coming from an Arts background, it was inevitable for me to focus on a methodological framework that would be true to practice. This meant putting intellectual practice into use by choosing a method that valued both practice and theory, hence, PaR.

In support of Nelson's assertion, Kershaw and Nicholson challenge why PaR should be recognised as a legitimate research method. They aver that:

... methods and methodologies might be reconceptualised for theatre and performance by thinking philosophically, procedurally, and practically about working processes that resist unhelpful dichotomies and fixed binaries which separate embodiment and intuition from intellectual practices, emotional experiences and ways of knowing ... We contend then, that research methods in theatre/performance studies per se, at least ... at best are not concerned with legitimating the cultural authority or researcher or the research. Rather, they are about the engaged social-environment production of systems and cultural production of flexible research ecologies where tacit understanding, inferred practices and theoretical assumptions can be made explicit and can, in turn, be queried and contested. (Kershaw and Nicholson, 2011:2).

Kershaw and Nicholson's contention hinges on the expected outcome of research. If the research is able to advance knowledge partly by means of practice, then it should be recognised. In any case knowledge rests upon what it is that we and others perceive in the world and what action is then taken upon that knowledge. Knowledge should not just be conceived theoretically, but should instigate action. Paulo Freire (1976) finds men and women who do not think and act upon their world as redundant. Tacit knowledge goes beyond knowing what is, to knowing what causes what, and what action is taken to generate that knowledge. The argument is that practice must reciprocate theory and vice versa. The researcher who researches in action might generate new knowledge about how something is done and leave it for the consumers of research to discover how and why it works. That should be the thrill of ontology and phenomenology. I was thrilled with what was and would be the outcome of the action of the Zimbabwean migrant women on their being and as carriers of the knowledge of xenophobia.

It is important to unpack what PaR is and about. Nelson (2013) explains that practice is a key method of inquiry in this type of qualitative research design. The research is embedded in creative practice and is exploratory. In respect of the creative department, the practice is seen in disciplines such as theatre/performance, dance, music, creative writing and visual art exhibitions, to name a few. He explains that it entails practical knowledge which is firstly demonstrated in practice. Most happens in doing more than abstractly conceived. It is the practice that propels the investigation. That is why sometimes it is known as practise-based research. I use the term practice-based in this study interchangeably with Practice as Research.

Vear (2021) stretches his description of PaR/Practice-based research to bring in the researcher dimension where he notes that the researcher also invests him/herself in the research as a practitioner. The practitioner gets involved by facilitating and designing some creative activities. I took this stance when I was the Forum Theatre Joker and I designed the workshop processes and facilitated them. In the facilitation process, I also put on my researcher hat so that I would not only get the data/information/knowledge from a subjective point of view. The FT Joker helped me to dig into the data collection from and through a practice orientation. I did the practical work to find out what I wanted.

In his description, Vear articulates that PaR is a principled and original investigation that is undertaken in order to gain new knowledge and the outcomes of that practice. What is intriguing is his use of the word 'principled'. As a 21st century author of research, Vear has come to realise that PaR is gaining recognition as compared to how Nelson and Baxter portray its recognition. He puts emphasis in that practice is doing something that is beyond usual and everyday acts of thinking, it moves into action. It focuses on using beliefs and ideas as opposed to merely investigating theories relating them (Vear 2021:5). He extends this point by stressing that PaR is " ... embedded in practice, embodied in

practice, enacted through practice and extended by practice.” (pg5). This simply means that knowledge can be and is explored and understood from a practice perspective.

In order to explore the research questions in PaR, the researcher needs to make action as part of the process. The actions of the creative work contribute to the outcomes and answers of the research question. The PaR research question should lead to specialised insights. It should generate inquiry that is complementary to practice (Smith and Dean, 2009). When formulating the research question, Smith and Dean point out that the question should be generative and move from reflection to reflexivity. This means it should give participants the agency to want to improve their human condition and experience. It should explore and problematise set issues and they should be a stated means of how to explore the issues. Action must be taken. The most important part is that the action should be embodied. In my case, FT and AI ask participants to embody the answer - they tell and enact stories, they use their bodies to explore the question, and they dialogue physically to reach to an answer. The question grows out of the need to act and is the propellant for that action. An example from study is this question: How can an integrated Practice as Research approach to Forum Theatre and Appreciative Inquiry give voice to Zimbabwean women affected by xenophobia? The question seeks an exploration of how AI and FT can be carried out (an action is required) to make the women reflexive on the issue of xenophobia. Thus, how will they be enabled to use their ‘voice’. This means they will be asked to deepen their thoughts from inside their being and challenge how they have been using their ‘voices’. They will be guided also by the practice of AI and FT. Hence, Smith and Dean (2009) indicate that the research question should be from within rather than outside.

One thing that I learnt about the PaR research questions is that they can shift and there can be some new questions emerging in the course of the research. Practice-based research has its own world of filtering data which is fluid. This is because each day and moment of the process is guided by the experiences of participants. Richards (2005) explains that as researchers we are aiming to learn from the data. This means that we may shift emphasis to a different and new question. That is how flexible, and fluid practice-based research is. An example, from this study, is question 3: To what extent does the asset-based orientation of Appreciative Inquiry enhance the deficit-based approach of Forum Theatre in raising the consciousness of women? This question was brought about when I realised that while combining the two methods, Appreciative Inquiry kept nudging Forum Theatre for enhancement.

Nelson (2013) offers a model of the process of PaR. The outline is helpful in directing how data is collected. The researcher has to:

- Specify a research inquiry at the outset.
- Set a timeline for the overall project including the various activities involved in a multi-mode inquiry.
- Build moments of critical reflection into the timeline, frequently checking that the research inquiry remains engaged and evidence is being collected.
- In documenting a process, capture moments of insight.
- Locate your praxis in a lineage of similar practices.
- Relate the specific inquiry to broader contemporary debate (through reading and exposition of ideas with references) (Nelson 2013).

Nelson (2022) explains that the model seeks to establish a connection between praxis and traditional protocols of research. The model is analytic and is located in insightful epistemologies of standard research frameworks. The last point should be critically

noted because as researchers we tend to ignore the importance of going back to the literature that helps to support and shape the practice argument. I leaned on the literature review to support the merging of AI and FT vis a vis the concept of xenophobia. The xenophobia concept is deeply seated in anthropological domains of knowledge that require the support of its conceptualisation. This necessitated the need to conceptualise some of my findings.

Candy (2006) also provides a similar outline. Compared to Nelson, she also suggests research questions, critical reflection, data collection methods and the process of documentation as important tenets that provide insight to knowledge generation in the PaR design. However, she delves more into the need for the rationalisation of the research methods as they are the thrust of the design.

- It must propose and define research questions and problem statement (specifying a research inquiry), at the outset.
- It must define its objectives in relation to the questions or problems to be addressed.
- There should be an advancement of creativity for insights, knowledge and understanding.
- Data collection methods for addressing and answering the research questions or problems must be specified.
- Rationalisation for the chosen research methods to answer the research questions.
- Outcomes of practice must be accompanied by documentation of the research process.
- There should be textual analysis and explanation that support the research position.
- The written analysis should also demonstrate critical reflection. (Candy, 2006).

As in any research, planning for data collection is important. PaR has its own ways of handling data collection. After establishing questions and aims of the research, what follows is data collection. As stated by Richards (2005) that we are aiming to learn from the data, PaR should offer symbols from the participants' behaviour and actions. Richards states that these symbols must be identified and examined as objects of research. She explains that there should be methods that are employed to work in practice within the context of the study and in a practice context. There should be a triangulation between method, questions, and objectives - all guided by the practice context. As part of my planning for the project, I worked out my research needs so that I would be guided towards my data collection process. The questions had to focus on a specific practice, and it was the practice of combining FT and AI. The aim was on the reason for merging the methods and it was to raise participants' awareness and voice. Intrinsically, FT and AI became the focal methods for data collection. The data collection methods should be accompanied by observation (Bressler and Latta (2008)). Observation patterns in PaR help in the exploration of the symbolic dimensions of participants' experiences and trends in their behaviour. These data collection methods should be action (participatory) oriented and allow the researcher to observe the behaviour and actions of the participants. They become the thrust of the investigation.

Maxwell (2018) asserts that, conversely, observation is a direct and powerful method that provides learning about people's behaviours in practice contexts. Observation can occur live and/or on video tape (Dodd and Epstein (2012)). I used both because sometimes, I would catch on an insight at a live particular moment and wish to take note of it before I forgot it. Live observations, in most cases, give direction to pertinent sets of data. They are the researchers foremost intuition to what he/she is trying to find out. Maxwell argues that video tape observations are also good in that they can be re-played, and the researcher gets more insight into a data set. They can also offer repeated analysis of a particular behaviour and more insight will be gained.

Methodologically, the act of observing and being observed has an effect on how participants behave. Although this may affect the participants' response to the data, it is helpful in that nuances can be picked up even instinctively. In concurrence with Maxwell's ideas, Dodd and Epstein (2012) assert that while observation may be advantageous for witnessing behaviours and dynamics, they can create reactivity among participants. Reactivity is when those being observed have a reaction and adjust it in some way to suit what they think the researcher wants to know. This can happen a lot in practice-based research.

Because of their participatory and aesthetic nature, Forum Theatre and Appreciative Inquiry may be seen to do well for the PAR design. In the *Aesthetics of the Oppressed*, Boal (2006) describes aesthetics as a practical theatre project which enables individuals to enquire into their lives and reclaim themselves as subjects. The impetus of the aesthetics is to find out what happens in the world of oppression through creativity. Creativity is the domain that drives the investigation into oppressed people's lives. "It is the act of creating meaning from the act itself" (Bresler and Latta 2008: 14). The aesthetics of the oppressed do not only communicate the artistry of drama on stage, but go deeper to use that artistry to delve into the investigation of human beings and the dynamics of power relationships. This is dialectical practice-related research which explores the human process of experiential meaning-making with the goal to bring about social change (Sullivan, 2009). The participatory aesthetics according to Bresler and Latta give a context of theatre/drama as giving raw data. This raw data is the material of inquiry. The actors on stage (interacting), the spect-actors (in interaction with the actors on stage) and the stage (reverberating the action) - all these are aesthetics that give raw data. Everything is considered participatory. The participatory process enables people to be expressive and perceptive. This means that the audience, as part of the process, is not only expressing how they feel about the oppression, but is exuding with personal action and information that need to be analysed. This is because they are in a meaning making process. The aesthetics promote creativity in an innovative way that privileges imagination and intellect (Bressler and Latta, 2008) - this is theory and practice inherent in PaR. Inherently the aesthetics of the Forum Theatre event have a placed value of experimentation (also investigation) and observation. "Only Aesthetics allow for the truest and profoundest understanding of the world and society ... Art is a special form of knowledge, subjective, sensory, not scientific" (Boal, 2004:1). Thus, Boal explains that we can use art to collect information about the world around us. Bressler and Latta also articulate that the TO aesthetics should be valued for their imaginative and critical inquiry for knowledge construction.

Appreciative Inquiry is not a theatrical/performative/creative method, and some would argue why it was being used to enhance Forum Theatre in this study. Notwithstanding this, Nissley (2004) argues that Cooperrider (2001: 32) puts forward that Appreciative Inquiry is about "the artful creation of positive imagery." Nissley describes the process of artful creation as one in which participants explore images of their past and present whilst engaging in the creation of artistic representations of the desired future. This is as much as participants in an FT event explore their past and present images of oppression for a desired future without oppression. Nissley's literature on the performativity of Appreciative Inquiry goes beyond the base comprehension of artfulness. He reveals how facilitators of AI are actually engaging organizations in the artistic creation of the positive imagery. He argues that the design of the 4D phase is artistic in the sense that a group of people gets involved creatively to model a process of change. He frames that as an 'aesthetic discourse'. The aesthetic discourse is outlined into five propositions to show the artistic flair: presentational knowledge/language, mediated dialogue, symbolic constructions that act as metaphorical representation, collaborative

inquiry/co-creation, and window to the unconscious (Nissley 2004). These propositions also outline how AI structures its data collection. The creativity and the performativity is considered and drawn out when the participants use words/language in the context of positivity. The language they use is represented in how they tell stories, dialogue the stories and the stories are used to co-create a new image of the future. In the case of this study, they were asked to act out the positive stories to augment the positivity. This is a window to the unconscious where they are asked to explore their experiences through imagination. In AI, the researcher and participants collaboratively search for new knowledge whilst using a frame that allows them to create stories through the process of inquiry. Each 4D story creation operates as a process for data collection. The section on methodology in this chapter, outlines more on the practicability of FT and AI as data collection methods.

While PaR has been receiving its recognition, problems of validity and reliability have been noted. Authors who have explored and supported its growth have also taken notice of these challenges. Fulton and Costley (2019) remark upon its disadvantage for its likelihood of bias and lack of objectivity especially from the researcher who is also a practitioner. For a researcher who might be an advocate of a certain method, it is easier to push results towards his/her intended goals and outputs. The experimental researcher may manipulate the design activities to suit his/her intended focus. Because the researcher may also be a participant, he/she may develop his/her own conceptual schemes and influence other research participants in the direction of his/her desired outcomes. Allen (2017:1114) also argues that, practically, a researcher who interacts with informants can influence occurrences directly or indirectly. The other research participants may also be biased towards a certain method and may not engage with vigour to the activities. Participants may also deliberately behave differently when they are aware that they are being observed for a particular purpose. This may as well skew conclusions as they may be drawn and interpreted wrongly (Allen, 2017). For example, some participants may find Appreciative Inquiry too easy and utopian and they may react sceptically towards the method. Fulton and Costley recommend continual negotiation and reflection so that the researcher and participants maintain a healthy research status position.

1.6 Theoretical Framework

This study is grounded in the theories of Augusto Boal's Theatre of the Oppressed and David Cooperrider's Appreciative Inquiry. Boal was a Brazilian activist, playwright, director and author of his manifesto of Theatre of the Oppressed in the 1970s (Babbage, 2014). David Cooperrider is a theorist and philosopher of AI and is currently a professor and chairman of the department of Organisational Behaviour at Weatherland School of Management, Case Western University (Lewis *et al* 2011). The theoretical frameworks attempt to explain how hegemonic and oppressive structures of existence can be challenged and how they promote critical engagement of people in their attainment for change, consciousness, equality, peace and justice in the world. This notion underlines this study's inquiry into the potential of combining FT and AI in developing agency to deal with xenophobia as a form of injustice. From a PaR perspective, the notion underscores how the participants were enabled to reflect upon the effects of xenophobia and at the same time take action to deal with its effects. This constitutes Cooperrider's social constructionist principle (Cooperrider and Whitney 2005) and the Boalian praxis that is explained by Gordon (2006:261). Cooperrider and Whitney articulate that there are many ways of viewing social reality and better options to construct our way of living (social construction). This means that there are different modes of presenting, describing and explaining reality derived especially from positive relationships. They aver that action and reflection are fundamental forms of

understanding and fixing our futures. Gordon explains praxis as the enabling of “the individual to identify [and analyse] the conditions contributing to his oppression and to use theatre as a means of improvising alternative ways of changing them.”

Augusto Boal’s Theatre of the Oppressed is influenced by Paulo Freire’s pedagogy of the oppressed. Boal put into theatrical practice Freire’s liberatory educational ideologies and practice of freedom in the Theatre of the Oppressed. Boal’s theory was also influenced by the theatre of Brecht and Stanislavski (Babbage, 2004). Babbage states that from amongst them all, Freire’s influence was more prominent. Freire was a Brazilian educator, activist and philosopher who advocated for the change of the oppressive Brazilian education system (Donald Macedo, in Freire 2014). Bertolt Brecht a 20th century poet, political philosopher, playwright and director influenced Boal to critique and challenge the social and political realities of his time through theatre. Benedetti (1998) informs that Stanislavski was a Russian actor/director who mostly analysed the technique of acting to help actors understand their roles. Stanislavsky’s technique motivated Boal in building the protagonist and antagonist roles that are pertinent in understanding the dynamics of acting oppression in Forum Theatre.

Cohen-Cruz and Schutzman (2006) and Smidt (2014) allude to that where Freire broke the hierarchical divide between oppressive teacher and student; Boal did so with actor and spectator. They state that he drew parallels between Freire’s theorisation of the banking system of education with the passive arrangement of mainstream theatre and rethought how the oppressed may be liberated through participatory theatre. The banking system of education, according to Freire (2014), is a system that promotes the objectification of learners. Objectification is about treating learners or participants, in an intervention or learning situation, as objects that need to be thought for and cannot think on their own. It is contextualised as treating human beings as if they are mere objects that need to be thought for, second class citizens and sub-human. This study argues that most intervention strategies have only promoted the objectifying of immigrant women. Hence, the proposal to use methods that have a subjectifying lustre. Subjectifying is treating them as people capable of thinking on their own and making their own decisions.

According to Boal, the goal of Forum Theatre is to:

...encourage autonomous activity, to set a process in motion, to stimulate transformative activity, to change spectators into protagonists. And it is precisely for these reasons that the Theatre of the Oppressed should be the initiator of changes the culmination of which is not the aesthetic phenomenon but real life' (1992: 245).

Here, Boal’s theorisation is pivoted on the concept of subjectifying through a praxis-oriented liberation process that empowers participants to take action against oppressive structures. Taking part in Forum Theatre encourages participants to see themselves as agents that can alter the oppressive order of existence. Orienting the women as protagonists encouraged them to view themselves as agitators of the struggle against xenophobia. This provided the realisation that taking part in Forum Theatre is not just a theatrical activity, but also a conceptual initiation of a revolution in real life. With PaR, this revolution, became an intrinsic way of studying, exploring and gathering information about the women’s lives in a participative and practice-oriented way.

Boal (1992) contends that praxis is essential to human experience and is the guiding principle in TO. He argues that life’s ideologies can only be authenticated if they are in relation to practice (Babbage 2004). The articulation here is about allowing human beings the power to critically learn about their world and at the same time take action to

challenge and change it through the participatory means of theatre. Praxis is underpinned by its humanist readings of action for empowerment and liberation. An audience member in Forum Theatre ceases to become an object, but becomes a subject of the dramatic action because he/she:

...no longer delegates power to his characters either to think or to act in his place. The spectator frees himself: he thinks and acts for himself! Theatre is action! Perhaps the theatre is revolutionary in itself; but have no doubts, it is a rehearsal for revolution (Boal 1979:22)

Boal argues that this is the complete cycle of praxis. Freire (1970:100) also states that human beings "...are because they are in a situation and they will be more, the more they not only critically reflect upon their existence but critically act upon it." The essence of PaR lies in participants being subjects of the research process and being able to analyse and reflect the process. As people who are facing repression and oppression, the Zimbabwean immigrant women may find the journey of praxis fulfilling because they would be enabled to think for themselves and not only watch the play and empathise with the protagonists. They were protagonists of their own stories. This enabled them to fight not passively, as per dictates of society, but actively as agents of their destiny. This assertion acknowledges praxis as inherent in PaR.

Boal (2000) argues that TO is not moralistic and cathartic in its approach. Catharsis is the purging of one's emotions after experiencing something that has affected a person emotionally. Women's liberation in African settings has been historically based on moral standards of empowerment. The Theatre of the Oppressed is against moral fundamentals. The argument here is that women's liberation should not be based on empathic identification (Babbage 2004 and 2018) because they may not be effectively capacitated to take stringent action in pursuing change. Boal had qualms with empathy presented in Aristotelean and bourgeois theatre where power was delegated only to the actor who represented the power and desire of the oppressors. He argued that empathy kept spectators in the background and passively accepted their fate and the desires of the oppressors (Babbage 2014). Hence, they would not experience full liberation. This study proposes an approach that vivifies active participation instead of a 'pacifying' one and challenges the moral liberation of women.

When Boal proposes critical thinking, he does not speak about it in isolation, but blends it with dialogue. When people claim their thinking capacities, it is because they would have seen how far they have gone in understanding the world. In most cases, critical thinking is realised through the kinds of dialogue that people engage in. It should be noted that dialogue is not only seen as the physical verbalising of people's thoughts, but as the articulation of the thoughts. In the Declaration of Principles/Theatre of the Oppressed ¹³ dialogue is described as the free exchange of ideas with other people as individuals or groups in a manner that promotes mutual respect and equal participation. In trying to address an issue such as xenophobia, it is important to assert the value of dialogue. It advances the sharing and imparting of knowledge among participants. In this study, dialogue provided the improvisational means to get Zimbabwean immigrant women to learn how, to imaginatively find ways, speak out for themselves and approach their oppressors without fear. Besides this, dialogue can promote, in the women, self-discovery and expression and the resistance against exploitation. Dialogue extended the desire among the women to think and take action.

¹³<http://theatreoftheoppressed.net/about/international-theatre-of-the-oppressed-organisation-declaration-of-principles/>

Gordon (2006) posits that Forum Theatre is established on revolutionary acting with spectators who do not just interpret the play (that is based on reality), but also take action. Interpreting the play involves thinking, but in a revolution, thinking alone is not enough. Zimbabwean immigrant women took action and the interpretation was profoundly based on investigation and analysis that is critical to PaR. This study articulated the investigation of reality that is not static, but which is alterable through critical thinking. Freire articulates that:

Finally, true dialogue cannot exist unless the dialoguers engage in critical thinking which discerns an invisible solidarity between the world and the people and admits of no dichotomy between them - thinking which perceives reality as process, as transformation, rather than as static entity - thinking which does not separate itself from action, ... (1970:92)

The kind of thinking suggested by Boal and Freire stimulates a consciousness among the oppressed to take up 'arms' and fight for the revolution. Boal (2000) argues that, built on the premise of active participation and dialogue, TO enables participants to interrogate and explore reality as a multi-faceted possibility rather than as a single entity. Arguably, if people do not think critically, they tend to view their problems as unchangeable, their realities as static and oppressors as unalterable. Getting the women to view their reality on a multiple perspective, through sharing knowledge amongst each other, validated critical thinking and substantiated the kind of information gathered in the research process.

Freire (1993) and Boal (2000) believe that in problem-posing education and interventions, participants are capacitated to critically perceive their reality as changeable, but should problematise the oppression until they find solutions to it. The assertion in this theory is problematic in that it validates oppressed people's lives as riddled with problems. It is laden with propositions of conflict resolutions that further promote the oppressed and oppressor's narcissistic entitlements. This attitude is leveraged on the thinking that everything in the oppressed people's lives is affected by everyone in power - that the powerful systems of power are responsible for their problems. The problem-posing language of TO may, further reinforce conflicts and violence between immigrants and locals in this regard. Even though this theatre can be an agent for change, participants are not given the opportunity to start with a positive mind-set in approaching the problems. Hence, they may not be enabled to examine knowledge and raise critical questions. This negates the notion of unity building among rival forces and thwarts transformative understanding and change.

It is in this view that the Appreciative Inquiry theory is brought into the fray. However, this does not mean that the TO theory is ineffectual; it shall be proven that the theories speak to and support each other even though they may appear disparate. Having noticed how traditional change and management theories focus on problem diagnosis and finding solutions, Cooperrider came to a decision to find an approach that focuses on creating a positive analysis of organisations and their growth. Lewis *et al* (2011) claim that AI was born out of Cooperrider's doctoral thesis where he studied the possibility of positive collaboration in organisations and began to focus on life giving factors that would promote change in organisations. There is also a claim that his wife Nancy, who is an artist, inspired him when she realised that in every piece of art, there is beauty. She and Cooperrider noticed that organisations are also expressions of beauty and like art they should be given the appreciative eye (Hammond 2013).

The AI theory is about the creation of a mind-set that is encouraged to arrive at solutions through the investigation of reality through a variety of questions and not spending time in trying to find the right answer. Well and arguably, TO also encourages participants to explore various solutions but not arriving at one answer. With the current complexity

of xenophobia in Johannesburg it would be more desirable for those affected to systematically inquire into the complexity rather than try to find quick fix solutions. In all this AI values “...the act of recognising the best in people or the world around us: affirming past and present strengths, successes and potentials to perceive those things that give life” (Cooperrider and Whitney 2005:07). Combining this frame of reference and that of the TO praxis was effective in creating an analytic mind-set among Zimbabwean immigrant women as they forge a revolution for their acceptance in Johannesburg.

Grounded on the social constructionist principle, Appreciative Inquiry recognises the discourse of positive narratives especially as applied in social change. The social constructionist principle posits that problems are not solved by coming up with or finding new solutions, but by rearranging what people already know and have (Lock and Strong 2010). Appreciative Inquiry is premised on the hypothesis that the social system should begin with appreciation of the society’s potential to the solving of its problems. For example, the women started by sharing stories of what they had achieved as foreigners in Johannesburg and the best treatment that they had received from locals. This set and established an appreciative tone from the onset of the process. Considering this, participants may have the willingness to share a lot of information in the research space.

There are four (4) principles that frame the positive narrative discourse in AI as grounded on the social constructionist theory: First, the community or organisation should identify the best of what is; second it should have a vision of the ideals of the future; third members should be involved in collaborative dialogue about what the future should look like and fourth the members should collectively experiment to discover what can be (Bushe 2011). The action-oriented principles of AI weave in well with a PaR process because it is predicated on seeing and valuing the growth of research subjects. McIntyre (2008) points out that practice-based research aims are achieved through a process of exploration that is action oriented and knowledge is constructed at various moments throughout the research process.

Considering the deemed violent culture in South Africa, xenophobia is already predicated on the negative discourse. Inherently, people are bound to focus on the negative effects of the divisions and will try to solve the problems in a negative manner. This may exacerbate the tensions amongst locals and foreigners because there will be a lot of blaming and finger pointing. Accordingly, what AI tries to do is to channel energies towards that which is not fragmented, but cohesive. The language of AI has its strengths on the positive discourse of change.

In every community or organisation there is a paradigmatic discourse that people are used to. Scholars of AI argue that the starting point of any transformation movement is identifying the nuances in these paradigms. Kretzmann and McKnight (1993) stress the importance of word choice and language for narratives from the moment the researcher-facilitator engages with clients¹⁴/participants. The language of inquiry should shape the relationships and dynamics between the parties and the aim in the research process. As such, the entire process of the PaR inquiry should be safely hinged on narratives that are significant to the culture of the participants. Bearing in mind the kind of word choice that might be characteristic of disgruntled Zimbabwean immigrant women, it is important to consider this assertion. It is incumbent upon the researcher-facilitator to then negotiate the kind of language that will validate transformation in the

¹⁴The language of AI referring to participants.

positive direction in their narratives. I considered myself as researcher-facilitator here because whilst searching for data, I also facilitated the workshop sessions.

Cooperrider and Whitney (2001) posit that the initial storytelling that participants engage in should, therefore, be what they perceive to be their positive reality regardless of the tensions that they might be experiencing. This becomes a catalyst for positive change. Telling stories in the initial stages of AI also has a positive impact on relationship building and reveals deep seated values from and among participants. Cooperrider and Whitney further assert that stories unveil micro-narratives that over time change the macro-narrative of the community or organisation. If immigrant women share their stories of success and strengths, the prevailing discourse of hatred and discrimination could be challenged. The sharing of stories in AI is shaped in such a way that no story or particular historical narrative is considered more insignificant than the other. This is by virtue of AI celebrating everyone's story of success.

Cooperrider (1990) avers that in organisations there are marginalised voices that have important innovations and yet organisations do not realise their innovation. He argues that AI becomes a process that affirms these voices. When people experience positive images of affirmation, they become resilient and cope with change; they won't fear it. If immigrant women are enabled to realise their marginalised voices, they can go a long way in making people understand that they do not or did not come to South Africa with no potential. Their marginalised voices could be what South Africa needs for its development.

In his heliocentric (centring the affirmative image in organisations) hypothesis on AI, Cooperrider (1990) posits that every social system should explicitly and implicitly hold the affirmative image. This was informed by the notion that every organisation naturally thrives towards affirming the best image. In light of this, it is inevitable that organisations should stay away from what Cooperrider (1990) calls problem centric change processes. On the contrary, TO is premised on the problem centric approach to change. However, in the perspective of this research, the idea is not to do away with this approach, but to find ways in which the two theories can complement each other.

Cooperrider (1990) argues that the affirmative image puts an emphasis on people being resilient to the negative affect in that bad is stronger than good, but if their lives are submerged in good, they may become strong enough to challenge and overcome negative events. This makes participants become aware of each other's capabilities and this motivates collaboration and cooperation which are necessary for the growth of the organisations. It is plausible, that Zimbabwean immigrant women enabled the affirmative and were encouraged to take innovative actions that promoted their development.

In a nutshell, Appreciative Inquiry provides a model that increases motivation, innovativeness and creativity among members of a community or organisation, including facilitators and participants. Barret and Fry (in Fry 2002) assert that as opposed to the problem centric movements that for the most part promote unnecessary competition among members, AI focuses on the pre-eminence of the organisation by engaging all stakeholders in the process of change. This pre-eminence is premised on people collaboratively and collectively re-imagining 'what could be' (In the language of AI). As people accused of taking away jobs from South Africans, Zimbabwean women were enabled to explain that they are not in competition with the locals. The workshops instilled in them a desire to re-imagine and take ownership of their future. This is also what TO proposes, that people work together to re-imagine and rehearse their future and take ownership of the process of change.

Although, it would suffice to include Jonathan fox's theory on playback, the study draws its inspiration from TO and AI theories. Playback is also an interactive form of theatre that draws stories from audience members. Those stories are enacted on the spot by actors on stage. Playback theatre helps to explore and bridge conflict whilst honouring the human condition (Rowe, (2007). As much as the theories in Playback Theatre would have contributed to the philosophical understanding of xenophobia, AI and TO theories speak more to issues of binaries and conflict perpetuated by xenophobia.

1.7 Research methodology

Because of my background in Applied Drama and Theatre (ADT) and studies in Appreciative Inquiry, I was intrigued by their drive to give participants power to speak and ability to transform lives. Not foregrounded on the theories of ADT, this research engages with its particularities to practice-based research. ADT invokes, as relevant, contexts to consider for the methodology. Somehow, I knew that the choices and considerations of the methods for this study were going to push boundaries of academic research. Nelson (2006) points out how practice-based research has received considerable academic challenge to its credibility in the academia - and that it has not received enough attention and credibility in South Africa. It is my hope that this study will contribute to the supporting of this emergent approach. More so, the objective of the study is not only to explore the effectiveness of combining FT and AI but also to give voice to the Zimbabwean women. I thought this method would suffice. This section presents an initial conceptual and theoretical argumentation of the methodology and methods of this study. Chapter 3 elaborates on this in more detail.

The theatre-based narrative employed in this study also posits the sharing and communicating of experiential knowledge between researcher-facilitator and research participants. The reason behind this is that the researcher will conduct research and at the same time facilitate the research workshops. My choice of research methodology was, therefore, Practice as Research (PaR). Niedderer and Roworth-Stokes ¹⁵(nyg/no year given) considers PaR as a research methodology that is based on practice. They contextualize practice, as including experiential activity, in arts -based research. They point out that the focus on experiential and/or creative input is a means to develop new insights in the practice and the subject under study. The practice and its outcomes make a direct contribution to the advancement of knowledge. The argument being: practice articulates theory within research. Niedderer and Rosworth-Stokes also indicate that this method uses practice as a means of making tacit knowledge accessible in data collection. They are quick to point out that tacit knowledge has not been acceptable in traditional research as it is based on induction rather than deduction, a notion that traditional research finds 'unacademic'. This study finds tacit knowledge essential because it relies on participants' feelings and behaviour as communicating knowledge. This way of gathering data is readily accessible for analysing and communicating research outcomes and data thereof. This is because the data collection is embedded in nuances of knowledge derived from real life narratives.

Barrett and Bolt (2007 and 2010) postulate that knowledge is derived from doing and the using of senses. They aver that PaR, in creative artistic research, involves using the medium of art to problematise social issues such as feelings and intuition rather than hard core fundamental facts. It implies that knowledge found in the enquiry cannot be

¹⁵<http://niedderer.org/IASDR07SRS.pdf> Accessed 05/01/2016

separated from practice. It was the participants' experiences and their socio-cultural contexts that informed and motivated this research process.

Combining Appreciative Inquiry and Forum Theatre, as an approach, to deal with xenophobia inherently situates this research on the basis of tacit knowledge which is entrenched in human capacity, activity, interaction and learning. Barrett (2007) contends that research posited on socio-cultural conditions can be only grasped through human agency. She further argues that knowledge is situated in the "embodied cultural capital."

Kershaw *et al* (2011) delineate how PaR is multi-faceted in its approach and how it challenges binary habits of thought and practice, theory and practice, body and mind in the domain of academic research. Per se, this paradigm shift brings in new epistemology that celebrates the innovative process in research and articulates tacit knowledge as objective while at the same time accounts for the individual's self-reflection. They posit this paradigm shift as the innovative aspect of contemporary research. They claim that the diverse approach of PaR is to allow the participants to take ownership of the research process, the mutual transference of knowledge between researcher-practitioner and participant and the thwarting of the Cartesian dualism¹⁶ which posits that the mind is separate from the body. This is within the thought that theory and practice contradict each other, but PaR argues that they do not contradict but speak to each other. As such, PaR was selected as the method of investigation because it celebrates action with reflection and that complements the experiential approaches of Appreciative Inquiry and Forum Theatre in addressing xenophobia as a social ill. These are the steps that I followed in this PaR:

- I defined the problem statement and proposed the research questions. The specific inquiry that was selected was the extent to which AI could enhance FT in raising the consciousness of Zimbabwean immigrant women in addressing xenophobia.
- The objectives were defined around the action to be taken in exploring xenophobia. This was to be done through FT and AI workshops.
- I focused on the 4 stages/phases of AI and FT to further the workshops these included
AI: discover, dream, design and destiny
FT: knowing the body, making the body expressive, theatre as language (FT performance) and theatre as discourse
- I selected and used these data collection methods: Forum Theatre and Appreciative Inquiry, observation, video and audio recording and literature review,
- I rationalised why I selected these methods through creating data sets from what each method gave as data.
- The collected data was analysed through a thematic analysis.
- Literature was used to analyse, explain and support the research position. This was in the documentation of the research.

¹⁶The philosophy defended by Rene Descartes that there is a distinct separation between mind and body used here to show that academia also promotes such binaries in research. <http://www.allaboutphilosophy.org/cartesian-dualism-faq.htm>

- There was critical reflection in the write up of the analysis. (As explained by Candy 2006).

Data Collection methods

In this research, the participants were taken through a series of combined Forum Theatre and Appreciative Inquiry workshops that were interactive. This involved the participants' experiences within their socio-cultural contexts. Appreciative Inquiry and Forum Theatre were employed as the primary methods of data collection. They were used for knowledge generation, experiential exploration and awakening of critical consciousness among the women. The following table shows the structure of data collection for the two methods.

Table 2a: Forum Theatre and Appreciative Inquiry as Data collection Methods (the phases)

Forum Theatre	Appreciative Inquiry
Knowing the body: Exploration of games and exercises that allow the participants to know and discover their bodies as bodies are archives of knowledge and their oppression. They are enabled to start planning for their change. The researcher starts looking for data that initiates the idea of oppression among participants.	Discover: Participants share stories of success so as to start planning for the transformation intervention. The researcher starts looking for the historical context of stories of success.
Making the body expressive: Exploration of exercises that help the participants to use their bodies as the beginning of action towards liberation. This is realized through Image Theatre and other related exercises. They start focusing on how the future would look like if their oppression would be thwarted. The researcher digs deeper into the idea of the selected oppression - how are the participants storying the oppression through their bodies.	Dream: They start imagining how their future would look like drawing on the affirmative image that is already in existence in the organization. From the historical context of stories of success, the researcher gathers stories that participants will use to plan for their future.
Theatre as language: Theatre heightens the embodiment of language as tool for change. Participants start rehearsing for their change through simultaneous dramaturgy, scripting of the Forum Theatre play, and conceptualizing of the problem. This is the core of the data collection where participants are acting out the story of oppression. The researcher looks for nuances of how the story is depicted, how the actors are acting it out, how the audience is reacting to the oppression and what solutions are found.	Design: They start innovating how they can put ideas into practice. The design stage is largely influenced by the Forum Theatre play and intervention. When participants and spectators respond to the story of oppression, the researcher looks for moments of how the solutions act as ideas that will be put into action. She is on the look-out for positive nuances of the solutions.
Theatre as discourse: Theatre becomes a discourse for change. Forum Theatre is presented to the greater part of the community. Collaboratively, the theatre team and the community audience members find alternative ways of solving the problem and think of rehearsing it for real life. (End of Forum Theatre intervention. There is no Replan). The researcher notes the discourse of problems in problem solving. Captures it to see how the positive discourse can affect or change it. The researcher also notes the impact of the problem discourse.	Destiny: Practical projects and strategies are put into practice and space is created for ideas to be discussed and dialogued collectively and with the intention of going back to the drawing board to assess the value of transformation. Here the researcher takes note of the positive that may still be there throughout the process. She takes note of the impact of the positive discourse. She also captures what the participants value collectively as that which will be used in the future.

Table 2b. Where the methods intersect as data collection

Stages	Intersection
Knowing the body and Discover stages	In FT, when participants explore their bodies through exercises, they discover stories of oppression embedded in their bodies. The same stories are discovered in AI, but in a positive outlook. These processes involves identifying and naming reality. The body is discovered as a tool that stores memory as knowledge of reality.
Making the body expressive and Dream stages	Some TO games and Image Theatre make participants more aware of the story of oppression and the body becomes a dream tank for change. The transitional image and ideal image bring participants to focus on how they envision their future. In AI, participants are encouraged to create images of a future with continuous innovation. Participants can draw, write and enact these dreams. They become more expressive of the reality of their future.
Theatre as language and Design stages	Forum Theatre as, the main event, proposes a critical language of possibility whereby participants are encouraged to script, act out and speak strategies for the future. The body (including mouth and mind) becomes a metaphorical language of possibilities and plans for the future. In AI, the participants employ a language of design. They design their futures through using words that focus on strategy and possibility.
Theatre as Discourse and Destiny stages	When taken to specific locations, the language of theatre becomes specific to context and background. It is generated towards a discourse of change, possibility, analysis and as future strategy. Using the themes and dreams that have evolved from the previous phases, the design phase analyses and creates the social architecture to shape the positive language of transformation for the present and future. Both methods maximise their intentions here - to a further transformation through a language that is specific to possibility.

Moore in Barnes and Hazel (2014) explains that the strategies for data collection in Forum theatre take part in phases as also explained in the Table 2. She articulates that the first part consists of interviews. These are not verbal interviews, but taking inquiry into stories of oppression as spoken by participants' bodies. These exercises include games that explore oppression and Image Theatre. They are articulated in the first and second stage on the table. The data is embedded in the bodies of the participants more than what they articulate verbally. She explains that these games culminate in post discussions and reflections. The researcher uses questioning to get the discussions and reflections going. This is an opportunity for the researcher to gather initial thoughts around the oppression being explored. The other phase takes part in the improvisation role-play based on the stories collected from the first phase interviews. Here the researcher gathers data from the scripting and rehearsing of the play to the enactment of the Forum Theatre /performance/event. The data is generated from the questions that the Joker asks, the discussions and observing of the behaviour of the participants as they explore the theme of oppression, oppressor-oppressed

relationships and possible solutions to the problem of oppression. The aesthetic space of Forum Theatre is what produces generative and embodied knowledge as it starts with the use of the body as container of knowledge, emotions and culture. Boal (1995) purports that the aesthetic space is the container in which bodies, expressions/actions, language (word), figures, and symbols are points of reference in the research design of Forum Theatre. The aesthetic space is where researcher collects data from looking at, observing and identifying data sets.

The Joker-researcher then uses questioning as a tool for reflexivity into exploring the reality that is presented in the aesthetic space. Questioning in Forum Theatre provokes dialogue. Dialogue is an important tool for research as much the questioning that provokes it. Barbosa, Camarda and Dwyer in Howe (2019) *et al* point out that the way of asking questions in FT enables an analysis of oppression and power structures. They aver that it is a tool that simultaneously provokes thought for analysis and conscientizes participants. They actually call the process a dramaturgy of collective questions. The questioning approach combines word, body and emotion. This means that in the play, the actors present situations that are questionable and need to be investigated. The bodies of the actors also show structural relationships that are open to analysis. When affected in their bodies, minds and in word (the language of the oppression), they are instigated to question their reality. The questions are propelled by the Joker and the anti-model Forum Theatre play itself. The anti-model play is the play that is presented to the audience showing the theme of oppression that needs to be solved. For the problem to be solved, audience members use their bodies to act out the solutions and the acting out provokes dialogue. The dialogue acts as analysis tool for the feasibility of the solutions in whether they promote change.

In the perspective of interactive research, Paul Sullivan's (2012) explains that the basis of dialogue is to provide an understanding of a problem between two people and it offers deliberative democracy to communication. He argues that it is born out of inequality. Automatically, it is premised on a special zone between two people or groups of people who realise the difference between self and other, but feel they have to understand each other. This form takes on as reflective of power-relations and the negotiations of identity and misunderstanding (Sullivan 2012). This description gives an instinctive relatedness to my approach on how dialogue in Forum Theatre becomes a tool to collect data. Forum Theatre already focuses on power relations and the self and other, issues of inequality with the desire to get people to negotiate misunderstandings. In this regard, Sullivan explains that dialogue acts as strategic action. Strategically the researcher positions participants to talk exploratively on a selected topic/theme. She/he gathers what they say and uses it to analyse relationships, trends and patterns and even analyse the dialogue itself.

Practically, in Forum Theatre, participants are given a theatrical and dramatic situation that instigates dialogue by virtue of it showing the complexity of inequality among people. The FT play leaves the audience ready for and open to dialogue. When the play ends, the Joker initiates discussion by asking the audience what the play is about. This already opens up to analysis - a measure of the knowledge or relevance of the theme of the play to audience. More questions are asked about its relevance to their lives. In this way the Joker-researcher ascertains the reality of participants. Data in Forum Theatre is embedded in the reality of the lives of participants. Sometimes the Joker uses hot-seating - a technique whereby the actors as characters are questioned on what motivates them to behave the way they do. Hot-seating opens up dialogue between the audience and the actors on stage and data is gathered on the participants' understanding and realisation of relationship dynamics and inequality. When the play is shown for the second time, spectators get on stage to try and solve the problem in the play. Here the Joker-researcher observes how

each spectator responds to the actors on stage and prepares questions that analyse power relationships, and inequality. The questions he asks provoke dialogue that is engendered in debate. The Joker asks questions such as: Was this intervention feasible, if so what makes it; what were its shortcomings, what was the reason for the new actor to make that decision; what would you have done differently, among others?

The consideration that life is theatre entails a positioning of theatre as some of analysis into life (Birch, 2021) and the dramaturgical language of Forum theatre positions an ontological shift of arts research in paradigms of practice-based research. Birch argues that Forum Theatre has been viewed as dramaturgy that analyses life in performance. He views this dramaturgy as the very essence of data collection. He states that “Forum Theatre has been widely used ... in research and so there seems to be an appetite for viewing plays ... as methodology to explore actors’ responses to political and cultural tensions, perhaps even oppressions ...” (Birch 2021:npg but in chapter 11)

Boursier (2021) posits that the Forum Theatre data collection occurs in contexts that are guided by what is happening to people and the world around them. Thus, looking at paradigms and identifying challenges and analysing them. Forum Theatre is, therefore, suitable to field contexts such as immigration and themes such as xenophobia. As a data collection method, she argues that Forum Theatre has a participatory and interactive style to enquiry. The interactive style encourages the researcher (Joker-facilitator-researcher), spectators and actors to learn from each other. It also encourages them to question each other’s reality. The niche of questioning being the very notion of enquiry in research. This positions participants and researcher-facilitator to a collaborative data collection approach.

The Theatre of the Oppressed has vast techniques and FT has been chosen for this study. A closer look at Forum Theatre, will show that it is one of the central techniques of TO. The structure of FT is such that it incorporates other TO techniques such as games and exercises and Image Theatre. These techniques offer an initial grounding to the bodies of participants. They prepare the participants for the intense theatre language in the Forum Theatre performance. Arguably, we cannot have an FT performance without the support of games and Image Theatre. Sometimes, for reflection purposes, it is important to use some of the TO techniques such as Rainbow of Desire and Newspaper theatre. They offer another creative level of reflection that is within the TO frame.

Appreciative Inquiry is an action research approach that explores issues of power, conscientizes people to positive development, critical thinking and action. Ludema, Cooperrider and Barrett (2001) throw light on Appreciative inquiry as part of the group of action research processes and approaches. They base this assertion in the four phases of AI which include questions that analyse reality and people’s lived experiences when they plan for change in their communities. Social realities are created by the interactions, language and relationships amongst people. The AI research approach aims to discover what gives life to a system and generate knowledge and action. Ludema *et al* (2001) argue that the intentionally affirmative assumptions of Appreciative Inquiry about people and their experiences are a contrast to more traditional forms of research that seek to analyse or diagnose problems (Ludema, Cooperrider and Barrett, 2001). The AI research process is focused on changing perspectives and directions on how things are done as much as action research deems necessary.

This study uses AI as a data collection method in its integration with the method of Forum Theatre. Shuayb *et al* aptly explain the role of AI as a method to gather data:

AI is a collaborative and participative approach. It relies on interactive techniques such as group discussion and interviews to identify good practice, consider change, and introduce it to a system. AI views language and words as the basic building blocks of social reality. The most crucial aspect of AI is the interview. Questions are asked that strengthen the system's capacity to identify, anticipate and heighten positive potential. AI interviewing is different from traditional interviews because rather than soliciting facts and opinions, AI interviews seek examples, stories and metaphors. The purpose is to find the best moments, events and stories. (Shuayb et al 2009:4).

Practically, the data collection process of AI is guided by the 4D phases. This is as much as FT is also guided by the stages in FT. As stated by Shuayb *et al*, questioning is critical in the data collection process. Participants are asked questions about their stories of success and strength and how they use those stories to change their lives. These stories bring the awareness that in the arduous task of life, there is still hope. The storytelling and metaphors in storytelling also form the foundation of research in AI.

Each 4D stage has an interview question attached to it like this: Discover = what gives life, Dream= what might be, Design = what should be the ideal and Destiny = How to empower, learn and improvise (Cooperrider and Godwin 2011). These questions are asked affirmatively. An affirmative question is, "A question that seeks to uncover and bring out the best in a person, situation or an organisation." (Whitney *et al.*, 2002: 89). The Discovery phase asks questions that explore and identify strengths of the group or individual. Participants are asked to respond to the question of 'what gives life' by telling and sharing stories that show how successful they are presently. The stories collected in the Dream phase are used to envision what the individuals want to happen. Instead of asking what the problem is rather questions are asked about the stories. These stories elicit more in the way of positive detail around their themes. Dream dialogues are elicited from this. The Design questions use the element of probing which is used a lot by the Joker in Forum Theatre. The questions dig for provocative propositions, and they aim to create compelling dialogues on what participants will do to change and build their future. As illustrated, the Destiny phase questions probe into how participants can bring the provocative propositions to life - what is it that they learnt, how will they improvise to empower themselves. The Destiny question is something that lacks in Forum Theatre, more questions should be asked by facilitators on what the participants will do with the solutions that they would have explored. These positive questions of the after-FT event should spark thoughts of how participants will bring a positive impact to their lives and those of the oppressors. Questions from the first 3Ds are ported over to the phases in Forum Theatre where the researcher has to constantly ask positive questions after participants have shared stories of hardships and pain. The questions help participants to bring their thoughts back to the bright side of life.

The AI researcher collects data from the stories told and from the dialogues elicited from the questions. Storytelling in AI begins with group members telling stories about their lived experiences - who they are, their celebrated skills and strengths, and why they are present in the workshop. Appreciative Inquiry brings latent stories out into the open and selectively focuses on their success theme. The power in this, for the researcher, is the story's ability to diagnose and analyse who the research participants are, do they have it in them to share positive strengths and where do they focus their energy. This allows participants to gain appreciation for their common experiences that cannot be quantified. This is because the researcher asks participants, after sharing their stories, to group themselves into sets of commonality. This look at storytelling, as a form of collecting data, incorporates purpose, anecdotes, metaphor and allusion. As such, stories, must be deconstructed to understand the tacit elements that inform the researcher of the

context of the story. It is necessary for the researcher to identify narrative elements that have the purpose of knowledge generation. The initial stories are used right through in the 4D phases to keep building on the context that would have been identified initially. It is important that this context be analysed. Storytelling is the thread that weaves all the data sets in AI together.

In combining with FT, participants should be made aware of the context of the stories in Forum Theatre. They should be made aware that they have the theme of oppression. This means they should focus on positive stories where they challenged or won the story of oppression. Thus, AI stories become ‘stories of strategic intention’. In this way they can impact implicit knowledge, and that is what is needed in PaR. They have in them the ease ability to impart and generate knowledge. Storytelling in AI becomes, “... a statement which bridges the best of ‘what is’ and what might be. It is provocative to the extent that it stretches the status quo ... and at the same time is grounded in what has worked in the past” (Cooperrider, Whitney and Stavros, 2003:148). The stories give a historical context to the problem under study. This is something that AI works effectively with for Forum Theatre. Both methods focus on the historical contexts of stories, except that AI focuses on a past that works and hopefully can be threaded into the present and future.

These two data collection methods (AI and FT) have their predilection in the conception of practical/experiential strategies that can be used to promote behaviour change and development. They engender experiential participation as action upon reflection which promotes critical thinking which is posited and needed in PaR. As such, PaR placed this research as a participatory collaborative process geared towards the social transformation of the Zimbabwean immigrant women through combining FT and AI.

It should be noted that, in one of the initial sessions, I introduced Appreciative Inquiry on its own by going through the 4D phases. We did a full-on AI process where the participants were taken through each phase. This was not only to teach them about AI, but to discover the efficacy of AI in raising their consciousness levels. This was easy to do because AI was not placed and evaluated against another method. The questions and instructions that were asked and given were directed towards the topic of xenophobia. The process of Forum Theatre was explained to them verbally. They were informed of every FT step as we moved along the process.

Other Data Collection Methods

Although the research design for this study is PaR, it had an inclination towards ethnography. This is because PaR borrows most of its data collection methods from ethnography. This study sought to use some of the ethnography techniques. Because ethnographic research is focused on participant observation and not limited to interview data, it gives comprehensive accounts of the participants’ way of life. This generates an extensive understanding of empirical insights into social practices (Reeves *et al* 2013). These would not be otherwise revealed in simple interview generated data. The ethnography connection to PaR becomes palpable here.

Caulfield (2021) and Hjorth *et al* (2020), define ethnography as a method of research that immerses the researcher-practitioner in a particular community to observe and investigate its personal behaviour and interactions. The investigation allows the researcher to gain a deep understanding of a groups’ social dynamics, habits, practices and shared culture. Its roots lie in and take a cultural lens on social constructs of the community (Eriksson and Kovalainein

2008). Notwithstanding, this did not become my research design, however, it offered a valuable paradigm in the narrative account of the women's historical and social constructs and gave me the niche to explore different aspects of the group.

The reason that I was drawn more to PaR is its approach to systematic reflection on practice experience. Practice experience appears to be evidence based. This means that in the creative process, knowledge is derived from research to creation (experientially) through the application of relevant methods that are evidence-based and best practices. In this case, it is Forum Theatre and Appreciative Inquiry. The rigour in this paradigm is that it is evidence-based and is subject to standards of practice. It tends to address subject matter derived from and/or relevant to public discourse within historical, social, political, environmental, and policy contexts. This gives it strength for multidisciplinary and collaborative practice. It collaboratively involves the researcher and the research participants to enhance knowledge and to improve practices toward improving the capacity of community development. There is an equitable sharing of decision-making between the researcher and participants. Both are given the agency to drive the research in the desired direction. The agency most of the time is to advance and improve the well-being of societies and communities.

Since this study was practice-based, participant observation was core to the collection of data. Participant observation involves observing participants who are the subject of investigation with the intention to interrogate specific behaviour and action related to the issue under study. It involves deciding on specific moments to observe. The researcher then takes field notes and writes them down or journals his/her findings. The observation is carried out in the most ethical manner where participants are informed beforehand the reason for observation which is merely to document their activities.

Kawulich (2005) asserts that participant observation provides ways of checking non-verbal expressions of participants' feelings and thoughts. It also deepens a holistic understanding of embodied phenomena that is being studied especially in a PaR space. Kawulich states that participant observation also helps answer qualitative and explorative research questions and build theory from the practice. The research question for this essay is explorative in that it seeks to find out how combining FT and AI can, instructively, engage Zimbabwean immigrant women in dealing with the issue of xenophobia.

Video recording was used to aid in participant observation because the researcher may not be omnipresent in his/her observations. Video recording also helped in capturing those moments that the researcher might have missed. Video recording is about capturing the virtual moments of participation in the research space. Specifically, I employed the participatory video recording approach. Jewitt (2012:03) states that participatory video is an investigative data collection tool that is relevant for "action research and practice-based interventions concerned with participation and empowerment in the context of ...marginalized communities." This is principal to this research because the video captured those moments of the women's critical participation and transformation. Jewitt further stipulates that video recording allows for different levels of analytical observation which are useful in in-depth investigation on the issue under study. The recordings were transcribed so as to interpret and study/analyse the data.

This research involves reflection at many levels. Journaling is useful for this and it is a way of keeping a critical reflection diary that looks into the transformational journey of both the participants and researcher-facilitator. The participants were enabled to work on individual journeys which highlighted the reflective aspects of the research

questions and gave insight into their individual growth and learning or lack thereof. The researcher-facilitator highlighted moments of epistemological and pedagogical dimension and perception on how the women would have dealt with xenophobia and documented them.

Interviews were used in carrying out baseline research on the participants' lived experience and assessment of the transformation process thereafter. They helped in the gathering of personal information, feelings, and opinions of participants. They had a way of exploring sensitive issues that the participants were uncomfortable with in general group settings. Somehow, they also enhanced a "human dimension to impersonal data"¹⁷ because the questioning in the interviews explored their behaviour.

Important, is the idea to exploit existing documents and scholarship to support all frames of thought. I also used researcher and participant journaling. These two methods of reflection involve writing down thoughts, feelings and emotions about the experiences during and after each workshop. There was so much value attached to this process because it enabled the researcher and participants to reflect deeply into the portrayal and experience of their participation. Journaling is a reflection strategy used in phenomenological research to capture participant experiences in real life settings (Hayman *et al* 2012). Hayman *et al* argue that it promotes valuable and constructive participation. However, care should be taken when using this method because the participants may feel exposed when they are asked to delve deep into the personal.

To support the processes of the research activity, analysis and report write up, I used literature review as a data collection method and validation of emergent thoughts as the research progressed. Snyder (2019) explains that literature review involves building the research on and correlating it to existing knowledge. Employing scholarship and documentation as data collection, does not draw on the subjective bias of the researcher. It is an objective way of building thoughts around the study. The researcher simply critically appreciates literature as informing the study. This helps in the arguing and building of theory and knowledge of enquiry.

I looked for and set up a structure for the literature that would serve as base data. The kind of this literature is the one that gives historical background of how immigrant women have lived and survived in South Africa. This literature was used and reviewed in Chapter 1 and the analysis chapters to give the historical context of the study. Chapter 5 uses literature as its basis to explain marginalisation and participation. The literature was a means of collecting information pertinent to the topic of xenophobia, marginalisation and other topics in this study. As a data collection tool, it involved identifying, recording, meaning making, and transmitting information from texts to majorly support some of the data collected from the fieldwork.

1.8 Ethical Considerations

Since this was a highly practice oriented research which involved human participants, who were to some degree, vulnerable because of the nature of the concept being investigated, I had to clearly articulate ethical considerations with the Wits University Ethics Clearance Committee. This entailed making sure that privacy, confidentiality and anonymity were top priority. The participants had to sign confidentiality and anonymity forms and consent to voluntarily partaking in the study. The women and men that participated in the study were marginalized by virtue of

¹⁷ www.evalued.bcu.ca.uk

them being foreign citizens. Xenophobia has instigated a discourse of marginalisation in Johannesburg. I had to also explain how the archival data was to be stored and when it would be disposed of to protect their privacy, confidentiality and anonymity. I explained that all recorded data will be kept in my password protected computer and the hard copy journals will be kept in my lockable cupboard and discarded after the study.

This study had ten participants and this included the two technical team members. There were five women and five men. There were eight members who are considered as the main participants. The two technical members were men. They are presented in their pseudonyms. The reason for using pseudonyms was because the topic of xenophobia is sensitive and as foreigners they did not want their real names to be used in this study. It should be noted that the technical team was also, to some extent, involved in the research through their role as reflective video recorders. This means that they had to use the video recording process to capture the intricate moments of merging the two methods and the xenophobic thematic thrust. All the participants were Zimbabwean migrants living in Johannesburg. Their age range was from mid-twenties to mid-forties. This is a demographic group that populates the working-class migrants of Johannesburg.

To protect their identity and privacy, the participants were asked to sign participant information sheets and consent forms to take part in the study. The participants were provided the opportunity to leave the programme should they so wish. Protecting their identity also included them using pseudonyms in both the research process and this report. Consent involved asking them to take part in the research process, to be audio and video recorded. Because the methodology in this study is Practice as Research, reflective processes were used and this includes journaling. The participants were asked to consent to their journal reflections being captured in the research report/thesis. The journals were kept by the researcher in a lockable cupboard only accessed by the researcher and will be destroyed after ten years of their usage.

Considering that the interventions had the capacity to trigger trauma, the participants and audience were told to let the researcher know and if this was beyond her, they would be referred to a Drama for Life therapist. When there was hostility between audience members who were playing the 'oppressed' and the 'oppressors' at one point, the Joker played a critical role by allaying the tensions. The Joker gave rules of engagement before each FT event and kept reminding the audience to respect each other and the actors on stage. It was also explained that the play was fictional and everything was done in the spirit of positivism as posited by Appreciative Inquiry.

A major challenge that I experienced with this research was my role and position as the researcher versus the position of most of the participants. Most of them were not in formal employment and being part of a theatre project was presumed as temporary income. Although, one of the clauses in the ethics clearance, that I documented, was that they would not be paid for participating, some of them explained to me their dire financial situations as foreigners in South Africa.. They were only given transport money and refreshments. To them those were some of the highlights of the inequalities created by migration. I had to take the responsible act of informing them that this research was, therefore, one of those ways in which they could explore the discrimination and inequality and find alternatives on how to foster active citizenship. This included them taking part in the research workshops to explore the socio-economic systems of South Africa - a benefit for their participation.

Another interesting dynamic of this study was the audience involvement. Interesting in the sense that they had to be included in the study because Forum Theatre should have audience members. They were not direct participants of this study, but they helped the eight research participants reflect on the value of their Forum Theatre play and what other people thought of migrant women and xenophobia. They used the spect-acting moments to reflect on their journals. As the researcher, I did not directly capture the audience's words and actions, but used what was written by the participants. The audience members were from Hillbrow Theatre and Emakhaya Theatre at Wits University. The Hillbrow Theatre had mostly migrant audience members (general public) who were invited to participate by choice and there were a few locals. The Emakhaya Theatre had mostly local South African audience members who were mostly students at the university. A few were not students. Both audience sets were told that the Forum Theatre event was a research study on the methods of Forum Theatre and Appreciative Inquiry with the theme of xenophobia among Zimbabwean immigrant women.

1.9 Conclusion

This chapter has given initial thoughts on the strands pertinent to this study. It has explained the significance of the research project in its contribution to the building of knowledge in arts-based and practice-based domains. By providing an overview of key information that drove this study, it has outlined and demonstrated the topical issues that are going to be covered. The chapter has also given a frame for the main reasons why this study will be useful to the development of the South African society in understanding the issue of xenophobia and migration. It has acted as a proposal to the practicability of the research-design, theoretical and conceptual structures pertinent to the research process.

The ensuing chapters bring forth the research findings, analysis and outcomes including how the methods helped to structure the investigation of combining FT and AI. Chapter 2 provides an overarching conceptual lens on raising the participants' bodies to levels of consciousness. Chapter 3 argues for the methodological choices and explains the methodology of the study. Chapter 4 explores the concept of rehearsal rooms as symbolic conceptions for a rehearsal for transformation. Chapter 5 is an examination of the women's journey of transformation from the margins of the South African socio-economic and political society to the centre. Chapter 4 and 5 highlight the lessons learnt about xenophobia. PaR presupposes as critical paradigm and dimensions in deepening the subject thought on the issue under study. Chapter 6 provides perspective on the dilemmas and freedoms of the Joker's role and function in combining the two methods. Chapter 7 gives the final perspective of the study and offers recommendation on thoughts about xenophobia, Forum Theatre, Appreciative Inquiry and Practice as Research and possible further study.

Chapter 2

“Raising Bodies to Levels of Consciousness” - Looking through the Lens of Critical Awareness in Forum Theatre and Appreciative Inquiry (A conceptual framework)

2.1 Introduction

This chapter describes the concept of ‘raising participants bodies’ to levels of consciousness and argues for it as a lens in exploring the methods of Forum Theatre (FT) and Appreciative Inquiry (AI) as embodied tools in investigating xenophobia among Zimbabwean migrant women. It does not only conceptualise consciousness, but also acts as backdrop to how the Zimbabwean women and the research participants were conscientized to the xenophobia oppression. Examples are given from the fieldwork to support the importance of consciousness in this study. The chapter also leans on the participants’ experiences to support the theories. Although this is a conceptual framework, the participants’ voices offer a valid connection between theory and experience. When Tino expressed that the AI and FT methods had a way of making her aware of the xenophobia nuances more, I picked that up as potential data to drive the point of consciousness home. Critical consciousness/awareness (also known as conscientization in Boalian terms) is one of the concepts in the Theatre of the Oppressed that encompasses the numerous concepts that Augusto Boal explored in the poetics of TO. These include dialogue, metaxis, transformation, rehearsal for a revolution, praxis, solidarity, humanisation, liberation, empowerment, agency, dominance and subjugation. In close examination, raising awareness is threaded into each of these concepts. So instead of a simple conceptual framework, this chapter looks at the idea of using the concept of critical awareness as a conceptual lens pertinent to the merging of AI and FT and articulating the women’s addressing of xenophobia.

The lens is premised on the synergy between aesthetic representation in the two methods and the physical body in challenging subjectivities in ontological domains of xenophobia as a form of oppression. The concept of raising bodies to levels of consciousness is important for this study because it gives focus on how the participants were enabled to transition and develop from an initial naming of their world to a new and different naming with regards to their conception of xenophobia. This chapter also gives a landscape to the emergent themes into the greater part of this research. As this research follows a participatory and action-oriented paradigm, the concept of raising bodies to levels of consciousness is apt and relevant to this study. It also articulates how the positive approach of Appreciative Inquiry adds value to Forum Theatre in raising the participants’ bodies to levels of consciousness in a more expanded manner.

The chapter also argues that the function of the human body is critical in raising levels of consciousness by virtue of it being the obverse point in human existence. For humans to dream and think about a world where existence is eminent, the body becomes the tool. The lens is enunciated against the backdrop of Freire’s pedagogy of the oppressed, Boal’s poetics of the Theatre of the Oppressed (TO) and Appreciative Inquiry ideologies and the practice in the workshops. The structuring of the workshops assisted in examining and underlining the growth in the levels of consciousness. The workshops also served as empirical knowledge and a propellant to the refutation of an imagined or virtual existence of the problem of xenophobia in the Zimbabwean women’s lives. This chapter asserts that Appreciative Inquiry can counter predispositions of the negativity inherent and build on the consciousness raised in FT and AI.

The synergy in the notion of consciousness raising in Freire's pedagogy, Boal's poetics and Appreciative Inquiry principles is best articulated in human functioning and critical reflexivity. The three frames exhibit a focus on how human functioning is the primary component inside and outside theatre. Outside theatre, oppressed people encounter social realities that can distort their human vocation and in theatre, the oppressed usually see this representation of their lives as pitiable entities that can be fixed by mere histrionic sympathy. When Freire confronts a consciousness, amongst the oppressed, that is characterised by naivety and resignation, Boal challenges a theatre that does not bring audience members to consciousness whilst Appreciative Inquiry defies a social reality engraved in negative consciousness. The three frameworks develop a critical awareness of people's realities through a praxis characterised by a dialectic between thought and action and reflection pertinent in practice-based research. As such, this chapter emphasises the significance of the research participants reaching to levels of personal and group awareness in their exploration of xenophobia through critical theatrical engagement.

The pedagogic stance of consciousness is pedestalled on the Zimbabwean women learning and unlearning the impressions and conceptions of xenophobia. This was about bringing change and new knowledge. This kind of pedagogy is explicated in Vygotsky's (1978) ideas about dialogue and its relationship with social interaction and cognitive development. This study was propelled by the employment of dialogue as a factor in promoting practice and theory. The chapter touches on the role of dialogue in increasing the women's involvement in their quest for change and liberation (the process of consciousness).

In the context of this study, consciousness will be defined in Freirean (1974, 1985, 2000, 2003, 2014) terms as the condition by which a person has a sense of identity, beliefs and attitudes about the world in which they live. This is an awareness of objectivities and subjectivities about the reality of the world. It includes an individual and collective focus characterised by a profound understanding of freedom/liberation and oppression in the world and especially the perception of social, political and economic oppression. The awareness of the world is to authenticate human beings' existence and their ability to name their world.

While Freire gives us a positive outlook on the function of the process of liberation for the oppressed, in most of theory writings, he focuses on the suffering of the oppressed. Nothing is amiss with that, but the reader of his work is made to believe that the pedagogy of the oppressed is only in the service of the oppressed. It somehow overshadows the role and possible change of the oppressor. Oppressors are painted as monsters who cannot change. He states that "oppressors seek to transform everything into an object of domination and that they think have an exclusive right to humanity. He explains that for years oppressed people have internalised oppression. They get to the extent that they fear freedom because their thoughts are submerged in subjugation (Freire 2014). Freire argues that they often do not hear or believe that they are good or there is anything good about them. He even says that the oppressed think that they are unproductive and lazy, hence they become convinced. Such discourse is a limitation to freedom and change. The pedagogy of the Oppressed, constructs a reality that perpetuates limitations and argues for a non-exit from the oppressors. This gives them the notion to continue to fear and hate the oppressors in despair. The oppressed even adopt the guidelines of the oppressor and even adopt his way of living and this is true (Freire 2014). That being articulated, it leaves workshop participants with the feeling that they may not ever win the war against oppression. This is because the facilitators also constantly ask questions that provoke thoughts about inferiority and the demonic tendencies of their oppressors. There is the feeling that oppressors will always be negative in their lives. After one of

the sessions where I asked the participants to create images of the relationships with their local counterparts, they showed the negative. This is exactly what Freire saw with the oppressors of his time. Workshops such as these rubberstamp this negative thinking. Then I asked them to tell positive stories of how they have interacted with the locals. It brought hope to the participants that despite the negative narratives there is positiveness in their interaction with their oppressors. This was also to highlight and test whether they would continue to see this positive as we continued to explore problems with xenophobia (the oppression) and oppressors.

The idea is to challenge these notions by contesting what is presented as the status quo by imagining and building a new version that will extend Freire's philosophy of freedom - an alternative version of 'what could be different'. This is about reconfiguring oppressor-oppressed relationships to include a positive discourse into the thinking of the pedagogy. This proposition acknowledges language and discourse as an important aspect of transformation. When Forum Theatre reaches the Theatre as Discourse level, we hope the language of binaries can change from blame to tolerance. This is because even after the Forum Theatre event, participants leave the stage still smarting over what the oppressors have done to them. Effective dialogue in the pedagogy and Theatre of the Oppressed can be achieved if there is a pursuit of fuller humanity through recognising problems and successes in life.

There is a need to introduce and discuss the consciousness lens in Freire, Boal and Appreciative Inquiry briefly. In a nutshell, Henry Giroux in Freire (1985) describes Freire's pedagogy as a landscape where, through and in education, domination, power and politics are fundamental in shaping and giving consciousness to what it means to be human. Giroux explains that this is where people try to name their world (being conscious of it) and this becomes a struggle for a particular way of life. Giroux points out that, in this landscape, Freire asserts that education then should become a weapon for critique and possibilities of freedom. For this to be ascertained, men and women should make action and critical reflection to become a fundamental part of their lives too. Critical action and reflection comprise an act of human beings aware/conscious of their world and gaining the ability to name it in their own terms and requirements and finding faith in their own struggle as subjects. From this point of view, whoever is in the vocation of learning becomes motivated and enabled to study driven by his/her own preconditioned knowledge in his/her own language and reality. The term language here goes beyond verbal articulation, it connotes all facets of the body that yearn to learn and produce knowledge. This is not to locate this study on an educational focus, but Freire's critique on education gives a strand on many social projects that seek to engage participants in undertakings of consciousness on oppression such as this one. As oppressed migrants, the Zimbabwean women expressed, in the preliminary workshops, their desire to be conscious of the nuances in the xenophobia narrative so as to name their existence in a foreign land.

Augusto Boal's poetics of the oppressed is premised on the philosophy of the human body becoming the mechanism of consciousness and transformation: That is, transforming audience members from being mere spectators of the dramatic action to becoming the main actors/protagonists of the dramatic action. This transformation is not merely for theatrical or dramatic change, but the spectator also improvises and plays out his/her real-life situation. Boal (2000) emphatically points out that the initial vocabulary in the theatre and poetics of the oppressed is the human body. He explains that the body is the main source of sound and movement (these two are necessary for dramatic action). If considered closely, sound and movement take their attributes from the body. Boal (2000:125) contends that, to control theatrical involvement, "...man must, first of all control his own body [*finding a level of consciousness*], know his

own body [*identifying levels of consciousness*], in order to be capable of making it more expressive”. The body, according to Boal is an imperative container through which a human being stores his/her experiences and desires to authenticate his/her life. I believe that the bodies of the participants in the workshops were the ontological vessels that contributed to the knowledge being sought for in study. It is within this juncture that this study introduces a dimension of doing things differently: Making the body an imperative and radical research tool and raising it to levels of consciousness.

The practice of Appreciative Inquiry is postulated on a process of inquiry that gives participants a leverage to shape and name their world from an innovative standpoint of transformation and enhancing their capacity to live a positive life. The process of inquiry is encapsulated in the successive phases of AI where, in each step, participants become conscious of their circumstances and change thereof: Change from the past to the present to the future. This suggests that in each phase Of Appreciative Inquiry a certain level of consciousness is raised about their existence in the socio-political and economic world. Whitney and Trosten-Bloom (2010) emphasise that the process is crafted on an exploration and discovery of things that give life its vitality and health. Again, the emphasis is on authenticating participants’ existence. Vitality and health can only be experienced through and by the participants’ bodies. Without health and vitality, people cannot claim the fullness of life. Although the AI model does not focus on embodied exercises, this research modified the approach to become an embodied experience as will be explained later.

2.2 The Concept of Consciousness

It is important to explain the concept of consciousness so as to delineate its significance in the raising of participants’ bodies in this study. Firstly, Freire’s pedagogy concerning consciousness is a focus on the process and ability for the oppressed to recognise and realise social, economic and political oppression and repression: The ability to understand where the conscious or lack of is embedded - internal or external. Freire describes consciousness as:

Inheriting acquired experience, creating and re-creating, integrating themselves into the context, responding to its challenges, objectifying themselves, discerning, transcending, men enter into the domain which is theirs exclusively... Integration results from their capacity to adapt oneself to reality plus the critical capacity to make choices and transform their reality. (2013:4)

To best articulate this description, there are certain ‘buzzwords’ and phrases that Freire has used, in the above quotation, to bring to attention that the concept of consciousness as a process that can develop individuals to new levels in their lives. The words are: *Acquired experience, creating and re-creating, integrating, responding, objectifying, discerning, transcending, and transform*. These are verbs in the continuous tense depicting an action that is ongoing. Freire’s pedagogy celebrates ongoing action as the creative and ultimate start to combating oppression and develop people’s lives. Besides the ongoing action, the words somehow problematise naivety and presumptive static behaviour among oppressed people.

In the current world that is riddled with domination, dictatorship, narcissism, inequality and all forms of social injustice, oppressed people are riddled with the lack of critical awareness of oppressive situations They are aware that they are alive, but they are blinded by the false or mythopoetic belief that their lives are purposed on the status quo through a supernatural order not of their own making. This is naïve consciousness.

Naïve consciousness can be best explained as the lack of awareness amongst the oppressed that they are oppressed as well as can be their indifference towards the oppression (Aschuler 2016). Although the participants, in the study, were

aware of the oppressive nature of xenophobia towards Zimbabwean women, they had initially exhibited the knowledge of a people who were resigned to their 'outsider' fate. They viewed xenophobia as a socially accepted predicament to be suffered by 'their likes' - a term gratuitously used by some of the participants to define who they are. This **naïve consciousness** is a clear indication of how oppressed people acquire certain bodily dispositions that do not show health and vitality. In addition, when they do not see or value the necessity of liberation, therefore, they view the oppressors as not machinations of their dehumanisation and oppression and they allow them to make decisions for them. All this lack of awareness becomes, for them, a limitation for their growth and a situation that they think cannot be transformed and their lives become hopeless. This is an illustration that oppressed people do have a sense of consciousness, but Freire and other social changers postulate a consciousness that is raised to a level above ingenuousness or naivety. Naïve consciousness becomes the first level of consciousness.

When in a naïve domain, oppressed people do not see the need to re-create their experiences and contexts. For example, what was learnt from the experience of the Zimbabwean women is that by virtue of their foreign status, "...being harassed by locals was something we could just accept because we are beggars in their country". This was said by Tino, one of the participants in the workshops. Such resignation is exhibited by people who think they do not have the ability to respond to challenges of exploitation and if they were to respond, it would be in an ingenuous way. They fearfully and simply enter or integrate into the context of the oppressor's world as is warranted.

Alschuler (2016) and Freire (1985) point out that when oppressed people are at the level of naïve consciousness, they identify mostly with the inferiority complex and their egos align with resignation, helplessness, fear, weakness, childishness and dependence. When someone acknowledges that his/her foreign status has reduced him/her to be a beggar, it is a clear indication of hopelessness, helplessness, dependence and weakness. This reaches to the extent that even if they try to integrate into the life of 'normality', they do it with the imagery of an Oliver Twist beggar antic. An Oliver Twist antic is when people are reduced to beggars. They are not affirmed as humans, but people who do not deserve equal privileges as those in power. The metaphor is drawn from Charles Dickens novel 'Oliver Twist' where Oliver became a symbol of begging and the dominated. Consequently, economic migration (the major reason for Zimbabwean immigrants in South Africa) engenders undesirable social and psychological effects such as these ones listed above. This escalates the superiority and malevolent dominance of the oppressor. However, Freire asserts that there is power in integrating into this world with the right weapons of fighting the oppression. Freire (1973: 4) calls the weapon, "the critical capacity to make choices and to transform their reality". This is a choice in acknowledging naïve consciousness and working towards changing it: Aptly, the raising of bodies from the first level of consciousness. Through the playing of the initial games, the women pointed towards the resignation that they are second class citizens in Johannesburg. One example was the exercise where they were asked to draw their body outlines and write a phrase or word that described the outline. Some of the words that came out were fearful, needy, Zimbabwean, desperate and it is what it is. They were then asked to create images of those words and the body images reflected the density of the words

Freire does not vouch for simple consciousness as the next level, but for a **critical consciousness**, also known as conscientization. According to Freire (2014) critical consciousness/conscientization constitutes a deep and profound questioning, understanding and awareness of instability (that influences oppression in society) and taking action to analyse and actualise it. Being critical, in itself, is a prefixed ability to discern or recognise instability in human

thoughts, relationships and interactions. It is a powerful predicate to consciousness. Before attaining consciousness, the body of a critical person is attuned to finding reason to act on something before taking a decision. Instead of just accepting a demeaned foreign status, through a critical focus, Zimbabwean women would, initially, be enabled to recognise through their feminine instincts/consciousness that they are being subjugated and realise that they are not just objects of scorn, but full human beings. Hence, Freire (2000:30) argues that “The basic condition of conscientization is that its agent must be a subject (that is a conscious being), conscientization...is exclusively a human process... only men [and women] achieve ...grasping and expressing the world’s reality in their creative language.” Freire’s argument is that for oppressed people to comprehend the world they live in; they must expressly become subjects who dialogue their reality.

Freire proposes a humanist philosophy that asserts human beings as different from animals. He contends that even though animals breathe and move on with their lives, they lack the critical reflection that distinguishes human lustre towards their duties and existence. This, therefore, distinguishes men from being mere objects. They are subjects of their daily lives as they have the ability to speak, think and act on how to change their circumstances as opposed to animals. The creative language being projected by Freire is the language of the possibility for human beings to transform their world. This creative language gives the human being the capacity to question and critique his/her world.

Henry Giroux (1988) also asserts that critical consciousness illuminates how oppressed groups can possibly change a language and discourse that has been distorted by the culture of their dominators and develop a new discourse that makes them view the world objectively. Viewing the world objectively constitutes an insightful critiquing of their reality as not a stagnant or normalised phenomenon but an alterable one. It should be noted that xenophobia cannot constitute a life of ‘normality’. Normality in this context refers to attaining a life of socio-political and economic stability whereby other people do not suffer discrimination of any kind and are not denied their human rights. In Forum Theatre, such language is granted literally and literary on the theatre stage. In Appreciative Inquiry, the discourse is even more elevated as it is hinged on a positivist frame - the perception that posits positive thinking as a stimulus into the awareness of the world.

Critical pedagogues such as Peter McLaren, Henry Giroux and Ira Shor acknowledge that the principal aim of conscientization is transformation, but their focus is on educational revolution. Though this study does not focus on education, the perceptions that the critical pedagogues highlight also gives credence to the perceptions with other systematic forms of oppression. The notion of education contributes to the dialectical construction of social transformation in this study.

Notwithstanding, conscientization itself does not transform people; it is the impetus for change to happen. Conscientization prompts the oppressed to change from just being reactive objects to pro-active subjects of society and to focus on action and reflection as the substance of their transformative growth (Shor 1980, Giroux 1988, McLaren, 2000). The change from being reactive to pro-active is transitional. The oppressed move from a naïve consciousness to the next level that is possibly more eye opening. Naïve consciousness is not fully liberatory because the oppressed still view the world with blinkers. It was not enough for the women to just realise their foreign status and be resigned to it and not do anything about it. The drama workshops, in due course, took them through generative

processes of this consciousness building. The Theatre as Language phase was the epicentre of critical consciousness. This was when the women scripted the play from the knowledge they had gathered about xenophobia; from the dialogues that they had gone through in their understanding of xenophobia; from the stories that they had shared and from the images that they had created. From these, they could construct a play that left the story of xenophobia open to scrutiny and that allowed them to analyse their world.

The next level of consciousness as explained by Alschuler (2016) is *fanatical consciousness*. Alschuler points out that, at this level, the oppressed exaggerate their oppression to a point where they desire a violent retaliation against the oppressors and wish to trade places with them. He even posits that they praise their own ethnicity as superior to that of the oppressors. Freire (2003) warns about the dangers of this as the oppressed may short-change the process of true liberation. To illustrate this, Deco, a participant, said “*Yah vele, thina singabangcono kulamalocal abangelamthetho njalo abangamavila, lendlela engiyiyo ngiyabonakala ukuthi ngiqinile kulabo.*” Loosely translated from Ndebele to English to mean that “We can be better than local South Africans who are immoral and lazy and I look stronger than them”.

I realised that the growth of participants into this subsequent level of consciousness was facilitated by their outrage at the realisation that despite their foreign status, their social standing had been further debased. One of the Theatre of the Oppressed (TO) games made them realise that their egos had been bruised. Briefly, this was an improvisational game on oppressive thought control. One participant played the role of a very powerful god whose kingdom was made successful by his followers, but he was not to appreciate them. It was explained to the other participants (who were to role play as followers) that they were to present praise speeches using their bodies only. The players who played subordinate roles were not told about the attitude of the god. Interestingly, the players prepared lavish praises for the god only to be ridiculed after their recitals. Upon reflection, the participants who were the players realised how their egos were bruised by each ridicule. The god would tell them to either sit down, or how ridiculous their bodies looked and to take their stupid bodies out of his sight. When asked about how they felt about the ridicule, the participants explained that they did not just realise that they were inferior, but their egos were bruised. Others explained that they wanted to be also in the position of the god so that he would feel what they felt when being ridiculed. They even asked if they could switch roles with the god character and show how they could also use the same language and demeaning tactics used by the god.

When asked to relate this to their lives in Johannesburg, they exclaimed how they realised the shamefulness and loss of self-esteem when ridiculed because of their. Sindie gave an example of how she was pointed out as being a ‘kwerekwere’ through the hairstyle that she was wearing. She stated how it made her realise her foreign status, but was more bruised that the derision was motivated by the way she looked. Illustratively, the game was a way of gauging the foreigner risk profile of Zimbabwean immigrant women and their level of consciousness with regards to xenophobic denigration perpetuated by locals. When the oppressed realise the bruise, they begin to convince themselves that the oppressor must be dealt with or they should become like him/her. Their perceived humiliation becomes the impetus to which a rebellion must begin. What was noticeable, in the behaviour of the participants, was that they did not want to start a rebellion against the system of oppression, but against the perpetrator. Hence, Alschuler (2016) calls this level, fanatical consciousness.

This level, if not well facilitated, could lead to a physical serious violent rebellion. Augusto Boal (2003) also gives an example of participants in one of his Theatre of the Oppressed interventions who wanted to take up real guns to fight the oppressors. Aschuler (2016) points out that, at this point, the oppressed feel that the oppressors must be convinced of their error through whatever means necessary. This is not to suggest that this stage/level is erroneous, it becomes a necessity to understand the physiological ontogeny of the oppressed. However, Alschuler argues that if the rebellion would succeed then the system of oppression will remain unaltered.

The oppressed must move from an illusory superiority to a sincere battle for their freedom. This movement is a removal of coarse distractions yearned by their bodies in the first level. The participants are enabled to further interrogate the causes and influences of the oppression through critical consciousness and engagement. At this juncture, critical consciousness and engagement is very pertinent as it encompasses critical reflections and actions. The context of transformative development encapsulates a responsible undertaking by the oppressed to factor a critical understanding of weaknesses and strengths for both them and the oppressors, an informed perception on the causes and influences of xenophobia. This is an awareness that they are not only changing the oppressor, but the situation that is oppressing them. Some of these situations, for foreigners, may stem from or be motivated by internal oppressions, history, migration policies, political dispositions of their own countries, environmental resources, institutional suppressions, to name a few.

Notably, this level of critical consciousness must allow for a transformative development that encapsulates human functioning where the oppressed also perceive the humanness of oppressors. To illustrate this, in one of the workshops, the participants were asked to role play the perpetrators of xenophobia so as to understand their motivations. Most of them reflected on their desire to then dialogue with the locals so as to understand them better rather than cocooning their assumptions about them. The participants knew that they had to act after this, they became conscious of their previous veiled illusion of solving their problems with violence, but through dialogic negotiation. Alschuler (2016) calls this a *liberated consciousness*. Freire argues this as critical praxis:

The insistence that the oppressed engage in reflection on the concrete situation is not a call to armchair revolution. On the contrary ...true reflection leads to action. On the other hand, when the situation calls for action, that action will constitute an authentic praxis only if its consequences become the object of critical reflection (2003:66).

This explains that the world would rather solve its conflicts through authentic and critical negotiation and courteous means than philistine ones. Substantially, the level of liberated consciousness engendered new perspectives on the participants' understanding of xenophobia. The women were challenged, through critical praxis, to have a nuanced perception of themselves as objects. They were enabled to critique and reconstruct their positions as foreigners in the host society and understand the minds and the behaviour of the locals. Freire's and other critical pedagogues' approach to the concept of consciousness illuminate Augusto Boal's experiential undertaking in the Theatre of the Oppressed where the concept of raising of participants' bodies physically is clearly articulated.

2.3 Levels of Consciousness in Theatre of the Oppressed

The idea of transforming the consciousness of audience members into the consciousness of the spect-actor in Theatre of the Oppressed is Boal's foremost plan. The plan is organised in the following stages: Knowing the body, Making the body expressive, Theatre as language and Theatre as Discourse. Augusto Boal only highlighted these stages as part of the TO aesthetics, but this study argues that these stages also articulate the raising of the participants' bodies to

levels of consciousness. When Freire contends for the educational and intellectual, Boal argues for a physical raising of consciousness.

For Boal, the theatre model observes the physical body as ultimate in this process. The focus on the body is on both its muscular and mind structure. Augusto Boal's ideology on raising consciousness hinges on the poetics and aesthetics of the Theatre of the Oppressed where the body takes centre stage. For Boal (1985 and 1992), the body is the representation of social ideology. The ideology is posited on personal human experiences and interactions as embedded in the body, inclusive of consciousness. He explains that in and outside of theatre, the body experiences life and life is experience. Boal juxtaposes two considerations of the human experiences: "We have before all else, a body, - before we have a name, we inhabit a body." (Boal, 1992:114) and "The first word of the theatrical vocabulary is the human body!" (Boal, 1985:125). The former consideration speaks to life outside and the latter inside the theatre.

Boal's theatre focuses on the mechanisms of oppression, it posits the body and its habits as the vessels that can be used to explore those mechanisms. Auslander (1992) explains that the body is the fundamental locus that Boal uses to address ideological expressions of oppression through theatre both outside and inside it. As such, Boal (1992:62) suggests the "...despecialisation of the body as a necessary step towards the exploration of oppression". Morelos (1999) avers that in Theatre of the Oppressed, the human body enters into a discourse of social and political power relations, negotiating transformation and soliciting a physical commitment for this revolution with other bodies in the theatrical space. The entering into the discourse and negotiation are activities that are reliant on participants' consciousness of their world.

Furthermore, for Boal (1985), theatre is a form of self-consciousness that is modelled in the experiences and activities of oppressed people as they use their body inscriptions to examine their fears, dreams, hopes, past, present and future imposed by oppressors. Although theatre is not necessary a 'monologuous' experience, Boal illuminates that it is modelled on the initial personal mind-body feel of the problem before it is shared on stage between actors and spectators.

The attitudes that participants adopt in a TO experience start with each individual consciousness before it is shared collectively with the rest of the group. The social and historical significance of each problem is channelled from each individual experience. Brecht (1964), one of Boal's influencers, argues that the body and its actions and gestures are determined by their awareness of historical and social ideologies. His revolution was an outcry on how the body becomes distorted by these ideologies. This research reveals how the immigrant women's bodies had become socially 'deformed' in their initial consideration of Johannesburg as being alienating and unwelcoming and was exacerbated by the city's divisive characteristic.

Boal's analysis on this social deformation of the body is also engraved on a Marxist discourse on material discrimination and oppression. This is a discourse pertinent to this research as highlighted in the research workshops on how material discrimination influences xenophobia. Whilst Boal adopts Freire's educational discourse on consciousness being the highlight of transformation, he partly adopts a Marxist ideology that posits a consciousness based on material interactions. Marxist material interactions constitute discrimination in terms of socio-economic haves and have nots that subsequently affect people's physical dispositions and leads to conflict (Cudd, 2006). Karl Marx viewed oppression as causally based on the economic and material interaction system. Cudd argues that with

Marx, women oppression is more of an economic cast more than just a majority versus minority issue. Material interaction is the justification for women's conscientization especially in the 21st century that is riddled with material dispositions more than anything else. Women have also been caught up in the web of the material interaction discrimination.

Boal's TO initial stages and even later ones seek to free the body from its materialist interactions, mechanisms and the deformation enforced upon it by the oppressors' machinations. In argument, materialist interactions are responsible for how the world views existence and relationships. Boal (1985) also contends that the physical world is shaped by these materialist notions. Participants, in a TO session, need an awakening from the very core of their beings of these mechanisms that distort their material world view. He argues that before the body can become expressive in theatre, participants/audience members/ spectators/ spect-actors must be enabled to identify the specific ideologies, such as the materialist alienating discourses that shape their consciousness. The Marxist ideology is very important in this lens because one big reason for the influence of xenophobia is the scramble for resources. Whilst local South Africans are battling with their own economic woes, Zimbabweans are accused of unfairly competing for the resources when they 'steal' jobs from South Africans.

Bodden (2010) highlights that Boal attempts to outline ways in which theatre can be used to critically conscientize the oppressed by offering them a body language that will help them to discover new concepts about their world. They do this by offering themselves to, first, the thinking of the protagonist character, and then assuming his/her role by replacing him/her on stage. They then discuss plans for a new order and try out solutions to the problem of oppression. This gives the spect-actor the right to think in opposition to the protagonist and to think for himself (Brecht 1964). As the dramatic action changes, the spect-actor makes a conscious and responsible act of changing his/her world and becoming the agent thereof. Before he/she even sets on stage, he/she critically engages with the world of oppression and critically seeks to change it. Bodden (2010) asserts that this is not a consciousness of a moral or correct path, but one where the spect-actor is enabled to examine/interrogate/explore all possible causes and influences of the oppression. This critical conscious and engagement are celebrated by Freire (2003) as the agency for liberation and by Boal (1995) as the rehearsal for a revolution.

2.3.1 Stages of Critical Engagement in the Theatre of the Oppressed

This section tries to explain the stages in the practical raising of bodies to levels of consciousness in the Theatre of the Oppressed workshops. Intrinsically, the stages follow a transformative sequence. This transformative sequence resonates with the rise of the levels of consciousness. The phases are also rooted in participants' experiences that are inclusive of their past, present and future lives. We cannot separate participants' experiences from what their bodies feel and do. It is bodies that conceive experience. In the beginning stages of the TO workshops, it was ascertained that the bodies of the participants had been riddled with certain experiences that depicted a consciousness of despair and loss of hope. Notwithstanding, a radical and holistic shift was realised in the body disposition of the participants as the workshops progressed.

Although some scholars, such as Auslander (1990) argue that Boal has not theorised the body in or as a continuous or systematic way for the exploration of oppression and transforming the audience member, I would argue that the four stages outlined by Boal give that systematic continuity relevant for raising consciousness. Boal may not have, in clear

terms, outlined the continuity in his poetics, but through the way he articulates each phase from Knowing the Body to Theatre as Discourse. One can notice the organised sequence. My argument stems from the sequential connection between each TO stage to the next as observed in the workshops. The systematic continuity was built on each level of consciousness. The expressions of the initial stages culminated in achieving the focus of the final stages. Whether the continuity became systematic by default or chance, it was realised as such and is to be discussed. That is the reason why I argue for the lens on raising bodies to levels of consciousness in this practice-oriented research. The stages outline here informed the research process and drove the progression of the various processes of transformation inherent in AI and FT.

a)Stage 1: Knowing the Body

This first stage consists of bodily exercises that are meant for the initial exploration of oppression. Initial in the sense of understanding the human's predicated sensation of who he/she is and with particular regard to issues of oppression. The body becomes the main source of this sensation and in performance conceptions this entails movement and sound which are two critical elements in drama and theatre. Movement and sound are resultantly pertinent in finding voice and action for actors in performance and with greater emphasis among oppressed people. Before engaging in the theatrical experience, Boal (1979) argues that the oppressed person must be enabled to know his/her body. Boal's poetics posit a conception of humanness based on people's awareness of their bodies as intellectual vessels to express their socio-political views. This intelligence is inherent in all human beings with theatre being the space for this intellectual exploration and progression. This does not suffice that oppressed people are oblivious of the capability of their bodies, but this becomes a re-awakening of a person's body function. History has shown that oppressed people become stupefied by the oppressor's demands to the extent of them (oppressed) not realising what animates them. Babbage (2004) alludes to that participants rediscover their bodies as capable of examining what oppresses them after a protracted stupefaction. Participants may get into a TO space with outside distractions that facilitate a level of naivety and ingenuousness about their world. The bodily exercises then have the ability to let participants apprehend the mechanisms of the body as central to sensorial, cognitive and behavioural capabilities of the body in perceiving oppressive elements against their lives. Hence, they are enabled to remove the distractions. Babbage argues that as the body de-familiarises itself from these elements, the process becomes an exercise of self-knowing.

To demonstrate how the body was used as a container of knowledge in TO, in this stage, the women were asked to identify stories of xenophobia and locate them in particular parts of their bodies and explore what and how those parts felt. There were various locations of the parts: On the chest (representative of the feelings of the heart), on the head, on feet, on hands and on private parts. The women focused their attention on these parts to make clear how their bodies became containers and sources of knowledge. More clearly was their explicit reference to their private parts which showed that their sexuality was also a matter of concern. When they were asked to exercise and reconnoitre the particular part, most of them expressed that it was the most difficult exercise they had ever been asked to do. Linda expressed how, intrinsically, her being feminine disposition intrinsically made her a source of scorn and disdain. They were accused of spreading HIV. She explained that Zimbabwean women were being labelled as prostitutes without any proof. This 'femme fatale' image was expressed as one of the causes of xenophobia. Sindie exclaimed that she felt that her body part was in a revolution to speak and move. the body part needed to be untangled from imagined chains. The part was her feet which she felt were more pronounced in her movement from Zimbabwe to the streets of

Johannesburg in her search for a job and yet the movement of her feet was stifled by the fear and terror of xenophobia. As a performance dancer, she also attributed her feet to her talent for dancing which could give her the financial and social freedom that she had been longing for. In reflection, some participants highlighted their lack of awareness on how the body carries so much knowledge of who they are and what it is that could be oppressing them. Most of the stories of xenophobia, for the women, through the body parts exploration, were located on their chests and heads and that was symbolic of tension and pain.

Morelos (1999), in his book on symbols in TO, asserts that participants are enabled to apprehend experience symbolically through and beyond sensorial articulation to frame the self and their world. This is the beginning of consciousness. However, what I noticed, here, is the naivety that the participants' bodies exhibited. Welile explained that because the body is in some sort of pain, it wants to explode, and attack the oppressor who is to blame for the way it feels. The others explained that there was nothing they could do with the pain, it was necessary that they experience it.

The men, in the workshop, were asked to locate where they thought their fellow women experience the narrative of xenophobia and explore the body part. They found the exercise more difficult than the women did because they based it on assumptions, most of them located it on the private parts. Their argument was that they believed that their fellow women were raped because of their foreign status. Whilst the women appreciated their concern, they explained that rape was an overstatement. The women who had located their private parts, in the exercise, clarified that the narrative was mostly based on the comparison of their sexuality with that of the local women. They found this narrative both derogatory and surprisingly complimentarily, but unhealthy and uselessly competitive. The suggestions and insinuations of private parts stemmed mostly from stereotyping which is inherent in the narratives of xenophobia. Both foreigners and locals have been locked in this war of stereotyping such and it is projected in their bodies and used in the discrimination of each other.

Boal (1979) articulates that through the bodily exercises each person is conscientized, through a physical regimen, of social distortions, limitations and possibilities of rehabilitation. The body experiences the beginning of consciousness as it also predicates the defining of an individual's character. It all begins with the self, but becomes shared with the comrades so as to examine the oppression collectively and in solidarity. The issue of examining in TO is an act premised on individuals and groups becoming conscious of situations of oppression.

a) Making the Body Expressive

The self-identification, self-awareness, self-knowing process continues to the subsequent level of making the body expressive. One of the hugest body dispositions amongst Zimbabwean women in Johannesburg is the prevalence and recurrence of arduousness as the result of the fear of xenophobia and existential anxiety and distress. This stage continues to ferret out internal individual and group oppressions so as to help participants overcome their fears and anxieties. The orientation of this stage is its playful approach in dealing with the problems of oppression. Boal carefully chooses games and exercises that could be played by children, but also enjoyed by adults. Initially, the body was awakened to the consciousness of narratives engraved in it, in the second stage the body is implored to further relax its tendons so that it starts to express a particular socio-political perspective or attitude and/or character. Babbage

(2004) affirms that the aim of the processes in this stage is to help the oppressed to be more aware of their habitual patterns and explore a broader frame of possibilities to transform their lives.

To illustrate the raising of consciousness in this stage, I will use one of the Theatre of the Oppressed games that I think was greatly demonstrative in the 'making the body expressive' workshop. The participants were instructed to play *Columbian Hypnosis*: A game from Augusto Boal's arsenal for actors and non-actors exploring the role of oppressor and oppressed (the leader and the led). They were divided into pairs where A was the leader and B the follower. Participant B had to follow the centre of A's palm whilst A manipulates B in whatever movement and direction B must follow. Then the variation was that they should exchange places. From observation, the exercise challenged each participant to unconsciously explore some body parts that they may have ignored in their everyday activities. This taking apart of their muscular structures posited a projection on the awareness of when the oppressed are manipulated and yet they would be unaware of the manipulation. It also projected the realisation of human interaction embedded in power relationships. Deco expressed that when he was being manipulated by his partner, he became aware that the manipulator can exert him/herself to challenge the person he/she is manipulating because he/she is aware of his dominance and superior position.

Upon the realisation that this game could also be interpreted to illustrate the relations between oppressors and the oppressed, Tino articulated that it brought an awareness to her body that the machinations of the oppressor were also embedded in their (oppressors') bodies. She stated that whilst her body was uncomfortably challenged, her partner's (who was playing the leader) body was aware of the limitations of its comfort zone. Thus, her partner would not get herself in a compromising and conceding position.

Getting the participants to switch roles also made them aware of the motivations of, especially, the oppressor and anxieties of the oppressed each time when the leader would change palm position. When they played leaders, the participants explained how they revelled in thinking of different and tricky moves to challenge the led. They said they felt an insidious reflex in their bodies to make large their movements so as to bring the led to surrendering. They reflected that that is how they felt the locals were motivated to get them out of their country - to manipulate them until they really felt the anxiety of being foreigners.

On challenging the habitual patterns of their lives as people experiencing xenophobia, the participants illustrated that they became conscious of the physical contrivances of the body as becoming the relay of knowledge in their apprehension and interpretation of oppression. The following of the centre of the leader's palm was also symbolic of the centeredness of oppression and how instead of being drawn into that centre the women needed to make a commitment to expand and change their thoughts on being manipulated and exploited because of gender and foreign status. This stage, ultimately, leaves participants eager to deal with the naïve and fanatical consciousness provoked in the first two stages. The next stage tries to address this level of consciousness by provoking them to find a language that will give possibility to challenge their status quo and plan for a better future.

c)Using Theatre as Language

This stage utilises Theatre of the Oppressed techniques that articulate theatre as a language that promotes consciousness raising. The process develops to become more theatrical than exercise based. It involves dramaturgical

exercises that prompt spectators to use the language of theatre to make a conscious move to take action. The stage involves the scripting of the play and doing a Forum Theatre performance. The play that was scripted by the participants is called 'Office 0027' (see appendix 1). The spectators' bodies are readied for a new dawn, that of liberation. Their consciousness is predetermined by the discovery of a language of multiple interpretations through images and dynamic theatre. When their bodies have been enabled to be expressive, they aspire to assert their agency for transforming their lives. There are various techniques in this stage, but focus will be given to Image and Forum Theatre as these were explored in the field research.

Image Theatre is a process of image making through the use of participants' frozen/static or silently moving bodies, individually or collectively, to analyse forms of oppression. Each body, in the space, becomes an archive of counter-discursive stories that shape experiences of oppressed people. The process consists of three stages: Real, ideal and transitional. The real image depicts the reality of oppression as perceived by the participants. The ideal shows an envisioned future that is without oppression. The transitional is when participants show how they can move from the reality of oppression to a future without oppression. Each stage posits a development in consciousness. Morelos (1999) asserts that Image Theatre is a preparatory step to Forum Theatre. Already this highlights a continuous development in how participants are entreated to move from a certain level of consciousness to the other. At this level of preparation, Image Theatre brings into focus the heightening of sensory awareness of oppression before the intellectual awareness postulated in Forum Theatre. The critical analysis of identities, social representations and subjectivities are heightened here. Auslander (2010) states that consciousness begins in the image and the image is presented through the human body. In consensus, Morelos (1999) affirms that as images are created by human bodies and through the bodies, mimetic orientations are created. Images, therefore, allow for a critical dispensation of thoughts and representations about the reality of life.

Sophia and Deco disclosed how they had always perceived xenophobia as a distant phenomenon that was experienced only in spaces of physical confrontation. The images that they subsequently created then accentuated what they experienced as various portrayals of forms and patterns of xenophobia, that Sipho and Deco were not aware of. This was a moment of overt awareness of the narratives of xenophobia in Johannesburg. In the portrayals were profound attitudes of hatred, fear, dehumanisation, delegitimising of other people's identities, hostility, scramble for resources, mistrust, hopelessness and defeat, to name a few. This was largely driven by the enabling of the participants to step back, reflect and observe xenophobic patterns of behaviour in each image without even verbally narrating any story. At this point, Tino pointed out how she would have broken down if she were asked to verbally narrate her story, but the image creation was a container for her to meditate on the realisation of a deep-seated realness in the portrayal of xenophobia. The images became a language that was expressive of nuances and were a psychological release for many participants.

Image Theatre also raised a consciousness of discursive patterns of Marxist material discrimination inherent in the stories of xenophobia. The performance of material existence was concretised in the group images where the participants showed an awareness of the material divide and hostilities between them and the locals and with Zimbabwean women at the receiving end. The negative socio-economic repertoires between migrants and locals were unlocked. Unlocking these negative repertoires paved a way for reflexivity amongst the women. They realised how they could contribute to the South African industry without becoming categorically competitors with their local

counterparts. However, they were not sure if the South African government economic policies could advance this move. This is not to suggest that they have to forfeit good jobs in South Africa, but should be critically aware of material discrimination as a force for development and not unhealthy competition.

The transitive pedagogy of consciousness in Image Theatre prepares participants for a more prominent order of consciousness in Forum Theatre. Whilst Image Theatre has the transitive and sensory effect, Forum theatre posits a consciousness of dialogue and action. Ideally Forum Theatre seeks to awaken a sense of heightened capacity for people to become conscious of a possibility of becoming protagonists (main actors) of their lives Boal (1979; 1995). Bodies are modified to take up dramaturgic roles to enable them to closely examine causes and influences of oppression and to examine explored and unexplored solutions to the problem.

The equation of consciousness is well calculated, in Forum Theatre, when audience members are quizzed to become critiques of the play and are invited on stage to cross examine the problem through offering alternative solutions. The invitation, intrinsically, becomes an awareness that the play is not just for naïve consumption. It makes participants aware that they have to make a commitment to a socialising process of theatre where both their intellectual and physical capabilities are challenged. The actors, too, who in this case were the participants (Zimbabweans), were on guard to see how their story pans out and if their take and consciousness on xenophobia is challenged or not.

The Forum Theatre play, itself, is a process of increasing awareness, from its development up to its enactment. This play should refocus both the actors and audience members' minds and bodies to the critical questioning of their reality. This means it should be open to multiple possibilities starting from its thematic focus and characterisation to open out a plethora of alternative solutions. Boal (1998) buttresses the point that the play should be designed to raise consciousness around specific social issues that will open up for responses from the audience members. The responses are mostly guided by the intriguing nucleus in the play's thematic focus. The participants created a Forum Theatre play that highlighted various thematic thrusts that hinged on scramble for resources, immigration policies and practices, identity, impunity and belonging, to name a few. They scripted this play to create an awareness about the plight of Zimbabwean migrant women and was for the consumption for foreigners and local South Africans. As for the participants, the scripting and rehearsing of the play was also pedestalled on their own awareness of political and social contexts of xenophobia. The play was the centre from which consciousness could exude and played as a consciousness raising force. Against this backdrop, the play also plays a pivotal and critical role in stimulating and challenging the oppressed people's consciousness to challenge oppression and demand change as they see it on stage as well as in their real lives.

The Forum theatre play (used for this study) and for the FT performance was created by the participants. The play is set in three scenes that follow the life of a Home Affairs official who represents systems of oppression and characters of oppressors that perpetrate oppression in Johannesburg. The play is entitled "Office 0027", a symbolisation of various attributes and themes of the xenophobia narrative such as identity documentation, discrimination, citizenship, job stealing by foreigners and humiliation. Scene One explores a conversation between two characters, Sthabile and a Home Affairs official, (represented as HA). Sthabile wants to renew her permit because it has some problems. She is met with intentional bureaucracy and her problem is not solved. Scene two explores the issue of foreigners being accused for stealing jobs from South Africans. The characters are Sophia and HA. HA will not do his/her job so that

blame will be put on Sophia. Sophia is a boss in this Non-Governmental Organisation (NGO) that deals with women social justice issues. According to HA, Sophia cannot enjoy the fruits of South African material resources so HA sabotages her. When she tries to fight against it, HA further demeans her. Scene three explores Dumisani and HA's story. Dumisani is helping a friend (Tendai), who cannot speak for herself because of the trauma she has suffered when her husband was murdered and her daughter raped during one of the violent xenophobia attacks. Again, Dumisani reaches a dead end as HA is adamant not to help him.

It is incumbent upon the Joker (who is the facilitator of the FT processes) to raise participants' bodies to liberatory and high order consciousness in Forum Theatre. Foremost, he/she makes the spect-actors aware of their oppression by inviting them to take part in the theatre and asks critical questions that try to destabilise a naïve and fanatic consciousness of their world view. He/she also stimulates debate and discussion to further awaken the spect-actors' consciousness. In the Forum Theatre platform, the Joker must provoke a political consciousness that is positioned towards the discourse of democratic citizenship (critical and liberated consciousness).

When I joked one FT performance session where the audience members were predominately the supposed oppressors (local South Africans), I realised that although my questioning sought to decode the perceived hegemonic tendencies blamed on the locals, I reinforced homogeneity among the local audience members. I also negated the negotiation of difference and diversity. This shows how the Joker ought to be aware of the context of raising consciousness. In situations such as the one I facilitated; it is desirable to stimulate a civic global consciousness. If the supposed oppressors realise that they are being antagonised, they become more aggressive than negotiable. This did not help the Zimbabwean women, in any way, to articulate their concerns as this perpetuated more aggression from the locals and they feared more ostracisation. The Joker also should be aware that consciousness raising is not for the benefit of the oppressed only if a balanced revolution is to be achieved.

d) Theatre as Discourse

The techniques in this stage were created by Boal out of necessity and in response to pressing social issues in public spaces and places, such as restaurants, prisons, parliament etc and they were used where existing methods proved inadequate. Scenarios of social problems are presented contextually to provoke spontaneous reaction (Babbage 2004). The Forum Theatre event/performance rightly fit into this stage because it propelled the discourse of xenophobia from the general Johannesburg populace. To support the FT event are other TO techniques that will also drive the discourse forward. Examples are Newspaper theatre, Invisible theatre, Rainbow of Desire and Legislative theatre. They are mostly used to conscientize people on the performance of their bodies in the public spaces. Only Newspaper Theatre and Rainbow of Desire were used in this project as reflective tools at the end of the project. They were also used as some kind of group focus interview for the participants to report on their thoughts about the merging of FT and AI.

The performance of the FT play on xenophobia at Hillbrow theatre was contextually motivated because the issue of xenophobia is a lived experience for most Zimbabwean women living in Hillbrow. The discourse of xenophobia is inherent in places populated by foreigners. As such, the FT performance in Hillbrow, was defaulted to become theatre as discourse. The conscientization of other women in Hillbrow and locals was also imminent.

2.4 Enhancing Consciousness Raising through Appreciative Inquiry

This section explains and argues for the combined forces of AI and FT and how AI, a positive approach to change, can enhance the deficit-based approach of Forum Theatre in raising participants' bodies to levels of consciousness. Each AI stage will be positioned against each TO stage. Appreciative Inquiry is framed on the 4 phases/stages of progression: Discovery, dream, design and destiny. Appreciative Inquiry is not necessarily premised on the poetics of body performance, but the argument is that participants in AI are not devoid of the physical engagement and this research modified AI to become a dramaturgic process.

2.4.1 Stages in the Enhancement: A Tabled Format

Appreciative Inquiry centres on human imagination and remembrances and thoughts of the past, present and future. Participants interrogate this timeline cognisant of an interrogation of their stories of success being illustrative of an awareness of change. AI as a method of Inquiry also challenges oppressive attitudes in communities by highlighting what works rather than what does not. This gives participants the platform to ride on a conscious level of commendation rather than disapproval.

Coperrider and Whitney (2005) assert that AI is guided by asking participants critical questions and allowing them to dialogue. Each stage carries pertinent consciousness raising questions that provoke critical thought and action. Guided by the affirmative topic choice principles of AI, the questions, in the workshops, were constructed in a bid to open the participants' minds, awaken underlying assumptions and stereotypes, provoke thought, engender curiosity, stimulate reflection, promote dialogue, invite action and explore possibilities. These are all generated through and in the process of consciousness raising. The same was achieved in Forum Theatre, but a more enhanced problem-solving tack was realised in each step of the way when AI was introduced.

*Please note that there were various other games and activities played in each stage, but the activities selected here clearly articulated the raising of consciousness. Table 3 shows the enhancement stages.

Table 3: Enhancement stages

Theatre of the Oppressed Stages	Appreciative Inquiry Stages	Comments and arguments on the Enhanced Raising of Consciousness
Knowing the body The women were asked to explore the body and the body parts that spoke to the narratives of oppression and xenophobia as foreign citizens in Johannesburg.	Discovery The women were asked to explore their bodies and discover the body parts that made them aware of their strengths, talents and stories of success as foreigners in Johannesburg. They were then requested to comment on their feelings and thoughts on the comparison of the body narratives in the TO exercise with the AI	This stage highlighted nuanced narratives of discovery and rediscovery of, first and foremost, their being human. The nuances of this existentialism were embedded in their rediscovery that there was something positive about their lives. AI gave them a new consciousness that despite their perceived discrimination there was something worth celebrating about their lives. The women expressed that they felt they were on an equal plane with their South African counterparts as they rediscovered their strengths and stories of success in a place such as Johannesburg. They felt a reawakening of their sensual beings. They pointed out that the newly discovered vigour and vitality seemed to overshadow the oppression that they felt in their bodies. Some wondered if

	exercise. (The men were asked to do the same, but focus on their thoughts about how they think the women feel.	this kind of feeling would be long lasting or it was short-lived in the research space. Intrinsically, AI became an inquiry into generative and invigorative probability in the lives of the women in the sense that by starting on a positive focus they are enabled to envisage a future enriched with possibilities. Instead of their bodies feeling the negative vibes of oppression. The ‘de-structuring’ of their muscular tensions in this AI exercise provoked a consciousness built on an affirmative foundation. This is not to say that the participants totally discarded the problem at hand, they began to validate a consciousness of hope.
Making the body expressive The participants played TO games that further investigated the initial discovering of the body and its narratives of xenophobia.	Dream After the participants played the Columbian Hypnosis (as outlined in the making the body expressive section above), they were given sheets of paper where in their pairs they had to write down and share how they thought they could, in future, use the talents and strengths they rediscovered in the initial phase. After the writing down, they had to go back to the Columbian Hypnosis and this time find their own ways of leading each other into the future without one of them leading.	In the ‘knowing the body’ stage of TO, the participants had acquired a consciousness that they were oppressed and discriminated against because of their foreign status. This was their status quo. Their thinking was limited to a servile and self-abasing nucleus. When they were given the platform to dream about a desired future, in AI, with their realised talents, they moved from the naïve consciousness to an awareness of possibilities. These are some of the dreams that were shared: Co-owning theatre and other businesses and companies with their South African counterparts, the ability to freely speak out against xenophobia, to freely walk the Johannesburg streets without fear, the improvement of migration policies, South Africans understanding the political situation and helping them fix the atrocious situation back in Zimbabwe, forging a women’s organisation that will bring South African and Zimbabwean women to work together to further the needs of women etc. This emerged from the talents and strengths such as community mobilisation, artistic orientation, economic skills, education, taekwondo etc that they shared together in the discovery and dream stages. The dream phase has a way of challenging naivety and limitations of the negative status quos. Concurrence in consciousness is also realised when they share dreams of their imagined future. Bushe (2011) explains that this stage becomes a graphic representation of what the future can hold. The participants’ consciousness was raised to a level where retreating would not be an option. The negative thoughts of xenophobia had to be challenged. Tino expressed that of course she would have continued to fight after being taken through Columbian Hypnosis, but the bringing in of the AI dream phase had made her realise that there was a lot more at stake that she has to fight for.

<u>Theatre as Language</u> The Participants were taken through the processes of Image Theatre and Forum Theatre for them to discover and design activities that will display the power of theatrical language that will raise their bodies to higher levels of consciousness.	<u>Design</u> The participants noticed how the ideal images, in the Image Theatre activity, reiterated what they revealed in the dream phase. The ideal images acted as the point of reference in them designing activities that would help them achieve a better future for themselves in this design phase. The ideal images encapsulated their desire for a united and non-discriminatory South Africa that understood the plight of foreigners. As such, in this phase they roleplayed as members of the South African and Zimbabwean diplomats who wanted to script a play that would be played in various communities and broadcast on the various media to show the plight of Zimbabwean women. From the stories of xenophobia that were shared in the initial stages, a Forum Theatre play on xenophobia entitled Office 0027 was scripted. Then the participants and I directed and rehearsed the play and the facilitation/joking of the Forum Theatre play together.	So much energy was invested into this phase as the participants were scripting the Forum Theatre play. The participants exhibited the symbolic bee disposition where the spirit of unity and hard work was imminent because the reality of needing to fix the problem of xenophobia loomed. The naïve and fanatical consciousness raised in the initial phases of TO needed to be challenged. When they worked in unity to script the play, their consciousness was commensurate. In the design phase this is the level where participants co-construct their future. Stavros and Torres (2005) articulate that Appreciative Inquiry prompts the asking of reflective questions on what it means for people to work together (co-construct/co-create) to achieve their greatest dreams whilst they are aware of assumptions, thoughts, beliefs and feelings about their lives and others. They point out that this awareness provokes action. The perspective of co-construction augments the perspective of collective and solidary fighting against oppression as explained in Freire's pedagogy. The determination of working together in creating the play created an awareness among the participants on the power of exploring options and possibilities together where they can be open to new meanings and developments. This awareness becomes engraved in the bodies of participants such that they value other bodies in space as being critical in group reflective awareness. The different words and phrases they put together in the play were an articulation of their awareness of the language in their current world and the imagined change of that world. The initial stages of AI developed a certain vocabulary for them on what it means to be foreign and face xenophobia and yet be positive about who they are and the possibility that the future may hold greatness. This phase made them understand that a united and non-discriminatory South Africa could be a far off reality, but in the rehearsal I noticed the determination of their acting and directing that they wanted to authenticate the story of xenophobia for it to receive testimonial accreditation. This was the acquisition of a critical and liberatory consciousness. Even though AI posits a positive focus, this does not mean that the designing of activities should appear utopian such as scripting a play with positive themes. This would be a misleading approach to change and it would not do anything to raise the consciousness of the participants that is why the
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		content and themes of the FT play showed the negative reality of xenophobia. Cooperrider and Whitney (2011) and Bushe (2000 a and b) assert that AI does not ignore problems, but it approaches them from the other side. The positive fixing of the problem of xenophobia would then be found in the next phase. This phase had to highlight the problems so that they could be addressed.
Theatre as Discourse The Forum Theatre play was performed and facilitated to the Johannesburg community at Hillbrow theatre and Emakhaya Theatre. The play showed 3 main themes and the play was divided into 3 scenes: 1, South African Home Affairs bureaucracy and challenges that women face in the offices. 2, Scramble for resources and how Zimbabwean women are accused of prostitution to boost their incomes. 3, Impunity on local criminals and how Zimbabwean women suffer when their husbands are killed in the xenophobic violence. Then there was the foruming (post discussion) of the play to find possible solutions to the problem of xenophobia as shown in the play.	Destiny The planned activities in the Design phase are executed in this stage. The focus here was on finding the solutions that would be given by the spect-actors in the foruming. It was incumbent upon the Joker to ask appreciative or positive questions that had an AI focus in trying to find how AI could enhance Forum Theatre. This phase also focuses on how the group of participants can action plan for the continuation of the project after this final phase as a way of sustaining it. The group met after the performances to action plan on how they will consolidate the given solutions to re-plan the way forward.	The idea in this phase was to support the ongoing raising of consciousness in the previous stages. The liberatory consciousness was provoked in the design stage where the group had started designing an action to address xenophobia. In this stage they were enabled to put their design to test and see how the audience would react to the themes raised. When the audience reacted to the quizzing of the Joker through various techniques in the questioning, it became apparent that some locals wanted xenophobia to be challenged whilst others did not and the Zimbabwean audience hoped for an understanding from the locals. This created, among the women, a consciousness of hope although it was not that easy especially with the South African audience. There was more solidarity from the Zimbabwean audience who actually gave ideal and lucrative solutions because they identified with the problem. When the Joker asked positive focused questions such as, “Do you think the world would be a better place if immigration policies were changed to accommodate the easy documentation of foreigners and people had a positive of preconception of foreignness?”, she was trying to ascertain if everyone was on the same level of consciousness in building a better South Africa that was welcoming of foreigners. Some South Africans responded that that would be a construction of a new and beautiful African renaissance. However, some out rightly stated that it was utopian and unachievable because South Africa belonged to South Africans only. Stavros and Torres (2005:53) give warnings on how, when a group is trying to collectively contribute to solution finding, they should be aware of how that reflects back on their own actions. This awareness becomes critical in building communities. The spect-actors who gave positive responses to this question reflected on themselves as peace builders and those that did not showed how they could further perpetuate xenophobia. Stavros and Torres then argue that no matter how history has shaped the world, people and relationships are

		dynamic and therefore open to new developments and possibilities. For the Zimbabwean women this raised their consciousness to the awareness that the future may appear incandescent and liberatory, but it's an uphill task. This kind of consciousness became a weapon for them to further challenge the evils of xenophobia and braced them for what is imminent in the discourse of foreignness in South Africa, but with a more confident and decisive ambition. AI was able to improve the participants' consciousness through centring their inner strength and power so they increased their self-awareness. The most important was the ability to own their minds as well as repossess their health and vitality.
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2.5 Conclusion

The “raising of bodies to levels of consciousness’ lens, has opened up a landscape through which Appreciative Inquiry becomes a syncretic approach to the method of Forum Theatre. This lens has also highlighted how practice-oriented research does not only become a quest for finding information, but how research participants can be enabled to change or develop their lives. This lens has become the strand through which forthcoming arguments will be expanded using critical points of view that emerged from it.

Appreciative Inquiry gave opportunity for a positive critical reflective appreciation of structures of dominance and subjugation among the participants. This was predicated on the multiplicity of meanings ranging from contextual influences to habitual effects and to cultural interpretations of xenophobia. The consciousness posited in Appreciative Inquiry evoked, in the participants, the shift from bodies taking shape of habits of helplessness and desperation, blaming Johannesburg as the hotbed of discrimination and conceding to ethnic and gender inferiority. Bringing such attention to critical consciousness prompts a decision-making process of a call to action to challenge negative struggles against hegemony and domination while maintaining humanitarian integrity. As Boal (2000) suggests that theatre becomes a rehearsal for a revolution, even the Appreciative Inquiry process became that rehearsal. In the rehearsal is a consciousness that the world will be understood positively and objectively. In this way Appreciative Inquiry has the capacity to move humanity to higher levels of consciousness.

Effective conscientization can take place through constructing and deconstructing, learning and unlearning, framing and reframing stories of migrant identities and subjectivities to forming new repertoires of difference. At the heart of conscientization lies the discourse of transformation as ascertained in the performance of the aforementioned notions. Consciousness raising was a legitimate focus for inquiry for this study especially for Zimbabwean women who had preconceptions of power loss and not belonging. Freire aptly summarises the effectiveness of critical consciousness, as realised in this chapter, in these terms:

The critically transitive consciousness is by depth in the interpretation of problems; ...the attempt to avoid distortion when analysing them; ...by receptivity to the new for reasons beyond mere novelty and by good sense not to reject the old... (2013:15)

At its best, Theatre of the Oppressed is participatory. Participatory engagement in drama or theatre is mostly seen as an embodied practice. Harpin and Nicholson (2017) argue that participation is a performative practice and in the fields of drama and theatre it is fixated in the conception of agency, autonomy, humanisation and praxis of liberation. The listed abstractions are also fixated on embodiment. It is the human body that desires self-determination and self-empowerment to achieve full liberation to feel as human as possible. Arguably, the human body needs to be raised to a certain level of consciousness to reach this human vocation (existence).

To some extent, it is realised that the raising of consciousness is relative, that without the careful and systematic orchestration of activities the 3 pedagogies (Pedagogy of the oppressed, TO and AI) may run the risk of reproducing oppression rather than challenging it. Even Appreciative Inquiry can create obstinacy among its participants especially when they are disillusioned to think that organisations or communities are bent on only their assets. These approaches can become coercive when they are rigidly applied without adaptability and critical consideration. Sometimes consciousness can drive participants into a utopian world of wishful thinking and they become disappointed if the revolution is not accomplished. Before I explain how these pitfalls manifested and how they were counteracted in the research design, I would first like to, in the following chapter, explain the relationship between my research and facilitation methodology as backdrop to the design. This chapter has delineated the concept of 'raising bodies to levels of consciousness' as a pertinent trajectory in explaining the participants' experiential involvement in the research process, the following chapter will capture the methodological process in how this was achieved.

Chapter 3

Research Methodology

3.1 Introduction

The aim of this research is to provide argument, understanding, meaning and knowledge in the discourse of xenophobia and examine the basis of combining Forum Theatre and Appreciative Inquiry as emergent methods of investigating the lifestyle of marginalised communities. The two methods (FT and AI) are positioned as emergent participatory practices that have an investigative focus into marginalised and silenced communities. This chapter seeks to advance a case on how the two methods were used to help in the investigation of the issue of xenophobia as affecting Zimbabwean women. Thus, it explores the research methods and methodology applicable for this study.

This chapter explores the methods that were used to qualify the underlying theoretical frames, conceptual lens and philosophies that guided the research towards its findings. It is also worth noting that the methodology was likewise guided by the theoretical and conceptual underpinnings assumed for this research. It brings forth the use and analysis of Practice as Research as the guiding and leading method of research in this study. The chapter also states and analyses the testing of the methods in terms of their practicability for the research. It will also explore choices made, different data collection methods used, and how the data was analysed.

The experiment was to test the combination of Forum Theatre and Appreciative Inquiry as methods of enquiry into the issue of xenophobia among Zimbabwean migrant women. The enquiry was inspired by its participatory instinct; hence the research was oriented to the domains of practice. This directed the research towards the field of practice-based research. As such, the combining of FT and AI was based on and influenced by already established principles and practices of Practice as Research (PaR). The questions of this study necessitated an investigation into the lifestyle of the Zimbabwean women. This means that the investigation had to produce a reflection on the behaviour and culture of the women, hence the direction towards ethnography. PaR borrows most of its data collection methods and focus from ethnography. The chapter will also give a description of my position and role as a researcher-facilitator in the field of ADT community engagement and intervention.

ADT has placed itself as an emergent research method in the orientation of practice-based and arts-based research. Applied Theatre scholars such as Ackroyd (2006), Prendergast & Saxton (2009), Prentki & Preston (2009), Nicholson (2005) and Taylor (2003) have contended for the capacity of ADT to investigate into the behaviour of communities. According to these scholars ADT has the intention of posing a research strand that is based on reflective practice. Reflective practice here denotes uncovering, finding and connecting dots on creativity as the basis of social turn in human actions and activities. The scholars identified motifs of practical research in ADT that are prevalent in PaR and ethnography: Reflexivity, human activity and behaviour, and participation. These motifs helped me to identify what could be the applicable approach to this study.

The thrust of the methodology of PaR, in this study, lies in decoding symbols of oppression in the discourse of xenophobia. These symbols are decoded in the behaviour, experience and reflexivity of participation in the Theatre of the Oppressed events and/or performances among research participants and researchers. By default, the Theatre of the Oppressed falls under Applied Drama and Theatre studies at Drama for Life. Arguably, TO does not fall under ADT.

It actually precedes it, but in terms of grounding it, methodologically, it falls within the paradigms of ADT. This is not to suggest that this chapter will articulate ADT as one of the research methods, but ADT foregrounds an understanding of where the hunch of this research method emanates from.

This merging experiment facilitated the production of multiple and emergent paradigms in the practice of research and its analysis. Because of the practical essence of this project, this chapter will also show how and why thematic analysis was selected as the analytical tool for this study.

3.2 Choices in the Field work

My choice of method in the fieldwork, was guided by the idea of putting to test the combining of the participatory Forum Theatre and Appreciative Inquiry. This drove the methodological focus towards a practice orientation. Barrett (2007), Nelson (2013), Kershaw *et al* (2011), and Arlander *et al* (2017) explain that the agenda in creative arts poses a new proposition of knowledge and knowing in the academia. Piccini and Kershaw (2003) state that there is a growing body of references that validate, democratise and legitimise socially constructed knowledge through blurring the roles of practitioner/facilitator and academic in arts-based research. PaR questions and challenges the boundaries between theory and practice in research. This is the case with this study. I will start by explaining how Forum Theatre and Appreciative Inquiry as transformational and interventional methods of enquiry were built into the paradigm of PaR.

FT and AI question the boundaries and dualities of body and mind, theory and practice in academic research. The study shows how Forum Theatre increased the participants' engagement in the exploration of xenophobia. Their ability to discover the xenophobic oppression and explore it was an essential component for a successful investigation. FT became a method of knowing which is predicated on its values of transformation and intervention. The same can be said about Appreciative Inquiry. Appreciative Inquiry is guided by its four investigative questions that propel transformation, intervention and investigation forward. As a method of enquiry, FT encourages debate and questioning among participants. The debates and questions constitute a critical evaluation of ideas which are seen as a way of getting to know. This positions FT as a research method in its own right. In all this, there are determinant elements to this knowing that are premised on the dualities of body and mind and theory and practice.

In FT, the participants attempt to deconstruct social and political constructs through critically dialoguing in spect-acting sessions. This is done through the modes of enquiry that are aimed at examining belief systems and assumptions of these constructs. The dialoguing sets the tone of theoretical enquiry. FT also relies on practice modes of enquiry that ensure that participants deconstruct the social and political constructs through an experiential undertaking. This strand of praxis ensures that the process of enquiry in FT shapes the reflective perspective of research. Vittoria *et al* posit that:

Among the factors affecting the epistemological perspectives, there are the extent of awareness and reflexivity, which contribute to the definition of the patterns of meaning, that is to say the set of knowledge, beliefs, evaluative judgements and feelings that guide our actions. They need a continuous critical examination after which it is possible to operate a perspective of transformation that generates the new modes of action. (2014:6153)

A closer look at these assertions indicates a praxis, in FT research, that values the use of both the mind and body as necessary tools of investigating into lives of participants. Wright (2005) explains that the body, in drama/theatre, becomes a tool for, or a demonstration of social insight, awareness and knowledge. He goes on to argue that in

Augusto Boal's work, the body in theatre, is an outline of knowledge and a means of transforming society. Wright explains that according to Boal, the body is engendered as a knowledge system. Boal argued for a systemic analysis of the body which he justifies as the biology of cognition. This shows how the body is, intrinsically, connected to the mind. These two cannot be separated, we are to see the body as genuinely and scientifically containing mental action in its process of acquiring knowledge, experience and thought. This biology of cognition is demonstrated in Vittoria *et al's* (2014:6153) epistemological perspective that praxis contributes to "patterns of meaning" and knowledge.

In practice, Forum Theatre falls under the Theatre of the Oppressed. Usually, some games and exercises are played before the FT play to warm up and prepare the audience members for the drama and theatre since some of them may not be drama ready. These games also act as preparation for the audience to understand what oppression is. It is also encouraged to do some Image Theatre exercises after the games. These exercises help the audience members to start exploring the theme of oppression through the use of their bodies. Image Theatre is about creating still images or tableaux that explore the theme of oppression. It is some kind of initial reflection on the oppression to be explored in the Forum Theatre play. Forum Theatre is a method that encourages audience members (also known as spect-actors) to interact with the play and explore different various alternatives for dealing with the problem presented on stage. These audience members are usually disempowered groups. The Joker, who acts as Emcee of the Forum Theatre intervention introduces the play and the order of events - This includes the giving of the rules. Thereafter, a play with a particular theme of oppression is shown for the first time. Then it is shown for the second time where the spect-actors are invited to shout stop! at a moment where they want to intervene to solve the problem. They are given the chance to do that and if there is another spect-actor who thinks that he/she can offer a different solution (he/she also shouts stop!). Then they are invited to also come on stage and replace the spect-actor. However, the Joker should encourage the rest of the spect-actors to respect the one on stage to, at least, complete their solution. When many possible solutions have been explored, the Joker asks the audience to reflect on all the solutions. However, if there is enough time, they can reflect on each solution at its end.

Appreciative Inquiry provides a different outlook on best praxis research perspectives. It was discovered that it can be used as an evaluative technique in transformational interventions through its emphasis on theory and practice and body and mind. Each section of the 4D cycle focuses on questions that evaluate the participants' comprehension and perception of the social issue being explored. The questions are: What gives life, What might be, What should be the ideal and how do we learn, empower and sustain? This evaluation is embedded in the dualism of the body and mind as inseparable entities. The data sets (in AI enquiry) are provided through this evaluative stance. Preskill and Catsambas (2006:2) assert that "Appreciative Inquiry (AI) is a group process that enquires into and identifies the best of what is. Underlying AI is a belief that the questions we [use for the enquiry] are critical to the world we create" The identification of the best of 'what is' can only be seen in how the participants respond to the enquiry through their actions and thoughts. This positions AI as a kind of action-oriented research that appeals for the evaluation of the progress in the participants' lives for positive change.

Because AI is not suited for research into traditional problematic issues, it enhanced agency in the actions and thoughts of the participants with regards to problem-solving. This is not to say FT did not do this, AI instigated value judgement on the consequences of problem-solving and solution finding in a far-reaching way. The appreciative interviews in, AI, provided opportunities for high level participation in the workshops. The participation is mostly

expressed in positive connotations. As in FT, participation in AI is articulated through theory and practice. In its action orientation, the method motivates people to focus on what they care mostly about to produce collective knowledge and stimulate action. This perception draws on theoretical and practice underpinnings of AI. Bushe (2011) acknowledges that the research perspective in AI helps us to discover the world, offers empirical and creative possibility in investigating social constructs in communities and organisations. In contrast to the problem posing approach of FT, AI deliberately affirms a positive analysis and reflection of people's relationships and lifestyles.

An Appreciative Inquiry process follows a 4D cycle: Discover, Dream, Design and Destiny. In the beginning, participants are asked to share their stories of success, skills and strengths. This is done within the ambit of a theme of development that the workshop will be focusing on. For example, the women were asked to share stories of success as foreigners in Johannesburg. The stories are usually shared in pairs or small groups. The facilitator asks the participants to group the stories according to thematic similarities and they discover how much similarities they share. They are then asked to get into groups (usually similarity groups) to use the stories to dream about how they can use their skills and strengths to develop and transform their communities or organisations. The dreams they come up with are used to design their future. This design involves them outlining the plans and strategizing how they will change and make the future better. When the plans have been presented and implemented, an ongoing appreciative culture is brought forward. New images of the future are realised from the initial stages/phases and this is in the Destiny phase. The participants are encouraged to keep going back to their discoveries, dreams and plans. This means that their future is established, sustained and nurtured through replanning and refocusing on what comes next.

These research offerings gave insight into the choices of focusing the methodology of this research in the direction of PaR. I realised that AI and FT could, if used as research strategy, facilitate practice change. These two methods facilitated the investigation of research experiences of the women (the researched) and facilitator -Joker¹⁸ (the researcher). The methods foregrounded the emergent research praxis and challenged traditional attempts that discourage meaning making in human interactions and the energy for change. The approach, which is inclusive of praxis, also positions the participants as subjects of the research and not as objects. When analysing the data that was collected, it was discovered that the combining of the two methods has the potential to address gaps in the knowledge of practice being relevant to theory in research. Thus, demonstrating how we can bridge research and practice. The idea is not to only address these gaps, but also to advance practice in knowledge.

Kershaw and Nicholson (2017) assert that Practice as Research in theatre came to being in the United Kingdom theatre practices and elsewhere in the 1980s as a response to the post modernised and globalised world view of the 21st century. This is whereby theatre was realised as a deconstruction of research methods. This is because it provided a practical methodological focus that aimed to evolve or revise binaries in the academia with regards to practice and theory. There was also a realisation that performance and theatre had become diverse in its approach to aesthetics and cultural locations. Theatre was no longer confined to traditional theatrical spaces, but had widened its territorial reflexivity. Inclusive of this reflexivity is the merging of theory/practice and body/mind discourses in research. What has been celebrated in traditional drama, performance and theatre artistry has been challenged by what Parker-Starbuck and Mock (2011:211-212) establish to be a sophisticated take on the body and bodies in theatre and

¹⁸ The role of the Joker-researcher will be explored in depth in chapter 6.

performance where "...body-centred research is the very notion of 'body' as interpretable and flexible, yet materially and culturally specific." They argue that the body exceeds not just a biological substance, but it is also open to various nuances of belonging, becoming and is the 'nerve centre/mind' for knowledge.

Applied Theatre has laid claim to this shift in its ontological approaches in the academia, theatre and research where the body has been valued for being a source of knowledge by virtue of its naturalistic performance. This choice of this research method (PaR) lies in Applied Theatre's substance in valuing the body in the business of 'becoming'. Freire (1970), in his philosophy of education calls this *raison d'être*: The reason for being and becoming, pertinent in dimensions of reflexivity. This study also articulated the relevance of this *raison d'être* in consideration of the topic of xenophobia.

Practice as Research then allowed for a platform for the research on human beings (Zimbabwean migrant women) being located in their cultural and material dimensions where the focus was on the practice and dramaturgic representations of their reality which embody being and becoming. The reflexivity in PaR proves that knowing is a process and not a product as it highlights the body as an extension of becoming. That is also when practice-based research is counted as a process of knowing.

The method of Practice as Research was supported by the insight of ethnography. Ethnography was not a choice *per se*. It was as a result of testing the combination of Forum Theatre and Appreciative Inquiry to interrogate humans and human behaviour with regards to xenophobic oppression - this human behaviour being the central point of diagnosis and analysis of oppression even in the Theatre of the Oppressed. This was by virtue of their (FT and AI) ethnographic insight and focus.

While Forum Theatre exposes stories of people's cultures of oppression and works on values of problem solving, Appreciative Inquiry is grounded in stories that strengthen the organisation's or community's cultural capacity to be successful despite the problems in their communities or organisations. Goleman *et al* (2013) aver that such storytelling becomes qualitative data that is naturally ethnographic and is used to discover underlying attributes of cultural values and behaviour in an organisation pertinent to ethnographic approaches. The Theatre of the Oppressed is also rooted in the engagement of people's lived experiences, people's relations, cultural values and behaviours of oppression thereby weaving in its ethnographic storytelling approach.

Ethnography desires to write culture as an evocative recapturing of lived experience. From anthropological and sociological contexts, ethnography has been explained as an involvement of the detailing, depiction and analysis of behaviour, social relations and culture among people (Wolcott 1999, Rosen 1991a, Stocking 1992, Van Maanen 1995). It is partly from this context that ethnography found its way into the research method paradigms of this study. Arguably, the exploration of the xenophobia narrative, in this study, is inclined towards anthropological, cultural and social perspectives. This is not to suggest that it was a complementary research design, but it influenced the PaR design.

The choice of Hillbrow Theatre in Johannesburg, as my research site, was based on my knowledge of the location of the theatre in one of the places highly populated by foreign nationals. The majority being Zimbabweans. The choice for Emakhaya theatre at Drama for Life, Wits University, was its recent reception as a cultural hub of Applied Drama

and Theatre research projects for the university students and outside patrons. The research workshops were carried out in Hillbrow theatre. The showing of the Forum Theatre event was at both Hillbrow and Emakhaya theatres.

Most Zimbabwean migrants have made Hillbrow their second home either by nationality affiliation or its centrality to most of their places of work. When I came to South Africa, my first destination was Hillbrow as most of my family members were resident there. Most of them claimed that the place was some form of a safety haven for foreign nationals from xenophobic attacks from the locals. Although partly confirmed, I still witnessed xenophobic attitudes from some sectors and public places such as the police station, local shops, taxi ranks and service delivery areas that were manned mostly by locals. Hillbrow, being a safety haven, did not mean that Zimbabwean migrants were not affected by xenophobia in the rest of Johannesburg.

The choice to work with the women participants did not only come from a personal persuasion. Xenophobia has played its tragedy in its affectations on migrant women. The treatment of migrant women in South Africa is an indication of a layered perversity in the violence against women. South African Newspaper articles¹⁹ have exposed the normality of gender-based violence in South African society. The articles seem to reflect on how South Africa deals with women as a vulnerable group. Mbiyozo (2019) points out that stereotyping and misconceptions of migrant women is an augmented treatise among this vulnerable group. He even calls the women “forgotten victims of South Africa’s xenophobia.” Besides this position, some of the women participants were drama and theatre activists and had been involved in some Applied Theatre projects in Hillbrow Theatre. There were also three Zimbabwean men who were part of the project and Forum Theatre ensemble. The involvement of men stemmed from the argument that migrant women issues could not be dealt with in a vacuum and isolation from the rest of society. This is because I thought that the discourse of xenophobia relied on narratives of gender which needed the input of men.

Also involved were two other Zimbabwean men who did the technical work for the research project such as video and audio recording. These men understood the importance of digital recording in Applied Theatre data collection as a representation of a performative mapping of knowledge. Taub in Barnes (2013) avers that video recording in research represents spatial regions and the embodiment of generative-reflective processes where there is an interplay of memory, meaning making and the experience of knowledge. As such, the technical team, as part of the research process, understood that the focus of the camera and capturing of the sound in the video recording were a representation of how the combining of Forum Theatre and Appreciative Inquiry would map knowledge on xenophobia. My role as researcher-facilitator pre-empted this choice because I had to concentrate on pithily facilitating this knowledge mapping in the process rather than divide my attention.

This study focused on the participation of women as an important aspect of conscientization and moving from oppression towards their liberation. Their participation was framed around community engagement within paradigms of artistic intervention. Community-based participation is recommended as one means of engaging members of minority groups in addressing issues of oppression. Community engagement fits well in community-based participatory research (Chung, 2009) because it emphasizes engaging stakeholders and community members in planning and action. Community engagement is the process of working collaboratively with and through groups of people affiliated by social proximity or similar situations to address issues affecting them. The research participants

¹⁹ News 24, 26/05/2017, The Mail and Guardian, 31/01/2020, African Safety Promotion Journal, 2016

constituted a group of community members brought together as stakeholders of change. It promotes relationship building through learning, action, and the expression of needs and values and more perspectives available to decision making.

Mkhwanazi and Cin (2021) explain how socially engaged arts can boost social justice through addressing conflict and peace building whilst at the same time giving voice to the powerless. They argue that community engagement can reduce practices of marginalisation and domination. As such, Forum Theatre as a participatory method, provides audience with an opportunity to become actively involved in the performance to try and address conflict. The theatrical space becomes a community engagement site. Appreciative Inquiry becomes a powerful vehicle for bringing communities into an awareness about stories of success and behavioural changes that will improve their well-being.

3.2.1 Outlining the Methods

a) Practice as Research

This study observes PaR as the methodological instigator of this study. Here, I, briefly, rationalise its conceptual and theoretical underpinnings. Some of this has been done earlier in the methodology section of the first chapter, but it would suffice to extend for the purpose of the argument here.

In arts and performance studies context, PaR explores the relation between theory and practice (Nelson 2013, Smith & Dean 2009, and Sullivan 2005). Nelson postulates that practice is a key method and is submitted as substantial evidence of the research inquiry. This means that knowledge is a matter of doing rather than abstractly conceived. Nelson's argument is that PaR extends its focus to use practical applicability rather than just making use of abstract facts which may not be substantiated on their own. Smith and Dean (2009) point out that artwork embodies research findings which are necessary for the substantiation of facts that are merely given in symbols of words and numbers. They argue that performative researchers develop knowledge by using various strands of techniques such as reflective practice, participant observation, ethnographic and action research orientations.

b) Co-construction through the ethnographic techniques in PaR

In this research, the participants were not just informants; they became co-researchers, co-informants and collaborators because they also took part in delineating the research design and data collection through various activities. These included scripting the play, directing it and putting it on stage. This came from the processes of storytelling and going through the 4D cycle in Appreciative Inquiry and games and exercises and image making in the Theatre of the Oppressed. Thus, they became subjects of the research process rather than objects. They were implicated in exploring and reflecting their own realities of oppression. This became a process of co-construction (a term from Appreciative Inquiry to suggest shared values and experiences within a community/organisation for the progress of transformation). Intrinsically, Practice as Research validated this standpoint of the participants as instruments of credibility in the research findings. As co-investigators the participants' stories were helpful in instituting themes and perspectives around the issue of xenophobia and the combining of FT and AI, a further validation of their standpoint in this participatory approach. Sykes and Treleaven in Ybema *et al* articulate this as the praxis of ethnographic approaches:

The consideration and treatment of all participants as co-researchers in the research inquiry arises from emphasis on the multi vocality and plurality of knowledge. Knowledge is co-constructed within reflective dialogue and actions. Such knowledge generated reflectively, explicitly identifies and interprets the meaning making of organizational actors... is inclusive of everyday language and practices, opening up meaning making ... [and] offering multiple interpretations, representations and discourses. (2009:224).

In their role as co-constructors of the research process, the participants found voice, gave voice and became their own voices as they worked on their agency as active participants.

However, this limited their perspective, meaning that they may have ignored pertinent data that they would have grown accustomed to as participants. They may also have had the latitude to augment data that they may have felt was a true representation of their reality. For example, the issue of xenophobia may push participants to take a subjective view that suits their representation as foreign citizens. In the rehearsal space, they tended to ignore the objectivity of participation of locals in the xenophobia discourse. To counteract this tendency, I made sure to ask reflective questions at the end of each session. Most of these questions were directed by the appreciative interview approach of AI and critical questioning in FT. For example, how do you think locals can contribute to the understanding and alleviating of xenophobia.

Another challenge was the compromising of my role as a foreign black woman intellectual facilitating a process of data finding on xenophobia, an issue that directly affects me. This means that I had two roles that I had to define for myself to aid the progression of this study - My academic stance and personal involvement. And how this affected and was affected by the ethnographic approach of this study. I am going to shed light on my personal involvement versus the methodological principles and ethics of ethnographic research.

My interest in the issue of xenophobia was ignited by my engagement with the studies of diversity and border crossing at Drama for Life. Sparked by my arrival in Johannesburg in 2008 when xenophobic violence was at its peak, the studies were timeous. I felt that I had to enquire more into the cultural relationships of locals and foreigners who were at each other's throats because of ethnic differences. Eriksson and Kovalainen (2008) call attention to two guiding principles in ethnographic research. The first is the realist/naturalism principle that seeks to discover authentic description of the world where the researcher has to minimise his/her influence on the activities of the people that are studied. For me, this principle was limiting because it would not have satisfied my hunch to be part of the advocacy in advancing transformational knowledge.

The second is the induction principle which counters the naturalism principle. It is based on discovery approaches where the researcher approaches a community with a set of predefined theoretical models and concepts and propositions that may help to discover idiosyncratic and contextual qualities of the community. This principle allows the research problem to be refined and change as the project continues. Eriksson and Kovalainen (2008:5) argue that this may mean "...getting to know people, gaining their trust and perhaps committing oneself to long term friendships." They contend that this should allow the researcher to be part fan, part activist and part member of the community. However, this means that the researcher has to make his/her intentions and objectives clear so as to maintain boundaries and not compromise the personal involvement. This principle worked for me and the inclinations of PaR. It gave me the ease of advancing, in an ethical manner, the theoretical and conceptual models that I had

previously learnt on xenophobia. It also affected the way I situated myself in the report and evaluation of the study. I was able to creatively describe scenarios, experiences and feelings which makes visible the culture being studied (Eriksson and Kovalainein, 2008).

Any form of research is propelled by an academic stance. Bringing in this stance was not as challenging as the personal one. There were moments when my role as academic researcher seemed discouraging to the participants. This was because they knew my foreign status and yet the role seemed to give me a pretentious predisposition. The academic stance in ethnographic research entails clear-cut participation whereby the researcher observes and studies a group of people for the advancement of knowledge (Reeves *et al* 2013). This stance is guided by academic and ethical rules also grounded in theoretical frameworks that help engender guiding questions. Likewise, the researcher avoids “...imposing conceptual and theoretical frameworks on empirical data at the beginning of the research process” (Eriksson and Kovalainein 2008: 2).

To be true to the professional ethic attached to this study, I had to follow these rules. However, what gave me the thrill was that I was able to use the two stances interchangeably. On one hand, the personal involvement paved a way in which I could focus on theory and practice and reflective perspective as best practice knowledge advancement in PaR and ethnographic research. On the other, the academic stance constituted the objective capturing of data. This helped to control my urge to influence on the activities of the participants.

For readers and onlookers, including the theatre audience, to acknowledge the legitimacy of the research by satisfying the epistemological context of academic research was palpable. The participants, at this juncture appeared to be a validation for my desire to be accepted in the legitimacy of academic research. They appeared to be a contrivance in their agreement to my knowledge my claims. As a facilitator of the research process, I had to negotiate my role as principal researcher and that meant carefully editing and ‘stitching’ patches of reality to bring back objectivity to the study. It also meant that I had to become the even-handed/neutral Joker of Forum Theatre in Boalian terms in both the rehearsal space (where the research workshops took place) and Forum Theatre stage.

The ethnographic stance necessitated the conducting of interviews, observation and participation. Ethnographic interviews were conducted mostly in the Discover and Image Theatre phases of Appreciative Inquiry and Theatre of the Oppressed phases, respectively. Notably, before delving into Forum Theatre, it is necessary to go through Image Theatre. Image Theatre offers a platform to interview participants about their realities. The interviews were unstructured on virtue of the Practice as Research framework. In Image Theatre the interviews took shape through the embodied exercises. The focus was on where the researcher-facilitator gave instructions on how the participants could use their bodies to sculpt their realities on xenophobia. This was guided by unstructured questions that highlighted what they co-witnessed in the images.

Further on to Forum Theatre, the researcher-facilitator (after putting on the hat of the Joker) interviewed both actors (the research participants) and audience members based on their witnessing of xenophobia from the FT play. As the Joker, I employed an interviewing strategy based on what I was observing in the play between the stage, acting and audience participation. This was critical questioning which is a pertinent interview technique in ethnography.

In the Discover phase of Appreciative Inquiry, the participants were interviewed about their understanding of the beauty of difference, strengths and successes as individuals and as foreign nationals. This was through embodied exercises of storytelling. Though the interview questions were unstructured in that manner, they followed a highly ordered and coded line of formulation so as to reaffirm the participants' role as co-researchers. These ethical underpinnings included asking the participants questions that did not re-traumatise them or expose them. These are some of the questions:

- Acknowledging the fact that you are foreign national, what qualities make you stand apart?
- From these qualities what are you mostly good and strong in?
- Can you briefly tell us a story of your success, if so, what qualities of yours contribute to this story of success?
- How do you use some of these strengths and/or talents to contribute to the society that you come from in Johannesburg?
- Have you engaged with locals in your community, if so, what do you value in them?
- Have you ever considered that you live in the same community with the locals, how can you use what you value in them to embrace the beauty of difference?

The interviews were structured mostly from what I was observing. Intrinsically, the method of observation was underlined in the research participants' participation. The observations were done, 'in the now', during the workshops and through video recordings. The value of doing observations, in the moment lay, in their empathetic flair where, as the researcher, I was 'walking' with the participants and in their shoes of understanding and experience on xenophobia. In practice-based research, 'in the moment' participant observation also allows for the analysis of embodied experience. In that regard, I needed to see nuances in the participants' behavioural tendencies, lived experiences and participation. Participation, here, refers to doing and demonstrating action. Furthermore, both observations from video recording and 'in the moment' provided concrete lines of feedback and evidence for my analysis.

Prus (1996) explains that in studying human lived experience, participant observation and open-ended interviews generally lead to a more complete understanding of the phenomena under study. He points out that this is because participant observation and interviews symbiotically generate open ended and extensive probing both on the minds and bodies of the researched. This addresses reflexivity because ethnography then becomes the notion of embodied practice (O'Reilly 2005). Participants are also given the opportunity to think, question and reflect upon what they have been practising. In quoting Wenger (1998:47), O'Reilly (2005) explains that in this ongoing reflexivity, in participant observation and interviews, participants gain an understanding of their reality through involvement in the daily practice of human agency, "...All the implicit relations, tacit conventions, subtle cues, untold rules of thumb, recognisable intuitions, specific perceptions, well-tuned sensitivities, embodied understanding, underlying assumptions and shared world views..." become evident. In both Appreciative Inquiry and Forum Theatre, the interview questions and participant observations highlighted humanity and reflective human relations. Ethnography, in this regard, authenticated practice-based research theory.

c) Designing and 'Doing' the Combination of Forum Theatre and Appreciative Inquiry

This was the part where I had to put on the hat of researcher-facilitator. This entailed the designing of the theatrical metaxis (the moment between fiction and reality), the liminality of this research paradigm (between intervention and

research work), and the continuum between deficit and asset-based analysis. I designed a method that has not existed and which still begs a naming in arts practice-based research method paradigms.

The combined design entailed a practice-oriented process, and the end result was a practical oriented product. Forum Theatre and Appreciative Inquiry methods were crystallised as diagnostic enquiry processes. This means that while in the process of data collection, situations were also being diagnosed and transformation was taking place. The process of diagnosis, itself, brings change especially if it is embodied and the questions asked are progressive. The combining exercise necessitated the diagnosing of stories and experiences of xenophobia.

The activities of the combining exercise including the FT shows that took thirty days with breaks during the weekends. Initially, I had planned 15 days for nine workshops, but because of the nature of the methods and the processes that this demanded, the number of workshops increased and so did the days.

What guided the combining were the four stages/phases of the Theatre of the Oppressed and Appreciative Inquiry. The four phases of TO are importantly used for Forum Theatre projects. See Table 2 for the structure and stages of FT and AI.

Fittingly, the two methods both follow four stages and there is a symbiotic presentation in how the stages are performed. The analysis outlined here is used to explicate and how the methodological process (as illustrated in the table) panned out in the whole project. I offer some examples from the findings as presented in these stages. The examples highlight the symbolic transformation perpetuated by the steps in the 4 stages of AI and FT.

In the knowing the body and making the body expressive stages, the participants were instructed to do TO exercises, play games and create images that culminated in their understanding of xenophobic oppressions. Firstly, they were asked to identify spaces, in the rehearsal room, where they felt that their bodies could easily explore nuances of their experiences as foreign nationals facing discrimination. They had to conscientiously explore each body part and then highlight which part specifically felt the experience.

The women mostly placed their hands on their chests, private parts, heart position, feet and hands. The men placed their hands on their heads, feet and hands. The nuances were in where these body parts felt the tension. The motif of feet and hands was explained as how, as travellers from Zimbabwe, they felt the heaviness of journeying in their lives and yet they were mocked for being travellers. The hands exposed their diligence to work hard and yet they were accused of stealing the local people's jobs. For the women, the private parts were a symbolic representation of recurrent abuse of their gender even as foreigners because most of them felt that they still had to use "their body assets" to fit in the society and sometimes be asked to return favours with their bodies. Sometimes they would be shamed for not looking as good as their local counterparts. The heart summed their fear of xenophobic attitudes and violence. The head, for the men, was a psychological view on how their women suffered xenophobia in their vulnerable nature.

They were asked to do the same exercise, but focus on using their bodies to explore the beauty of difference. This was bringing in the Discover stage of Appreciative Inquiry. Most of them touched the heart position and the head. This articulated the ease of pain they experienced mostly when they thought of life without xenophobia. This was psychological relief for them, in thinking about a world where everybody conceived and valued difference not in

xenophobic terms. They were also asked to share stories of success for foreign women in different spaces. Most of the women articulated success at workplaces, educational institutions and having local friends. The men articulated the same but shared stories of women counterparts who were their relatives and friends. Most of the men were happy to celebrate the strengths and successes of their counterparts.

In the 'making the body expressive' stage, the participants went through Image Theatre exercises where they delved mostly into discovering the oppression of xenophobia. They created real images that depicted their conception of xenophobia in their different spaces: At work, in the streets and residential places. There were various images, but all of them were a demonstration of fear, pain, resignation, anger and violence. Appreciative Inquiry was brought in the ideal image where they were asked to perceive how their lives would be without the oppression of xenophobia (and this was the Dream phase). Most images showed hands hanging in the air, smiling and hugging bodies. They then had to show the transitional image which was an interrogation of how they would move from the reality of the oppression of xenophobia to what they envisaged to be a world without it. This was the most pertinent part of the research investigation because in the midst of their own investigation of changing their lives, I was also investigating how they dealt with this oppression. This was also to see how the improvisation helped them to envisage solving the problem.

The realisation here is the purposeful combination of Appreciative Inquiry and Forum Theatre, previously explained as the continuum between asset and deficit based; between negative and positive. For Appreciative Inquiry, the transitional image vouchsafed the move from the Discover to the Dream phase. The participants were dreaming about what they could do to achieve their dreams of self-determination. The investigation of the transitional image highlighted the struggle that the participants envisaged in trying to make the locals realise that they are also human and being accepted as such. This was the moment when the participants were being tested on whether they had the ability to transform their lives where Freire (1972:64) explicates that "...in problem-posing [research], people develop their power to perceive critically the way they exist in the world with which and in which they find themselves; they come to see the world not as a static reality, but as a reality in process, in transformation (1972:64). As such, the enquiry led insight into overcoming the boundary between theory and practice/understanding and learning.

The process continued to Theatre as Language and Design phases where the participants had to interrogate the power or lack of theatrical language for them to realise their self-determination. "Boal believes that theatrical language is the most essential human language" (Morelos 1999:131). Together, with the participants, we devised a Forum Theatre play based on the initial experiences of the first two phases. The devising was dependent on the body language data collected from the first two phases and had to be channelled to the theatre stage (including rehearsals and presentation) so that it was articulated into the theatrical language. At this stage we also planned on how we would organize the Forum Theatre event to audiences at Hillbrow and Emakhaya theatres.

With appreciative Inquiry, the Design stage entailed planning on how to bring in the positive voice into how the play was facilitated/ joked. This was so that the audience could be prepared to reflect on the issue with a positive mind set and appreciative ways. The language, therefore, was about creating dialogue to foster shared meaning making. With this step, as the researcher, I was on the lookout for how, as the Joker, I would frame reflective questions focusing on Appreciative Inquiry prerequisites as part of my data collection and analysis. It is worth noting that even

the planning of the Forum Theatre project was part of the Design stage because it entailed working on devising strategies for future actions.

The Design stage also entailed the performances, presentation and facilitation of the play. In this regard, it involved the audience's participation during the analysis of xenophobia through spect-acting. The audience took turns to act and try out solutions to the problem by being invited on stage to take the place of the protagonist (oppressed character). This means that, together with the audiences, we strategized on how women could deal with xenophobia on stage. In the Appreciative Inquiry language, this stage is about all stakeholders co-constructing strategic intent signals for the transformation and success of the organisation. New ideas are envisioned for the future. (Cooperrider *et al* 2008). In Boalian terms, this was a rehearsal for the future where through acting on stage, the spect-actors planned for a revolution in their real lives. This phase engendered the gist of the enquiry in that spect-acting was an informative and prolific data-gathering exercise in its diagnostic approach. When each solution was analysed, data voluntarily availed itself. This provided more meaningful and deeper outlets for data gathering and analysis about xenophobia and the combining of the two methods. The process moved beyond diagnosis to treatment.

The Destiny and Theatre as Discourse phases were stages of harnessing the research group's reflections on the issue of xenophobia and the whole project of combining Forum Theatre and Appreciative Inquiry. After the performances, the participants regrouped to reflect on their journey in this research project. We employed Newspaper Theatre, image making and a bit from Rainbow of Desire "Cops in the Head" technique (Boal 1995). The participants had to read newspaper stories on xenophobia and collect recurrent themes. Then there was a panel convention that involved re-enacting the stories in their realness and then using images to counter the narratives in the stories. This meant that they had to bring in a positive aspect in their images highlighting the solutions that they got from the spect-actors. Then, as a panel, they deliberated on how Forum Theatre in its problem posing approach highlighted and augmented problems in the outlook of xenophobia and how Appreciative Inquiry in its affirmative approach may have countered that.

Through the Cops in the Head technique, the participants were asked to identify voices that could have influenced the protagonist's actions in the original story. After each identification they created cops out of the voices who became a stream of consciousness around the actor who played the protagonist. They were asked to create cops who had learnt the power of Appreciative Inquiry and then recreate the stream of consciousness. The shifts in the stream of consciousness were reflected upon. These exercises were a commitment to the paths that the participants would take to revolutionaries the oppression of xenophobia from a group experience to individual initiatives. They were outlining and positing a track record of inspired possibilities for change as learnt from the three initial phases.

It was realised that Appreciative Inquiry has the potential to revitalise the Forum Theatre project in its asset-based approach. AI also revolutionised the aesthetic event of Forum Theatre to bring to it an organisational flair of transformation. Philosophically, while the participants were performing the reality of xenophobia, the process of enhancing Forum Theatre with Appreciative Inquiry became more of getting the participants to 'un-perform'/unlearn what xenophobia had done to their lives. Table 4 illustrates the progression of the workshops in the merging of the two methods.

Table 4**Generic Workshop Structure and progression**

Workshop	Activity	Action
1	Getting to know the participants and outlining ethics considerations and planning the research processes	Formal getting to know each other through discussion and outlining ethical considerations
2	Brief Discussion on understanding Forum Theatre and Appreciative Inquiry	Giving brief notes and readings on the two methods
3	Going through Knowing the body exercises in TO and Discover phase in AI	Doing explorative exercises and Playing TO games Boal's Games for Actors and non-Actors. Reflecting of this games as way of exploring xenophobia. Getting the participants to share stories of success as foreigners
4	Going through Making the body Expressive in TO and Dream phases in AI	Deeper investigation of xenophobia through exploring the 3 Image Theatre events and the beginning of finding alternatives to the problem.
5	Going through Theatre as Language in TO and Design phase in AI	Forum Theatre scripting, rehearsing the play and rehearsing jokering, designing and planning for the Forum Theatre events.
6	Going through Theatre as Discourse in TO and Destiny phase in AI	Using other TO techniques to reflect on the issue of xenophobia and the combining of FT and AI and re-planning on next possible projects.
7	Evaluative Interviews	Interviewing the participants on their thoughts about the combining process
8	Exiting	Submission of journals and celebrating the project over drinks and snacks with focusing on activity 7.

c) Methods Enhancing the Collection of Data in the Combining Exercise

In each of the phases the data collection process was enhanced through the following methods: Forum Theatre and Appreciative Inquiry, physical participant observation which included note taking, video recorded participant observation, researcher and participant reflective journaling, audio recorded reflections and reviewing literature. Table 5 gives a summary of the data that was gathered as themes versus each method of data collection.

Table 5: Data collection methods and what was discovered

Data Collection Method	Data gathered	During which phase?
Forum Theatre	1. Forum Theatre is a powerful and relevant method in pushing the agenda of critical consciousness 2. The women were capacitated to think critically about their lives in Johannesburg and find ways on how they can implement change and policies to their livelihood. 3. However it still focuses on the discourse of problems. There was a tendency to still think that life cannot be changed and the oppressors will still hold on to the reins of power. That is the status quo. 4. It can be enhanced with the language of AI especially when solutions to the problem are being sought eg. When the participants realised that the equation was not solely on them, but also on how the oppressor should be dealt with.	All the four phases of TO. And in the Theatre as Language phases, particularly.
Appreciative Inquiry	1. The positive capacity and asset orientation of AI to enhance FT 2. The possibility of changing the problem-posing discourse. 3. The utopian approach of the AI	In all the four phases of Appreciative Inquiry
Participant Journals	1. Feelings and thoughts of the participants on xenophobia and the process 2. Individual transformation in understanding the merging of the two methods and learning and unlearning about xenophobia. 3. Being pushed to and living on the margins. 4. Evaluation of the joker and researcher.	In all the four phases of Appreciative Inquiry and Forum Theatre.
Video Recording	1. The body as tool for research. 2. The function of theory and practice evident in PaR research 3. Various forms of transformation including the moving from the margins to the centre 4. The role and function of the Joker 5. Moments of realisation when AI countered the deficit approach of Forum Theatre and when that failed 6. Different audience responses to the FT play in Hillbrow and Emakhaya 7. Xenophobia as an aesthetic perspective 8. Refusal to accept the xenophobia aesthetic and aesthetics of AI and FT 9. Rehearsal rooms as symbolic conceptions for rehearsal for life 10. Reformation of theatrical conventions 11. The thin line between fiction and reality	In the rehearsal rooms (Hillbrow) and Emakhaya Theatre. All the four stages of AI and FT.
Audio recording	1. Strengths articulated by the participants after learning about AI 2. Articulating the pain of being a foreigner 3. Anger at being ostracised. 4. Appreciating and challenging the merging of the two methods 5. Gender-based violence	Discover phase of AI Knowing the body stage Discourse phase of AI Theatre as Language
Physical participant observation	1. The body as tool for engagement, transformation, and research 2. Engagement in the rehearsal rooms 3. Playing out the thin line between fiction and reality	In all the phases of AI and FT
Researcher Journal	1. The success and failure of merging the two methods 2. The role and function of the Joker	In all the phases of AI and FT
Literature Review	1. All the above listed themes	All phases of AI and FT Report writing

Participant observation has been explained in the combining of Forum Theatre and Appreciative Inquiry section, here I will articulate how taking field notes assisted in this research instrument. Although, participant observation was done through video recording it was necessary to take field notes to capture moments in detail. These moments included writing descriptions and analysis of what was taking place ‘in the now’ in the research spaces. The whole process of taking field notes encompassed writing of the notes (jotting) which included describing events, analysing the events and the notes themselves. This included reflecting on the events and the note taking exercise itself. Emerson *et al* (2011) describe taking field notes, in PaR, as writing down in systematic ways what the researcher observes entailing transforming witnessed events, people and places into words on paper. Their emphasis is on the systematic way and they quote Geertz (1973:19) who explains the systematic way as “The ethnographer inscribing social discourse, writes it down. In so doing, he turns it from a passing event which exists only in its own moment of occurrence into an account, which exists in its inscriptions.” This means that the researcher is aware that he/she is not jotting notes for the sake of remembering, but also to enliven, through the writing mode, social happening in the lives of the researched. As such, in my note taking, the writing was performative in that it involved noticing something from the participants and then negotiating writing it down and how it should be written. I wrote down the date, time and place of the data collection and this contributed to understanding nuances of narratives as exposed by each facet (day, place and time). Of particular interest was jotting down descriptions of actions (behaviour) that exposed the concepts under study at the particular moments and when the participants analysed and reflected on something pertinent to the study. An example of this was the writing that I did at Emakhaya theatre. The participants were exhausted and fearful of the audience members who were mostly locals. I wrote, “This hot day is really hot for this topic. I am challenged, it’s a Friday. Emakhaya is not well ventilated. The performance is the only thing that is getting people to vent. What an awkward time and place to do this intervention” (Sibongile Bhebhe (2016), notes from research notebook).

The next action was to analyse the jotted material and this happened either on the same day or after a week and this was dependant on the pace and the phenomenon of the event. The process of analysis included grouping thematic thrusts of described actions, words and their ‘linguaging’, specific facts, sensory impressions, responses to critical questions and conceptual categories. When grouped, these would then be rewritten in the summary and language of analysis as directed by the method and style of this research. The language of analysis is predetermined by the type of research method and it is the language that puts together theoretical assumptions and practical considerations and their interpretations (Boyatzis 1998).

Even though taking down notes suffices for specific moment descriptions, video recording serves for generating data inputs as recorded memories for re-examination and later analysis. Barrett in Barrett and Bolt (2010) contends that it is possible to consider video recording not just as extension or the use of media in 21st century research, but as a mode of communication in which sounds and images distinctively contribute to empirical data gathering in practice-based research. Video recording provides a further exposition in intuition and imagination and continuous discovery. It invigorates the researcher’s initial senses, thoughts and assumptions. It also enhances the research participants’ reflection (Barrett and Bolt 2010).

After note taking and reading journal reflections, I would instinctively question myself on what prompted this behaviour and thought and then I would revisit the video to analyse that particular excerpt. I replayed the moment in slow and fast motion and re-decoded simulations to find rigour in consistency, inconsistency, contradictions,

familiarity, ‘contra indications’ and nuances with my notes. I then noted these down, if they were any, such that, in my analysis process, I regrouped the data to find new explanations about certain concepts.

What also helped with this video recorded data were the instructions given to the cameramen and the participants on how to capture moments of recognition and for the participants to be aware of the camera as a tool for data gathering in the space. Through their own volition or instructed by me, the cameramen would bring the camera’s lens in close viewing of a certain event or action and the participant would respond accordingly. The participants were also instructed to call the cameraman to close viewing if they wanted a certain action highlighted. Examples of such moments were when the participants, remarkably, wanted to show how they were really affected by xenophobia. These are some of the video moments that I also paid close attention to when I was analysing the data. The momentous mode of video recording in research is aptly styled by Kershaw and Nicholson (2011) as ‘screen seduction’ where the researched becomes less of a physical presence and more of a presence characterised as and in the body of data and this data accumulates around him/her and he/she in turn accumulates that data. The screen is seduced to comply with the demands of the research.

As much as reflective moments were realised in the rehearsal space (field work), the researcher and participants needed to further these moments of reflection even outside of the rehearsal space. This notion goes back to the ethnographic principle that stipulates that research of this kind is about people’s lived experiences and their reflections are about their life. If this study had to be true to the demands of such a research focus, then it was necessary that even in the peripheries of data collection domains, there is respect for the participants’ reflections on their lived experiences and in the fictional world of the workshops. Reflective journaling provided for that space. Reflective journaling was about participants finding personal writing outlets for activities and concepts being studied with body and mind considerations about the research process.

John Dewey (1960), American philosopher and educational reformer, who coined the term reflective thinking argues that oftentimes in situations of learning and life in general, humans have replayed events in their minds: This involves thinking back on what happened and connecting dots while reviewing the interactive occurrences. He also contends that this is what the individual focuses his/her thoughts on, and the thoughts trigger the person to further inquire about the thought occurrences. As such, in the following day, the participants would claim to have new thoughts on something that occurred the previous day. That would be new data for collection. This was critical inquiry which was a furtherance of the data collected outside of the rehearsal room.

After the field experience, the participants reflected, in their notebooks through written or artistic presentations, on their experiences of the research process. This was post-journaling. They were guiding questions on what they were supposed to reflect on such as:

- What did you see happening for you today?
- What emerging things did you learn about xenophobia?
- What happened in the process of using FT and AI techniques together?
- How did this learning take place, please identify particular moments?
- How was it done and what was done (*this was to focus the enquiry onto the method*) for you to appreciate this learning?
- What are your feelings about today’s experience and what do you take out of this?

These questions actually helped the participants who had never written reflective journals and also guided the focus of data collection. The questions mostly focused the aesthetics of practice in PaR especially for a theatre enquiry (Barrett and Bolt 2013). Responding to these questions as reflection nurtured meaning making and mindfulness for what the enquiry was about.

I collected the journals at the end of each research week and looked for motifs, codes and emerging themes which I collated and grouped into the same data groupings that I would have collected in the rehearsal space and then connected them. The connection entailed checking for parallels and variances. These were coded into insights, explanations and theorisations for analysis. At the end of the research process, the weekly data collections were collated and re-coded to fit into the whole analysis. I employed inductive reasoning approach for the coding because I was focusing on starting with practical observation to form general ideas and conclusions. The strands of practical data that were collected were used to forge new thinking and concepts on the practice.

I also journaled after each session. My reflections were mostly on my feelings about how I collected the data and what data was collected from each experience and what insights I got from that experience. I also reflected on what I could have done differently so that, if possible, it could be incorporated in the next session. I did a similar exercise for the analysis as with the participants' journaling. The art of reflecting on something also refines the theoretical aspects of the art form in practice (Heap in Duffy 2015). This gave insight and prompts into critical thinking, learning and knowledge and this is because the knowing is reflected in the practice. Critical journal reflecting enhanced our understanding of power dynamics between the locals and foreigners and crossing bridges from subjective and objective realities.

As part of the final reflection of the research process, I interviewed the participants and audio recorded the interviews. Interviews in PaR research entail "... generating participants' descriptions of key aspects related to the cultural world of which he or she is a part - that is space, time, events, people, activities and objects." (Roulston 2010:19). In the case of this research, the participants were responding to descriptions of the world of research that they took part in. Audio recording involved capturing the interview responses in a recording device.

Each participant was asked the same question which was followed by one unstructured question. The question focused on what they thought about combining Forum Theatre and Appreciative Inquiry. It had an instinctive evaluative applicability to the method. The question that followed was guided by the participants' response to the initial question. The interviews took 10 minutes each. Most of the data had been collected in the embodied activities, but I wanted the participants to give an evaluation of the experiment itself. The setting of the audio recording, interestingly, brought a shift in how the participants articulated their responses as opposed to how they were responding to questions in the rehearsal spaces. Such a shift could have been brought about by perceived power dynamics in interview sessions and the idea about the recording gadgets which tends to formalise conversations. The participants became pretentious and they seemed to edit their thoughts. I feel this compromised the data collection because the evaluation came more from what the brain was trying to articulate, which was a difficult task for most participants, than what the participants experienced.

I also used literature to provide background scholarship on the issue of xenophobia, women's positionality to xenophobia and merging Forum Theatre and Appreciative Inquiry. This was to establish argument through making

connections between knowledge in existence and the study. A literature review can serve to advance knowledge by identifying what is known and unknown about a particular phenomenon (Crabtree and Miller 1999). The information collected from the literature was juxtaposed with the data collected in the rehearsal space. For example, reviewing readings on the merging of FT and AI was reiterated or showed what gaps there were in the study. The literature then became helpful in positioning the study, strategically helping to remove bias from my arguments. Webb in Chinyowa (2005) contends that literature is not affected by manifestations of the researcher's thoughts. The literature, as a data collection instrument also became, mostly, helpful for the analysis.

It would suffice to explain that the data was generated in the rehearsal workshops and during FT performances. The rehearsal workshops involved mainly going through the steps of the processes of AI and FT. The methods of data collection that were used were FT and AI techniques, observation, video and audio recording and journaling. The data that was collected was mostly the actions and behaviour of the participants. Focus was drawn on to what the participants thought about the merging of the two methods; scripting and acting out the play; how they responded to discussion questions and their reaction to the theme of xenophobia. In the internal FT event/performance data was drawn from the spect-acting and discussions about the play. This was to help with realising how the women responded to their own play through spect-acting. In their journal entries they were asked to focus on the listed strands. The video recording team was also instructed to expressly focus on the instruction of the behaviour of the participants.

In the performances at Hillbrow and Emakhaya theatres, the focus was on recording how the play was enacted in both locations. The data was drawn from how the actors conducted themselves in each location and if there were any discrepancies with how they acted in the rehearsal workshops. The video and audio recording also focused on the responses (spect-acting and discussions) given by the audience members to the play. The audience did not journal anything about the merging of the two methods, but I observed the effectiveness of both methods through how they responded in the spect-acting and instructions that I gave them when trying to bring in Appreciative Inquiry. The research participants also journalled their experiences of the performances at the theatres and I compared their reactions to both spaces after reading their journals.

d) How the Data was analysed

I used the thematic analysis method. Rice and Ezzy (1999), Boyatzis (1998), Crabtree and Miller (1999) locate thematic analysis as involving identification of themes through a rigorous reading and coding of themes for the description of the phenomenon under study. Thematic patterns are recognised within the data and they become categories for analysis. Coding according to Braun and Clark (2006) refers to searching for and identifying macro conversation in the research data that is later articulated into thematic groups. The coding process involved recognizing important moments of the participants' understanding, exploration and actions relating to the women's experiences on xenophobia then encoding them (seeing them as something) prior to a process of interpretation (Boyatzis, 1998). A code captures the qualitative richness of the phenomenon (Boyatzis 1998). Encoding the information organises the data to identify and develop themes from them. Boyatzis (1998:161) defines a theme as "a pattern in the information that at minimum describes and organises the possible observations and at maximum interprets aspects of the phenomenon". This method of analysis complemented the research questions by allowing the tenets of theoretical underpinnings and practice in this study to merge and be vital to the process of analysis as the

themes emerged directly from the data. I used Braun and Clarke's (2006) six steps of the process of thematic analysis as follows:

Familiarising oneself with the data: Reading original notes and transcribing recorded interactions. Then reading and re-reading the notes to note down initial ideas, a first step to understanding the research.

After each session, I transcribed (in a word or short phrase) information from the videos and notes and pasted them on my wall in thematic groups so that each day I look at them for familiarisation. I did this also weekly as I collated emergent, recurrent and similar themes. The pasted notes would be in various coloured cards for familiarity and clarity.

Generating initial codes: Identifying the many data extracts (preliminary codes) that provide context for the phenomenon under study.

Here I used my computer to create diagrams that were colour coded so as to identify potential themes. I highlighted similar themes in the same colour. I also did this with the cards done in the first step. The cards were of different colours to highlight the various emerging themes.

Searching for themes: Data (as codes) collated is grouped into overarching and relevant themes. Initial thoughts on the relationship between codes, subthemes and themes.

This was done effectively in the familiarisation stage. At the end of each week that is when I would carefully scrutinise the words and phrases on the cards and group them according to thematic comparison. I did this also at the completion of the project as I revisited the groupings to see if there were any emerging themes or ones that could not be articulated. This helped me to know which themes would be suitable to answer my research questions even in the write up. The coding also helped me tally the themes with the relevant theories and readings.

Reviewing themes: Deepening the review of the themes through mapping them.

The reviewing of the themes also happened in the previous step, but here I made use of brainstorming techniques. Some of these were in pictorial or diagrammatic forms to articulate ideas and open them for argument and discussion. I did some thematic association and dissociations. Next to the associations, I noted theories and theorists who would support the grouped themes.

Defining and naming themes: Refining and defining the themes and starting to create the story of analysis through the defining.

This is the part where I came up with chapter topics that were encompassed in each step of thematic mapping. I grouped the themes into logical sets that would possibly open a watertight argument. This helped me to name the concepts, ideas and philosophies revealed in the study. The participants' meaning was put into perspective as well its connections to theory and practice across the research significance.

Writing the analysis report: Transforming the review and analysis into interpretable and explorative writing with supporting empirical evidence that addresses the research question and phenomenology.

Guided by the PaR design and ethnographic principles, I wrote the report and integrated my personal involvement and academic stance into the writing.

The codes began as an expansive exploration of xenophobia as an evil and oppressive force to be contended with in society. The codes were later deduced to themes in critical pedagogy and perspective. These steps made it easier for me to make sense of the data and generate meaning. Perhaps the advantage of using thematic analysis lies in the enablement of the researcher to account for codes as experiences that focus on the researched lived experiences.

3.3 Conclusion

This chapter has revealed my experiences on how I conducted this research, but most important the emergent insight into the knowledge of PaR as the research design. The chapter has validated that there are multiple ways of doing research and in which meaning can be constructed in the academia and in the domain of practice-based research through theatre. The data was authenticated as being obtained from the participants' participation as a marker of practice. This was applicable to the theoretical underpinnings of this study which validate participation and participatory diagnosis as core to practice-based research. The experiment on combining Forum Theatre and Appreciative Inquiry was the locus of the identification of the various methods of data collection and how they were analysed. This navigated the connection between the research aims and questions of this study. The methodology illustrated ways in which the investigated concepts are reconstructed as new knowledge and how the participants, themselves, were constructors of this knowledge.

PaR and ethnography are largely attuned. Their compatibility is seen in their stance that is democratic and open to the application of theory and practice. The consideration of ADT as part of ethnographic and practice-based research was also timely. ADT contributes to the negotiation of power hierarchies that include theory and practice in knowledge production. This stance has engendered new perspectives in emergent forms of research in the academia. The methods challenge concerns over academic and science rigour as perspectives of good practise research. The action orientation in the methods promotes agency in participants' transformation and in turn endorses activism, advocacy and cultural analysis. Participants' and researcher perspectives are valued in both methodologies. This helps in the identification and analysis of hidden and unexpected issues. Attitudes and emotions of the participants are also exposed. The methods worked effectively in uncovering complicated and critical design research challenges such as the merging of FT and AI. In the subject of usability, the methods are user friendly and adaptable.

The methodological presentations in this chapter foreground the next stage of investigation in this research. The subsequent chapters present a write up of the analysed data and descriptions of the findings in this study. Chapter 4 draws attention to the symbolic representations of rehearsal rooms from the standpoint of practicing capacity building and actioning in the methods of Forum Theatre and Appreciative Inquiry.

Chapter 4

Rehearsal Rooms as the Symbolic Conceptions for a Rehearsal for Life

4.1 Introduction

The previous chapters have highlighted and explored how the conceptual and theoretical undertakings of this study included the raising of the consciousness of the women as they went through the processes of Forum Theatre and Appreciative Inquiry. It was discovered that the two methods called to attention the raising of the consciousness to various levels. These levels were directed by the methodological focus of this study as explicated in chapter 3. The concept of merging FT and AI underlined how the women moved from levels of naïve to active liberated consciousness. The research process was a presentation of workshop accounts that were rendered as the symbolic rehearsal of how the women would deal with the problem of xenophobia even outside of the research space. With Practice as Research and ethnography approaches, the rehearsal spaces became symbolic representations of knowledge from the standpoint of data collection, practising capacity building and actioning for the future of the women.

This chapter, therefore, explores the conceptions of rehearsal and rehearsal spaces as concepts that, arguably, deal with the progress of the women's participation in the project of merging Forum Theatre and Appreciative Inquiry. Rehearsal rooms at Hillbrow and Emakhaya theatres became prominent spaces where the aesthetics of oppression with regards to xenophobia were represented and explored. The spaces were containers through which the women and the men (men participants who were in support of the project) organised their world and reality through various acts of an aesthetic language of rehearsal for collective meaning making around the issue of xenophobia. Augusto Boal calls this the rehearsal for life. I will explain this phenomenon later in detail.

The rehearsal rooms acted as impetus for the findings for this research. They sparked the findings as the participants connected meaning to them in relation to the theme of xenophobia. They were representations of foreigner narratives. One of the initial conversations that we had with the research participants was how it was pertinent for us to use a space such as Hillbrow Theatre which in itself is a representation of foreigner narratives through its aesthetic perspective. This affected the whole outlook of the project as the participants began to attach a symbolic and meaningful narrative to each room/space that we used for each rehearsal. These spaces provided a platform for the exploration of merging of Forum Theatre and Appreciative Inquiry in addressing xenophobia amongst the women. This means that lessons were also learnt about the issue of xenophobia. Chapter 4 does not go deeper into the constructing and deconstructing of xenophobia, but foregrounds how the merging of FT and AI panned out as the beginning of meaning making and/or consciousness building around the concept of rehearsing for life with regards to addressing xenophobia. This was through the spaces being utilised as creative, life changing and affirming rehearsal rooms as posited in the theoretical and aesthetic frames of merging FT and AI.

The rehearsal room at Hillbrow theatre was a classroom that had chairs and tables and not furnished in any particular manner. The windows were high rise and big. The participants could hear the noise outside if they paid attention to it. The interior colour was a plaster of cream. It somehow created a homely atmosphere, but not totally because of some

stains and small chippings. I thought that it somehow represented the semi-belonging of the women in Hillbrow when they found Hillbrow accommodating, but not fully assimilating them as citizens. Emakhaya Theatre was a box theatre with four cornered square walls. The interior colour was grey. I thought the grey colour depicted the seriousness that the theatre exhudes, hence, it would have been difficult to explore xenophobia in that atmosphere. The furniture was composed of chairs that could be moved around. Nothing particular could be attached to the movable chairs.

In this chapter and the whole study, rehearsal rooms are explained as spaces that were used in their physical and representational contexts for getting the participants to rehearse - Physical in the sense of spatial location and building structure; representational in the sense of how each rehearsal room became a symbolic space of addressing xenophobia. Each space exuded a symbolic role and function of rehearsing for life. Thus, the rooms were a conceptual container for the participants' journeys in their rehearsal for life. The concept for rehearsal for life is also explicated as the rehearsal for a revolution. This was a term coined by Augusto Boal to explain how theatre is an end in itself - not just for entertainment purposes, but to practise in the fictional space what can be done in real life. This was from an understanding that, in a Forum Theatre event, spect-actors have the opportunity to speak for themselves, debate real life issues of oppression, get on stage to take the roles of the characters that they identified with and try to solve the oppression being exposed (Snyder-Young 2011 and Boal 1979, 1992, 2006). This is what the participants did in these spaces - to rehearse the challenges of the xenophobic oppression and learn to speak out for themselves through the aesthetic drive of Forum Theatre. This was a process where they practised what they would and could do in the real world of Johannesburg to solve the xenophobic oppression. The rehearsal rooms were, therefore, viewed as physical and symbolic containers for constructing and deconstructing the issue of xenophobia, through this rehearsal process, as facilitated by and through the merging of FT and AI.

Arguably, in the domain of Theatre of the Oppressed, rehearsal rooms move beyond their corporeal conventional structures that are for practising theatrical performances to encompass an intentionality to become proverbial resources for metaxis. Metaxis is an important aspect in TO that in it allows participants to explore their realities in a fictitious space that is safe and easier to connect with as compared to having difficult discussions in a real context. It acts as a distancing mechanism for the participants. This means that they are containers for reality and fiction to co-exist. From a dramaturgic point of view, Boal (1992:3) believes that, in TO, everyday spaces are transformed into theatrical arena or aesthetic spaces that may also transform physical sensations among spectators and actors. This is when and where fiction and reality meet, an extension for the rehearsal for life.

Furthermore, this chapter and study view the notion of rehearsing, in the Boalian sense, as encapsulating the experience between fiction and reality in rehearsal spaces. This is as well as literally getting participants to practise and perform a play for a Forum Theatre show whilst at the same time teaching the audience to protest against oppression. The former involves a philosophical re-positioning of the theatre space to that of a proactive process for both actors and spectators to practise strategies for how to deal with oppressive situations in real life. This is about constructing a fictional world for the participants to consider what can be done afterwards. The participants created dramaturgic scenarios and went through artistic processes that spoke to their experiences of xenophobia whilst at the same time using those scenarios and processes as backdrop to their real-life experiences. Intrinsically, here the rehearsing notion is explained as the intention to fictionalise, theatricalise, improvise and analyse a problem by making theatre about and from everyday life and vice versa (Johnston, 2015). Boal (2006) calls this rehearsal an

interpenetration of fiction into reality; a superposition of action itself and preparation for a revolution. This is what Boal and, by extension, the study mean by rehearsal for life - rehearsing for life situations worked within the rehearsal room. This rehearsing was carried out during the workshop processes and the Forum Theatre experiences with audience members. This is about focusing on the corporeal function and role of rehearsing in the rehearsal rooms. This function and role added value to the re-positioning of the philosophy of rehearsing for life. This is how and when in the process of coming up with the Forum Theatre play, the participants became scripters, directors and producers of their own lives.

There were several rehearsal rooms used for this research project. The first one was the Hillbrow Theatre itself. Made up of several theatre rooms, the theatre boasts of several spaces that can also be used for physical rehearsals. We used four such spaces and each one had its role and function that contributed to the findings of this research. We used three lower rooms for workshop processes and the main theatre auditorium for the showing of the Forum Theatre play where the audience members witnessed the play and rehearsed how they could deal with the problem of xenophobia. Another rehearsal room where the research participants extended, expanded and validated their rehearsal experiences of xenophobia was Emakhaya theatre, Wits University. This was with a different audience who also rehearsed for the thwarting of xenophobia, witnessed and validated the research participants' experiences. These rooms provide aesthetic experience and dimension that generate and reinforce the 'aesthetization' of reality (Morelos 1999). Morelos explains that Boal believes that such spaces provide a platform for two autonomous worlds (the world of reality and fiction) to collide and transubstantiate aesthetical reality.

This chapter also expands on the approach of Appreciative Inquiry as validating the lived experiences of the women in dealing with xenophobia as facilitated in the rehearsal for life. Cooperrider states that in *The Power of Appreciative Inquiry*, Whitney and Trosten-Bloom posit :

...six conditions for the liberation of power called the Six Freedoms: freedom to be known in relationships, freedom to be heard, freedom to dream in community, freedom to choose to contribute, freedom to act with support, and freedom to be positive...the authors conclude... "*The Power of Appreciative Inquiry comes from the way it unleashes all of the Six Freedoms over the course of just one complete 4-D cycle*" ... in which real listening [and assertive participation] for a deep level of meaning making, is the norm. (in Whitney and Trosten-Bloom, 2010:iv)

This assertion suggests a deeper level of rehearsing for life. While Forum Theatre propels participants for a politically revolutionary manifesto charged and ingrained rehearsal for life, Appreciative Inquiry comes with its approach of a life affirming participation in the rehearsal process. As much as freedom is experienced in the Forum Theatre approach, Whitney and Trosten-Bloom suggest freedoms of a placated disposition in which participants start functioning on a more positive level. All the freedoms are of special note and they shall be substantiated later in the chapter as giving value to the rehearsal for life in Forum Theatre.

The chapter will, categorically, look at the aesthetic perspective of the rehearsal spaces as symbolic political drivers of the rehearsal for the revolution against xenophobia. This will be an articulation of how the participants' bodies responded to the merging of FT and AI in preparation for how they could deal with the issues raised in the workshops. The idea of rehearsal rooms as the reformation of theatrical conventions will also be investigated. This is about challenging theatrical conventions for the freedom of participation for the future. The rehearsal rooms as spaces for

cultural metamorphosis will also be explored. This will show the transformative and transformational drive of Forum Theatre and Appreciative Inquiry rehearsal processes to change the xenophobia narrative. The chapter will also explore how the merging of FT and AI facilitated the playing out of the thin line between fiction and reality. Intrinsic in AI and FT processes is the investment of the participants' emotions amid the demands of theatrical experience. The autonomous world of fiction and reality is engendered in these processes and the concept of rehearsal for life is played out clearly when the participants practice what they can do outside of the theatrical space.

4.2 The Aesthetics and Politics of Xenophobia in the Rehearsal Rooms

As part of the initial process of the Discover phase and Knowing the Body stages of Appreciative Inquiry and Theatre of the Oppressed respectively, the participants were asked to explore their bodies in relation to their initial feelings and understanding of xenophobia. Sindie (one of the participants who lives in Hillbrow) suggested that we should add a layer to the process by focusing attention to their understanding of xenophobia vis-à-vis the surrounding environment (whether political or social) because she felt that her body could not separate itself from the nuances that the space exuded. The other participants were in agreement as they explained that even if some of them did not live in Hillbrow, their bodies felt inundated by their foreignness when they were in Hillbrow or at the theatre. Thus, their bodies began to explore and rehearse the aesthetics and political dimensions of xenophobia through their presence in the space.

In the Knowing the Body stage, when asked to explore the oppressions they felt in their bodies with regards to xenophobia, the participants asked to start the journey from outside of the first rehearsal room. Their exploration outside was very dramatic. Each one of them found a spot that had a story that was propelled by what their bodies felt. Sindie placed herself, coincidentally, close to a police van that was just parked outside the theatre and coiled herself in a foetal position depicting despair and fear. Tino moved around the theatre courtyard stretching her limbs and making shrieking sounds. Andile also moved around the courtyard exploring almost all her body parts and giving emphasis to some of them. I moved to each one of them and extended or mirrored what they were doing. This was just to give support as this was done publicly. The participants had expressed that they felt vulnerable doing this exercise in a public space. This vulnerability was an expression of how space can formulate narratives of oppression. I was glad that this vulnerability was displayed publicly because, symbolically, it mirrored the precarity of xenophobia in Hillbrow. Robinson (2016) points out that for Boal, theatre is the particular language of the human body because humans become most human when doing theatre and theatre emphasises self-reflexivity. Already in that theatre mode and in that rehearsal space, the participants' bodies were enabled to reflect on what it means to be foreign in that part of Johannesburg. The participants became in tune with the space and it became pliable in response to their acts and interpretation.

Practice-based research allows for vulnerability for its research participants. This is not to say that the women were in a highly vulnerable ethical category, but the approach allows participants to be vulnerable because of the interplay between reality and the production of knowledge. England (1994:82) argues that as long as the issue being studied involves reflexivity and positionality, we cannot ignore that participants will also share their vulnerability. She explains that "...reflexivity is self-critical sympathetic introspection and the self-analytical scrutiny of the self ... it induces self-discovery and can lead to insights and new hypotheses." In some instances, the vulnerability helps as collected data to show the power relations at play. This is the case for the study where the focus was on the power relationships between the foreigners and locals.

In reflection Sindie explained that when she saw the police van her body gave a spasm of being seen as a suspect (with a criminal disposition for that matter) as a foreign woman. The van, in this surrounding, was on point to articulate body perceptions of xenophobia in Hillbrow. For her, without even uttering anything to anyone about her foreign status she felt that her body radiates with questionability when she walks in the streets or in a public service area. The police van is notoriously known to bundle up foreign nationals in the streets if they are found without any identification. Tino explained in her journal that, "I felt my body radiating with an aesthetic dimension that is politically orientated as I saw Sindie 'cooping up' hers next to the police van. I felt that there was a revolution of bodies in space. I wanted to scream, but I only shrieked. My body became a spectacle of war." She also said that the aesthetic of her walkabout exploration was an urge of her body not understanding the aesthetics of the walk in the streets of Johannesburg. She also stated that sometimes she had an urge to run, but would tell herself to slow down because she had noticed that the people (not knowing whether they are local or not) have different types of walk and paces. She felt that her walking reverberated with the xenophobia aesthetic from her body. Furthermore, her position as a foreign body made her aware of such nuances. I understood this to be a re-birth and re-emphasis of Boal's philosophy around the aesthetics of the oppressed and political underpinnings of the Theatre of the Oppressed - that the body is the ultimate tool for revolution.

Andile felt she attracted a lot of stares from the public and her body instinctively switched to her womanhood and sexuality. She explained how she understood the body politics of women in general in South Africa, but kept wondering what that meant for a foreign woman. She concurred with Tino about also feeling her body rioting as an oppressed entity in Johannesburg and especially being an object of sexual abuse.

These reflections sparked an initial perception that the participants were already seeing themselves starting a rehearsal for a revolution. For Boal (2002) the aesthetics of the oppressed are a pursuit of political truths through bodily senses. Participants are enabled to detect signals of oppression, feel and show them in and through their bodies. The stage of knowing the body initialises personal aesthetics and politics where participants' bodies start to formulate their own sets of meanings.

When incorporating the Discover stage of Appreciative Inquiry, the participants opted to work inside the theatre building in one of the rehearsal rooms. After a gruelling knowing the body experience, the participants were sceptical that they could regroup themselves. The situation had been volatile and this was the first opportunity to test and bring in the AI approach. The participants were asked to explore, through their bodies, what they celebrated about being foreign in Johannesburg. However, they had to also keep in mind their Knowing the Body experiences from the TO exercise. This process took place at the downstairs rehearsal room. This rehearsal room had poor lighting that did not highlight the darkness of being underground that much. This space metaphorically became a grounding space for the participants' affirmation of their rehearsal for humanness and consciousness of xenophobia. The experience here, ironically, contrasted with the dim light of the room. Compared to the positionality of experience of the body in the previous exercise, there was a shift in focus where they had to allow the body to bring in their perceptions of the best of their lives in Johannesburg. This explains that as an instrument and container of knowledge, the body can be aware of wherein lies its stipulations of behaviour and experience. In this exercise, the participants' bodies spoke to an affirmation of who they are as human beings. Ludema *et al* (2003) assert that the purpose of the Discover stage is to highlight and illuminate factors that give humanness to individuals. Instead of seeing themselves as second class

human beings, they start to think of themselves as innovative beings who are capable of taking charge of their being. Participants begin to rehearse towards a positive revolution. Tino explained that the exercise gave her a deep-seated feeling of appreciation for some locals and an understanding of ignorance amongst those who were highly xenophobic. Jakes articulated that he felt strength from within and an affirmation of who Zimbabwean women are. Most of them agreed that they felt their bodies allaying fear and believing that they too are humans.

Nevertheless, the participants indicated a downplaying of the pain and reality of oppression through a somewhat idealised rehearsing of their humanness and consciousness of xenophobia in AI. They claimed that, at that moment, they had been enabled to feel as if they were coping against the injustices of xenophobia and they were fully human, but when they came out of that rehearsal room, the stinking reality would strike again. They believed that the rehearsal was an instrument of hope, but it downplayed their suffering. That was just momentary victory for them. Deco explained that their bodies had been saying they are capable of a rehearsal for a revolution, but they had not yet begun. The aesthetic dimension of experiencing relief and hope was endearing for a while, but the thought of re-living the oppression outside of the rehearsal space dented their quest for humanness and there was a re-adaptation to the inhuman aesthetic.

One would think that this initial attraction of the oppressed in re-discovering themselves would start challenging the deficit mentality in TO and generating the needed energy for a positive thinking aesthetic. Then again, it creates an uncertainty that the initial positive outlook can be sustained when the participants leave the rehearsal room to face their reality. This almost put a dent on how Appreciative Inquiry could effectively bring a positive effect on Forum Theatre. While Cooperrider and Srivastva (1987) critiqued the problem-posing approaches and posited AI as a method that would create positive thinking, Bushe (2011) argues that in AI, a group may be impatient with their innovativeness in the discussion for the future and for them the future may just become a shadow of itself. Bushe quotes William James (1902) who explains that people may know that change is inevitable when they are threatened by fear and violence, but may not even understand the change when violence and fear are reconfigured around it (the change). William James was known for his philosophy in phenomenological understanding of the individual self and self-consciousness as innovation to change.

In the ensuing phases of the Dream and Design and Making the Body Expressive and Theatre as Language phases, the aesthetic dimensions gained momentum. Each rehearsal room had its own story to tell and the exploration of the politics of xenophobia generated to unprecedented levels. Boals' second and third strategies engage participants to continue re-discovering their bodies as phenomena of performance and emphasis is placed on exploring the body as a propellant for exploring the politics of oppression (Garoian, 1999:59). Garoian also underscores Boal's emphasis on the phenomena of the "living and present body" becoming an expression and a language predicated on the body's physical and cultural experiences which are not a repetition of a prescribed text. The experiences are an improvised performance driven by everyday life. This is Boal's rehearsal for life process. The Dream and Design phases engage participants in a desire to significantly improve their lives through a collective focus on what has been identified as that which works with a further focus on what the future may hold.

One of the games played at the Making the body Expressive was a trust game where one participant was blindfolded and was led through the rehearsal room that had chairs and tables scattered all over, by another participant. They

reversed roles in leading. The game was chosen by the participants themselves. A reflection, about the game, that stood out was how the one being led represented Freire's (1933) philosophy and Boal's (1992) poetics of the oppressed that usually the one being led will always need something from the one leading. Thus, the oppressed always wants various forms of emancipation and assurance from the oppressor. Welile articulated that in that instance it is clear that being a foreign woman comes with its own blinding blinkers as compared to being a local woman. She explained that the game actually showed how Zimbabwean women were in need of freedom, acceptance and support politically, emotionally and physically. The group, in agreement, pointed out that, unfortunately, because of the nature of Johannesburg, nobody has the time to concentrate on what foreign women go through and want. As is the case with how women are treated in Johannesburg, the focus on Zimbabwean women's problem would be just trivial.

The obstacles in the room added another dimension to the discussion of aesthetics and politics of xenophobia. The tables and chairs were representative of the obstacles that the women faced:

Foreign women in the townships have been disproportionately affected by the recent xenophobia, not only because the violence has played out on their bodies (through beatings and rape), but also because the violence has been directed towards their homes (through burning and looting).²⁰ (Centre for the Study of Violence and Reconciliation 2008)

The participants saw this aesthetics playing to, largely, represent the double jeopardy they faced during any xenophobic attack. The above assertion actually drives the point home that the women realised the double tragedy that they are faced with – that is being a woman and being foreign. They stressed that the aesthetics in the room actually highlighted this double tragedy with them being blindfolded and by the vulgar representation of the furniture in the room.

After being asked to imagine the room without the furniture, the participants were instructed to express how they envisioned their lives to be. They actually refused to imagine that and asked how that would all pan out if they rearranged the furniture and not necessarily removed it. The argument was that removing the furniture would be utopian. As such, they challenged the researcher's consideration of a political insinuation that highlighted a total removal of xenophobia. However, Lewis *et al* (2016:187) aver that in the Dream phase "One of the purposes of dreaming is to generate a wide range of possibilities, it is not about forecasting reality. In [the aesthetics of a dream] all things are possible." The participants needed to realise that the Dream phase becomes a resource that may later help them move forward and from the cast of the dreams, reality could be vouchsafed. The participants were adamant, however, that the total removal of the furniture would insinuate a total removal of xenophobia which is a fallacy in the current reality of Johannesburg where foreign women are faced with this "double jeopardy." It should be realised that the Dream phase systematically tries to tap human potential through allowing them to imagine a futuristic aesthetics of hope (Cooperider and Whitney, 1999), though some may not realise that until they move to the next stage and use the dreams to design their future.

Focus is also drawn to an Image Theatre aesthetic of a man being neck-laced on a burning tyre. The aesthetic becomes an epic tale of hatred and suffering for the women. The rehearsal room was abounding with tension such that the participants themselves did not understand if they were living that image or they were just in a rehearsal room. The

²⁰ <https://www.csvr.org.za> July 20, 2008 CSVr: Double Jeopardy: Being foreign and female increase their vulnerability during xenophobia violence.

image created here was the popular image of the tyre necklacing²¹ of the foreign man in Alexander (a township notoriously known for xenophobic violence, in the Northern parts of Johannesburg). This image was created by Deco (a man in the group) and Sindie and Tino. Sindie showed a body submerged in despair and agony and looked at the horror of the man being necklaced and at the same time pleading with the perpetrators to have mercy on the man. Tino stood behind Sindie trying to cover her eyes not to see what was happening, but equally horrified. This was a rehearsal of a painful reality of xenophobic violence for the women. I asked the participants to repeat words and phrases of what they were feeling and thinking at that particular moment towards the image. The phrases that came out were: What have we done to deserve this, the pain of being a woman, may your eyes not see this, please, why, if God exists where is he right now? Man's wife or sister or mother etc. This was some form of thought-tracking. Thought tracking, as a TO technique marks a deeper insight of how the character feels and realises various layers within the issue explored. The onlookers of the image also joined in and expressed their own thoughts and feelings without going through a discursive reflection. The reflection became embodied and there was a traumatic effect in dealing with that image. Leigh *et al* (2019) assert that embodied reflection can have a positive impact on self-efficacy and open up channels of critical thinking in a more accessible way especially where traumatic effects have been realised.

Image making exercises, such as this one, can perpetuate dehumanising trauma and stereotypes. Whilst the participants were happy to expose the demeaning effects of xenophobia, this did not do much to alleviate the suffering of the oppressed that is purported to be driven by the Theatre of the Oppressed. Otherwise, it directed the participants' anger towards an irreconcilable hatred for locals. Anger and hatred create objects out of people. They become the very opposite of what they wish for. It becomes, therefore, difficult to bring out the desired change and that would require a thorough analysis of the participants' feelings at that time. While Image Theatre can be celebrated for its power to unravel such complexities of xenophobia, it may debilitate the participants' desire for addressing the problem at hand and they might want to do exactly what the oppressor does. That is why it is important to move to the ideal image. In this research, the ideal image perfunctorily functioned as the Dream phase of Appreciative Inquiry. Augusto Boal gives an example of how some of his participants in Brazil wanted to take up real arms and go and fight after he had unravelled the oppressive structures of his country (Boal 2002). This story and the workshop incident show the propensity to instigate anger and retraumatising effect of Forum Theatre. As such, the rehearsal rooms should demonstrate the need to contain that anger through an approach that would alleviate the anger and give hope to the participants.

After a gruelling real image of the tyre necklace, the trio was asked to imagine a Johannesburg where locals would chastise each other for such act through creating an ideal image. The participants found it difficult to create that image, but were compelled to challenge their imaginations to see if that was possible. The ideal image that was created showed the three participants clasping hands in a line, moving and all looking ahead. When dynamised (added sound and movement effects to the image), the image bore a resemblance to a carnival of street marchers who had achieved what they wanted and sought to show everybody their success. The dream was that one day in the streets of Johannesburg there would be no fear and panic and tyres would only be used on motor vehicles not to torch people. Deco explained that dreaming, in the ideal image, helped them realise a redrafting of personal thoughts of hatred to

²¹ Necklacing in Johannesburg involves putting a burning tyre on the neck of an alleged criminal offender as punishment for his/her supposed crimes. This is illegal as the perpetrators will be taking the law into their own hands.

conceiving how life would be if the dream started with them. The proliferation of dreaming and seeing the ideal image is so that people perceive life more as their own construction to challenge the history that had put boundaries around what they might be (Orem *et al*, 2007). In this instance, the ideal image creation became symbiotic with what the dream phase purports in Appreciative Inquiry.

The image of transition in Image Theatre and the spect-acting in Forum Theatre accentuate the rehearsal for life in TO. These two processes create a space in which the oppressed rehearse ways and means of fighting against the oppression (Boal, 1996). The body and mind of the spect-actor merge and inform each other whether the rehearsal is difficult or easy. This is seen in how the participants move from the real image to the ideal or how they articulate their solutions.

In the transitional image, the participants showed in their movements how difficult or easy the transition is. When Jakes, Welile and Andile showed their transition from an image that depicted the hatred, by the locals, towards women who give birth in Johannesburg hospitals, it was difficult for their bodies to show the possibility of calling for tolerance and acceptance. The participants found it worrisome for locals to even suggest that foreign women are not supposed to procreate because they are foreigners. The real image had depicted how the local nurses in public hospitals and the general public were irked and showed contempt at the conception of foreign babies in their country because this meant that the babies would grow to dominate them. They also highlighted that the pregnant women were using up resources in the maternity clinics. The issue of maternity discrimination highlights the problem of lack of belonging. When a critical issue such as giving birth is treated with contempt, it shows the level of intolerance among locals against foreign women. In this instance xenophobia becomes an antithesis to belonging. The South African constitution (1996) engraves the citizenship law that stipulates that individuals have a fundamental right to identity and belonging. However, the treatment of foreign women in maternity clinics thwarts this right. Gadzikwa and Jones (2020) find the treatment of Zimbabwean women as embedded in the discourse of exclusion and symbolically a loss of identity and belonging.

In the transitional images, the trio tried to show how painful it is for women not to procreate whilst at the prime of their fertile lives. Though they tried to rehearse their appeal for tolerance, they found it absurd to do so. Deco, Sindie and Tino also found it difficult to transition from the tyre lace image to the line/chain of unity that they showed in the ideal. Nyamnjoh (2010) explains that the politics of xenophobia are premised on the illusion that belonging and identity are informed by the erroneous assumption of the ultimate insider and outsider. As such, the ultimate insider becomes the only one capable and with the right to give birth all because of his/her insecurities of being dominated. The foreigner should not, at any cost, give birth.

From a dramaturgic point of view, I believe that the aesthetics and politics of xenophobia were revealed. In another light, I think it was the group's participation in allowing themselves to challenge the aspects of Appreciative Inquiry that they deemed utopian. It allowed them to discuss how those aspects were necessary for the enablement of rehearsing for life.

This phenomenon also showed itself in the Forum Theatre event where the aesthetics and politics of xenophobia were challenged and the bringing in of Appreciative Inquiry seemed utopian in some moments and instances. What the research participants saw panning out in the rehearsal rooms was also evident in the Forum Theatre event. The

audience members argued that some situations of xenophobia could not be eradicated easily with the theoretical underpinnings of Appreciative Inquiry.

In the Forum Theatre spect-acting, one realised that audience members (whether local or foreign) also found it hard to present their solutions. Characterised by the politicisation of belonging, the aesthetics of xenophobia become an open arena of stigma and stereotyping. With such preconceptions, audience members participate with the notion of finger pointing and blame. At Hillbrow Theatre, the spect-actors, who mostly were foreigners, made a case for inclusion. However, the discourse of inclusion highlighted bitterness against locals who they claimed forgot how the history of Zimbabwe shaped the future of South Africa. Thus, the politics of entitlement were at play even among the foreigners.

At Emakhaya theatre, the audience members who were mostly locals, exonerated the behaviour of the antagonist in the play, to some extent. They did not necessarily make a case for the exclusion of the Zimbabwean women, but cried foul on the portrayal of the oppressor characters who depicted locals. One audience member even complained that she could not connect with the aesthetics of the oppressor because she felt there was an exaggeration. Another audience member highlighted that Forum Theatre was bound to solicit such emotions because the one who identifies with the oppressor will find it unfair to be depicted in that manner. In this instance, there was a consummation of a contention between the feelings and aesthetics of the oppressed and oppressor.

The means of arriving at the image of transition and getting the spect-actors to explore solutions in Forum Theatre, through scripting a play that challenged conceptions and misconceptions, reflected on the participants' understanding of how to deal with xenophobia in different contexts. However, as has been highlighted, there was contention with how the issue was presented to the audiences and how the research participants found it difficult to rehearse a transition from a reality of discrimination to freedom. While they were designing their future, through that rehearsal, the participants were still challenged by the aggravating circumstances. Cockell and McArthur-Blair (2012) suggest that when designing a future, through Appreciative Inquiry, participants ought to ask themselves what concrete plans can they implement to create a preferred future despite extenuating circumstances.

Cockell and McArthur-Blair offer actions that are positive and outcomes-based: Commitments, offers and requests. Commitments are actions that each person proposes can and will do. Offers are resources that one can give to others. Requests are needs that others can provide. This is a way of putting all energy sources together to 'Design' their future in the rehearsal room. The Design plans have a way of identifying key agreements for working together effectively (Cockell and McArthur-Blair, 2012). Even though the spect-actors might disagree and argue on certain issues, if the Joker imparts a spirit of agreeing to differ, the task of designing the future does not become daunting. It is then incumbent upon the Joker's strategic facilitation strength to allow for an appreciative rehearsal to take place. That is through asking questions that provoke critical and appreciative thinking. Questions such as: Of what significance is allowing love and unity to lead in our lives as different people; What is the beauty of being different; What can we achieve in our differences etc. The key sustaining the AI energy in the Design phase is to engage the participants in creative and affirming strategic plans.

After rationalising on the complexity of FT and AI rehearsal rooms, the next section examines how Forum theatre seeks to reform the theatre space for the enactment of the freedom aesthetic in theatre settings. It also show how

Appreciative Inquiry challenges the Forum Theatre conventions to propose a more innovative way to deal with real life issues in the theatre spaces.

4.3 Reformation of Theatrical Conventions in the rehearsal Rooms

Because Forum Theatre is a workshop process, it challenges most theatrical conventions. First, the fact that it is a process rather than a final performance product, implies a lot about its structure and outcomes. Secondly, it is not mandatory for actors to rehearse a scripted play as would be the case in traditional performances. Third, the fourth wall is broken down between the audience and actors. Fourth, the rehearsal rooms become spaces for rehearsing for real life. Fifth, the stage is also invaded as a rehearsal space: A rehearsal room for a revolution. Lastly, the performances make use of intervals that are directed by the Joker who acts as a master of ceremonies and commentator of events. Most importantly, this research seeks to even invade the Forum Theatre conventions with Appreciative Inquiry to create an ultimate reformation of theatrical conventions.

The structure of Forum Theatre, as a process, clearly proves the theatre event to be a participatory programme. Audience members shift from being receivers of theatre to a partakers in theatre. In the greater part of the process, participants are given the platform to offer and dialogue ideas, make decisions, transform ideas into action, problem-solve and negotiate solutions. Whereas with the conventional forms of theatre, the audience member sits in the theatre with blinkers to consume what is set before him/her. In Forum Theatre, the active participant is free to challenge and experiment with the course of action. Women, who are even known to be socially inept, can, in such a structure, practice authentic transformation. This is because the structure allows every person of any oppressed disposition to develop their skills of dialogue and emancipatory expression. Incorporating the structure of Appreciative Inquiry, into this structure, meant enhancing ownership among the Zimbabwean women of the process. Whitney and Trosten-Bloom (2010:2) aver that “Through...inquiry and dialogue people shift their attention and action from problem analysis to lift up worthy ideals and productive possibilities...”

When the participants asked if there was a script for the Forum Theatre play, they were anticipating that I knew about the xenophobia narratives and would just ask them to act out what I already knew. It was a surprise for them to find out that we would script the play together from the findings that we had explored about xenophobia. The rehearsal room became a significant activity of enhanced ownership which is mostly taken away in traditional rehearsals. This meant that the women had to script, direct their own creativity, adapt scenes to their own understanding and meaning and rehearse their own realities. Ganguly (2010) emphasises that when the participants script their own play, it is an excellent way of stimulating them to sharpen their critical consciousness. This is because as they script, they become aware of the nuances in their narratives and they know which ones will drive the point home. This was about moving the women towards direct agency and critical creativity. In Appreciative Inquiry this would constitute a recognition that all members contribute to a higher sense of purpose and a culture that fosters empowerment at all levels of agency (Cooperrider *et al* 2008). In any case, participants may not be enabled to rehearse for their lives if they are not enabled to script the stories of their lives.

Breaking down the fourth wall in Forum Theatre is an unprecedented feat in the reformation of conventional rehearsal rooms. One can imagine how it panned out for the Zimbabwean women watching a play on xenophobia from their seats, taking part in its directing and spect-acting. Breaking the fourth wall was Boal's break away from the classical

traditions of theatre that purported audience members to be separated from the action on stage so that they become politically disoriented to the socio-politics of the time. This is as an act of transgression for the cause of transitivity and politically conscious theatre (Boal 2005 and Prendergast & Saxton, 2009). Boal believed that it was important to allow the spectators to transit between reality and fiction and that was the only way they (spectators) could be totally dynamised. He contended that:

Conventional theatre is governed by an intransitive relationship, in that everything travels from stage to auditorium, everything is transported, transferred in that direction - emotions, ideas, morality! - and nothing goes the other way. The tiniest noise, smallest exclamation, the least sign of life the spectator displays, is the equivalent of driving the wrong way down a one-way street: danger! Lest the magic of the stage be, shattered, silence is required. In *Theatre of the Oppressed*, by contrast, dialogue is created; transitivity is not merely tolerated, it is actively sought - this theatre asks its audience questions and expects answers. Sincerely. (Boal 1998: 19-20).

As such, the women realised that they were doing a political act when they scripted a play that allowed the audience to transit to the stage and take part in it as solution givers. The rehearsal for life was charged with political connotations of transitivity. After the Forum Theatre session in Hillbrow Theatre, Tino articulated that she felt like a theatrical journalist in her role because her character systematically interrogated the audience for responses without her asking any questions. The stage was invaded as a rehearsal space for both the participants and the spect-actors. According to Boal (1998) that constitutes a transgression, but such transgression is politically charged because it challenges the status quo - another contribution to a high sense of purpose in the lives of the participants. The notion of transitivity, in this regard, is an explanation of how spectators are transformed from being passive to active participants in the rehearsal room. The transformation is not an act of charity because it is not given by the oppressor or the one who holds power in the theatre, but by the spectators themselves. Freire (1970) is against the notion of freedom as an act of charity from the oppressors. For him freedom should be the vocational right of every human to be more human.

The invitation of the spectators (both local and foreign) into the theatrical world of the Zimbabwean women illustrates how Forum Theatre can help build communities that suffer polarity. The invitation was a step towards transformation, the transitivity that Boal articulates. For the women, it was a reward for them to find themselves working with locals to manage their differences. It was also another way for them to work with their foreign counterparts for the common goal. Invading the stage was a victorious transgression.

However, due to xenophobic attitudes and violence, the narrative of urban decay has heightened in Johannesburg. Even though, it was a victory that the rehearsal room was transgressed in that manner, it was palpable that some spectators (mostly local) found that as an opportunity to continue venting out their disgruntlement towards Zimbabwean immigrant women. Because the disposition of Forum Theatre tends towards problematising issues, the rehearsal room also became a fertile ground for battle. This meant that we had to reflect on the various offers of the spect-acting after the performance. I had tried, as the Joker, to employ Appreciative Inquiry questioning tactics, but I found that the spect-actors could not realise the push towards positive thinking. Although, to a certain extent, that was achieved, it took so much pushing. This goes to show how much xenophobia continues to cause urban social decay in cities such as Johannesburg and how FT in its deficit approach can sometimes perpetuate further decay.

My questioning tactics involved using questions that were trying to shape people's inclination towards and intentions to work against any tidal waves of repeating the same mistakes of violent discrimination and intolerance and decay. For me, a Zimbabwean woman, this was a demonstration that in some practice-based research domains, it is difficult to stick to research conventions. This was also an act of transgression that gave me the freedom to be also a researcher activist. This role became a drive towards the proposition of city that is welcoming and embracing of everyone. I asked the spect-actors some of these questions:

- How would you treat Sthabile (one of the protagonists in the play) if you did not know their national status? See Appendix 1 for the character of Sthabile in the play.
- Can we all in this room use our names and forget our surnames and whatever is attached to them culturally and ethnically? If so how and what is the possibility
- Is it possible to, as you come on stage, remove from your mind any obstacle (physical or abstract) that you see might be causing the problem here? How would you describe the process of removing them?
- Using your strength and aptitude as an individual how do you think you can help Zimbabwean women live their lives to their full capacities too?

The discovery of strengths and individual capacities in AI upraises the audience's capacity to transform who they are. It also adjusts cultural misconceptions and misgivings and they learn that affirmative questioning becomes a mode of inquiry capable of "inspiring, mobilising and sustaining significant human system change" (Whitney and Cooperrider 2005: 4). The research participants were also capacitated in this. Whitney and Cooperrider likewise quiz on what will happen to human change systems if we begin by working with positive presumptions that spaces of intervention (rehearsal rooms) are centres of human relatedness and can be alive with endless constructive capacity.

Boal's approach to Forum Theatre is that human beings are the objects of inquiry as they are subjects of their change. Per se, there should be a way that must provoke or stimulate their capacity for action. The Joker then is that important aspect in the stimulation. He/she is critical in the reformation of the rehearsal rooms and participants' rehearsal for life. The role of the Joker is to democratise theatre, a desirable end for this research project. My intention, as the Joker, was to make sure that when facilitating all the workshops, I would incorporate as much of the constructivist aesthetics from Appreciative Inquiry. This is so because the constructivist aesthetic is predicated on seeing communities as living and dynamic systems. Norum (2008) explains that the constructivist approach tends not to be deductive and reductionist, but inductive as driven by the possibility to nurture capacity to evoke and co-create new realities for participants.

In addition, the constructivist aesthetics demand a languaging initiative, from the Joker, that will propel constructive dialogue in the rehearsal room. As posited in Bergvall-Kareborn *et al* (2008), Appreciative Inquiry dialogue and/or conversations are guided by a principle of questioning that unleashes the capacity for critical thinking, positive dreaming, adventure and anticipatory learning. In all this, they claim that this nurtures imagination of possibilities of problem solving. The languaging should connect and hold participants together and not cause further conflict and confusion among the participants (Bergvall-Kareborn *et al* 2008). However, they must agree to differ and that is different from causing confusion. Such languaging challenges the habitual status quo of deficit-based approaches (such as Forum Theatre). The research participants and the spect-actors had to be left knowing that the duty of the Joker was to allow for a fertile ground of imagination of solutions, in the rehearsal space, rather than to resolve

problems. The power of positive imagining usually leads to constructive reciprocal interactions (Bergvall-Kareborn *et al* 2008). Hence, I made sure, as the Joker, to provoke ambiguity, paradox, constructive dialogue and appreciative yet critical thinking through my questioning. One would notice that the strand of the Joker's role in FT is symbiotic with that of AI. However, what makes the AI Joker stand apart from the Boalian Joker is the idea to facilitate better and positive options for the participants. The AI Joker promotes a positive revolution in the rehearsal rooms.

Intrinsically, the role of the Joker in the rehearsal for life is that of disrupting fixed roles and conceptions about life. It is his/her duty to make participants aware that they are not living fated lives. In the research project, I tried to negate, amongst the Zimbabwean women, the idea that as foreigners they were fated to suffer. More so, with the introduction of Appreciative Inquiry, I was enabled to stress that their lives were not static. They had to rehearse what it meant for them to transform their lives in the affirmative. I was also able to challenge traditional aesthetics of tragedy (considering how the women saw their being in Johannesburg a tragic event) by summoning and hurling down boundaries to such thinking. I turned the rehearsal rooms upside down and reformed them to a terrain of dialectic possibilities unlike in the traditional stage where there is just the purging of emotions from spectators (Babbage 2018).

With the inclusion of Appreciative Inquiry, certain conventions of Forum Theatre were disrupted towards a different outcome. I will explore four ways in which this occurred in the rehearsal rooms. First, with FT, we were trying to fix the problem of xenophobia by analysing its causes. In this, we had an inclination that life is a problem that needs to be fixed. This limits the participants' view of life as an entity full of possibilities. AI already sets a context of appreciation where people can analyse with a positive mindset to improve their lives. Appreciation improves one's mindset to focus on positive thoughts. Second, with AI we valued the best of what is. This means that we tried to focus on that which the participants valued about their lives as foreign women - The idea that they were human, they could be part of the socio-political and economic development of South Africa. The idea behind valuing the best of what is, is also part of appreciation because when people value what is already there amongst each other, they cultivate healthy relationships. Forum Theatre does not bring so much value to what is because it validates the negative of what is. Third, FT tended towards prioritising problem-solving and AI brought in the idea that communities are receptacles of the strengths of its members that need to be embraced for a better future. Problem-posing is limited to stories of despair that keep the participants grounded in their misery. With AI, we sought to acknowledge that problems are apparent, but we reinforced a positive outlook in dealing with problems. Deco, Tino and Sindie wrote in their journals that in the spect-acting sessions, sometimes the 'rehearsal rooms' feel like spaces of war. Their strategies feel like retaliation. They might have expressed this because they had been introduced to the other aspect of AI strategizing and this was based on comparison of the two methods. I felt that such a realisation exposed how sometimes exploring solution through problem posing may factor the war room mentality. Fourth, the action planning in Forum Theatre is on how to get things done. AI is substantiated on dialoguing what will be done through envisioning what might be. This means that AI becomes more innovative towards the creation and sustaining of the dreams of the people instead of trying to solve their problems as a possible stop. AI complements FT in that it chooses to embrace the strength of life that gives people the urge to go on living despite the challenges they go through. Coopridge and Srivasta (1987) articulate that AI helps participants re-discover their existing strengths and opportunities in their lives instead of being blindfolded by the agency of problems.

Theatrically, AI challenges the aesthetics aligned to the conventions of political bitterness towards oppression. In an FT rehearsal, the story and actions of the characters are pivoted on conflict. The characters have to show, through their bodies, their detestation of oppression. That creates and heightens an atmosphere of antagonism and despondency. That is why there tends to be unprecedented hostility between the oppressors and the oppressed in the audience. Through its language of positive affirmation, AI initiates conversations that alleviate the subsequent conflict that would be manifest in FT. In the next section, I delve into how these challenged conventions also signposted cultural transformation in the rehearsal rooms.

4.4 Rehearsal Rooms and rehearsals as spaces for cultural metamorphosis

In the context of Johannesburg, where there is injustice due to structural social categorisations, there is need for structural and cultural reformation. In the context of xenophobia, cultural metamorphosis would include a shifting of the delimitations caused by national and/or ethnic antagonism along artificial (colonially imposed) boundaries where cultural diversity is suppressed (Kersting, 2009). Smith and Nathane-Taulela (2015) aver that in the South African context where there are unequal power relations due to social categorisations, there is need for critical cultural conscientization and mobilisation for social change. The rehearsal rooms were a representation of this cultural metamorphosis as they sought to highlight this delimitation and challenge systematic categorisation of nationality. This section will demonstrate how the merging of AI and FT aided in this transformation.

One impediment, mentioned by the participants, to cultural unity, in Johannesburg, was the issue of language. In the rehearsal room, the participants used the two Zimbabwean languages (Shona and IsiNdebele) and English as the mediums to articulate the reality of xenophobia. The xenophobia narrative, in Johannesburg, is also constituted along language barriers. The participants voiced that they felt safer in the rehearsal rooms that they were expressing themselves in their mother tongue, something problematic when they were outside. The Shona speaking participants argued that it was easy for the IsiNdebele speakers because their language was a dialect of Zulu (the most spoken language in Johannesburg). To some extent, it may be easy because for those who cannot pay attention to intonation may get away with it. However, there are spaces where locals are disgusted by the Ndebele people who try to speak Zulu and intonation is picked up. Sindie said they suffer the most because they are accused of being linguistically fraudulent so that they easily take away their jobs and are not found out to be foreign.

The Forum Theatre play was scripted in IsiNdebele and English so that various audiences could understand it. Be that as it may, the interventions at Hillbrow Theatre were mostly in Zulu and IsiNdebele and at Emakhaya theatre in English and Zulu. That, as well, posed problems. There were some spectators, at Emakhaya theatre, who deliberately used other South African languages to rile up the actors (research participants). Either this was to provoke them or it was yet another xenophobic notion by the locals that anyone living in Johannesburg must be conversant in all South African languages. At times, the Forum Theatre event dragged on because interpretations had to be made. Smith and Nathane-Taulele (2015) point out the complex dynamics of how language is implicated in the domination and clash of cultures when exploring deep-seated issues of oppression. One spect-actor highlighted this problem as xenophobic when the actors were forced to respond to the languages that they did not understand.

The Hillbrow rehearsal room became a debating ground when issues of cultural bigotry, stereotyping and superiority emerged. During the Design phase and scripting of the play, Sindie shared a story about how locals saw Zimbabwean

women as immorally loose. She mentioned that, in Hillbrow and Yeoville (another part of the Johannesburg CBD), Zimbabwean women were derided as prostitutes because they patronised many brothels and night clubs. She claimed that, in the streets, it is alleged that if a man buys a Zimbabwean woman a packet of KFC (Kentucky Fried Chicken) food, she concedes to his intentions. However, Deco argued that he thought that Zimbabwean women were more culturally astute than the local women because they were hard working and they came from a culturally stable country. Tino was quick to point out that such cultural stereotyping was prevalent in the Johannesburg xenophobia discourse. She explained that such narrow-minded conversations lead to intolerance, anger and sometimes violence. This intolerance comes from both sides. Arguably, when women become the subject of cultural derision, in the African context, they tend to lose their moral aptitude and view themselves as intellectually and socially incapacitated. Hence, the women participants explained that as the reason they felt like second-class citizens in South Africa.

To deal with such insinuations, that were bound to derail progress (as expressed by the participants), the participants were asked to revisit the Discover phase. This was for them to reflect on how the rehearsal for re-discovering their lives had initially changed their negative thinking. Revisiting this phase was an attempt to get them at superseding arbitrary moral forces of culture that were bent on re-fuelling their anxiety as foreign and incomplete citizens. It is essential to keep retracing the phases of Appreciative Inquiry to keep track of the participants' progress. As explained earlier, Appreciative Inquiry thrives on its 4D cyclical iterative tactic. This tactic suggests that Appreciative Inquiry be an ongoing/continuous process. The 4D cycle tactic, therefore, gives a flexible context to assess progress. Whitney and Trosten-Bloom (2010) affirm that the 4D cycle builds upon the group's track record of success that inspires a positive outlook to life. Even if the group feels disgruntled at one moment, if it keeps revisiting the different phases, there is hope that it will still envision hope in spite of difficult conflicts.

Considering the above, the re-focus on the Discovery phase provides insights on the importance of generating affirmative stories and strengths in and from the beginning of the process. The participants were enabled to build on the positive core and they could not lose it later. Re-focusing on the positive core meant that the participants shifted from a problem orientated focus to an environment where they were absolved from blame, culture finger pointing and bigotry.

Hammond's (2013) elucidation of group assumptions makes sense here in that when the group moves on with the process, it tends to unconsciously revisit the problems. The downside, according to Hammond, is that the group may fail to see the new experience that contradicts their belief on problem orientations. She explains that it is important to keep evaluating group assumptions and especially with regards to culture. Culture conversations may thwart the very essence of reformation because they stubbornly hinge on assumptions. Assumptions can be strong indicators of cultural stereotyping and bigotry.

The 4D cycle kept the rehearsal rooms as connected entities that transformed the participants' ways of thinking around cultural prejudice as the marker that defines the xenophobia bigotry. Faced with the reality of unjust cultural prejudice, Johannesburg offers a breeding ground for the devastating plague of xenophobic violence and attitudes. In this context, hindrances to self-efficacy among women may include language and socio-cultural standing inferiorities. The participants were much more likely to own this transformation if they were given the chance to initially generate affirmative stories. Freire (1970:33) asserts that "If humankind produce social reality ... then transforming the reality

is an historical task for humanity.” This denotes that the model of the 4D cycle hinged on the assumption that sustaining the positive core, in the rehearsal rooms, was a task at empowering the participants to be agents of their own change as negotiated from within than outside.

Reflecting on her experiences on socio-cultural inferiority and being taken back to the Discover phase, Welile explained that people’s actions affect their lives. She said, “If one acts from an embittered standpoint of cultural inferiority, she is bound to remain inferior and not ever dream about being a better person, but if one is given a chance at realising their potential to be a better person then she acquires self-respect and not stereotype other people.” When asked what they thought about the potential they had, as socially capacitated women, they indicated that humanness was for everybody who believed in themselves. It is striking that the men still felt that the women ought to assert themselves more when confronted with cultural denigration. The women argued that outside of the rehearsal room they might still be affected by the fear of being labelled as immoral if they tried to be assertive. This is because an assertive foreign woman is alleged to be having uncouth ulterior motives even though they would be trying to transform their lives. Babbage (2004: 67) notes that a “Theatre of the Oppressed production is essentially a starting point ... at the heart of the work is the ambition of far-reaching social transformation.” Even though the men were sceptical of any cultural assertiveness from the women, this was the beginning of the rehearsal for them to stand tall and embrace their assertiveness. The unfortunate part is that assertiveness in FT could be misconstrued to suggest a gruelling and aggressive fight and protest against the oppressors. In this case AI would offer a more lucrative handle through its wholeness principle that articulates that stories are not static, but have room for interpretation (Whitney and Trosten-Bloom 2010). The implication here is that people can discuss and play out any human experience with the enthusiasm for positive change, rather than focusing on the status quo. Such transformation can be successful in the safety of a positive environment of AI. Assertiveness, then becomes a poetic desire to change the status of women without being aggressive. The next section explores how the transformation, through the fiction and reality spaces of FT and AI, was played out in the rehearsal rooms.

4.5 Playing out the Thin Line Between Fiction and Reality in the Rehearsal Rooms

Boal believes that as theatre is a way of showing our lives, it is also a way of showing our reality and the structure of that reality. Because it shows something that is our reality, out of that reality - the normal day reality, we create a new reality; the reality of symbols. This creates a dichotomous situation in which one reality is contained in another reality. He holds that the distinctions between fiction and reality are always tenuous. He questions the separation between fiction and reality ... In the Theatre of the Oppressed we say that the image of reality is a reality as an image, and the whole of Theatre of the Oppressed stands on that ... If the spectator knows that the actor is playing a role, it’s fine, but if the spectator does not know that she is dealing with an actor and believes herself to be , in the presence of a real person, is this correct? (Morelos, 1999:132)

Morelos puts forward an apt representation of Boal’s take on the role of theatre not only being a spectacular show, but becoming “... a medium for action, for reflection but, most important for transformation - a theatre in which new modes of being can be countered and new possibilities for humankind can be imagined” (Taylor 2003:xxx). This is an intrinsic value in the inquiry posited by Forum Theatre and Appreciative Inquiry here.

In the beginning of the research process, when I carried out the Appreciative Inquiry interviews and asked the participants to explore personal stories of xenophobia, they became suspicious that the research would inquire more about their real lives than the occasional levity of theatre. Their suspicions could not have been any nearer to the truth because the purpose of this study was to draw on their real experiences (through the metaxis approach of FT) on xenophobia and how Appreciative Inquiry and Forum Theatre contribute to this understanding. This, definitely, meant that reality and fiction were to be mixed.

Exploring oppressions, such as xenophobia, at the level of everyday life, necessitates the use of deliberate approaches. The rehearsal rooms provided a space that could reach deeper into the paradigms of meaning making in everyday activities surrounding xenophobia. The techniques of Appreciative Inquiry and Forum Theatre executed that by fostering an understanding of the complexities and mechanisms of exploring such reality in a fictitious space. A closer look at the *modus operandi* of the methods is indicative of the upfront way they incorporate reality into their inquiry. Forum Theatre, on the one hand, picks up on real issues of oppression as experienced by the oppressed. On the other, Appreciative Inquiry delineates real experiences of success, strength and talents. Using the techniques blurred the line between simply acting out these experiences in the rehearsal rooms and acting out their humanness and humanity. This is metaxis.

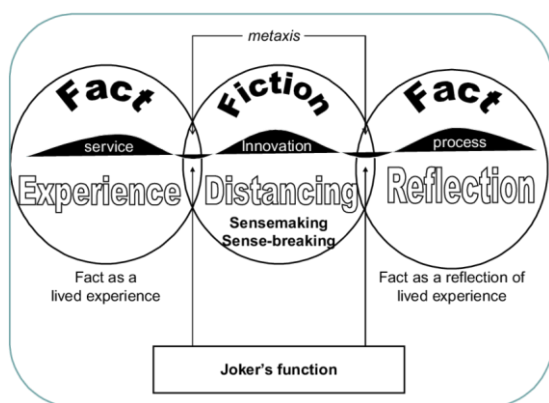
According to Morelos (1999), the idea of metaxis involves, both the actor and spectator, being fully present in the presence of theatre. His emphasis on presence draws insight from the phenomena of emotions and sensations as the elements that the consciousness of the human being dips into. In each rehearsal room, the participants invested their emotions and sensations into the demands of the theatrical experiences. They were aware that they were investing them into a world of fiction, but still transposed their feelings into what the theatrical aesthetic offered while they grappled with the reality of their actions. This is a consciousness prevalent in the interface of the two worlds of fiction and reality. Boal (1995) explains that when a spect-actor creates images of her/his own reality, he/she utterly belongs to that world of the image and the reality of the image simultaneously. This is how Boal articulates metaxis and its role. He points out that it is a phenomenon of ambivalence where two realities are conflated, as truths of fictions. Banks (2006:189) emphasises that “in order for metaxis to take place the images must become autonomous.” This is seen in the liminality of performance.

Liminality connotes a moment of change, for the individual, in the betweenness and ambiguity of the present and future (Turner, 1967). Liminal spaces are regularized by the knowledge that we are creating something new in whatever situation of transition. Boal (1979) hoped to encourage such opportunities through allowing the stage to be a dialogic place for imagination, meaning making and critical reflection for future life (a rehearsal for a revolution). The embodiment and reflection of reality in a fictitious stage amounts to the possibility of capturing transformation.

Sometimes, after our sessions, the participants wanted to de-role from the activities done especially when we focused on Forum Theatre. Their request for de-roling was an indication of how, even in the rehearsal space, they were affected by reality. Sometimes some of them would threaten to leave the project because the reality was cutting deep into their lived experiences. Tino disclosed that dealing with the issue of xenophobia, even in a theatre space, was “no child’s play.” In the world of metaxis, participants can either be empowered or become dispirited. It is essential that the space becomes contained and the facilitator becomes aware of any nuanced behaviours of indignation. At one time

Tino accused me of being in denial of the realities of xenophobia. I had asked them to come out of the real image of pain and I used the phrase “snap out of that image.” She explained that it was not easy to just ‘snap out’ of an embodiment of suffering. In this case metaxis, substantially, constitutes the embodiment of reality. In the case of Forum Theatre, the reality gets embedded in the bodies of spect-actors. Banks (2006) argues that the duality of metaxis can reveal the risk of an actor or spect-actor reproducing the same power system he wishes to deconstruct. The Forum Theatre performance at Emakhaya theatre exposed the despondency among the participants. I could see how they were becoming desperate and fearful of the reality of xenophobia despite it being addressed in the theatre/fictional space. During the reflection session, they expressed how they had a rude awakening even though they had been initially rehearsing the spect-acting in the Hillbrow rehearsal rooms. The reality of the story of xenophobia cut deep for both audience members and actors.

The Joker should also be cautious with the language he/she uses because the line between the action on stage and in reality, may be fragile. It’s not only about being a master of ceremony of a perfect theatre event, even her/his demeanour should show responsibility of facilitation. The demeanour involves understanding the role and function of the Joker as explicated in chapter 6. Because the Joker plays the key role in bridging the two worlds and is an important door opener for metaxis (Prendergast and Saxton, 2009) - She must be aware of the binary nature of metaxis. Thus, it calls for operating it in the liminal space with the awareness of a strategic aesthetic language. This is a language that is reflective and mindful of the fragile ground of the existence of the two worlds. Through such a language, the Joker is aware that when participants step into this world, they lose themselves into it. Rather than simply enjoying the critical questioning, the Joker should also be aware of distancing mechanisms of facilitating fiction and reality. This aspect is made clear in the following diagram 1 (Passila *et al* 2013):



As the world of metaxis may seem to highlight problems, Appreciative Inquiry can be the container through which fiction and reality may find a balance. As predicated on the principles of change, Appreciative Inquiry posits a new language that allows for options of manoeuvring of difficult topics. Appreciative Inquiry theorists, (Cooperrider and Whitney 1999, Orem et al 2007, Bushe 2011, Hammond 2013) believe that in every society or group, something works. If groups focus on what works that becomes their reality. As such, these theorists aver that if groups carry parts of the past that do not work, they are bound to have their lives riddled with problems. However, if they carry the best parts from the past, they have more confidence with their present reality and envision a comfortable journey to the future. By the re-examining and restructuring the study of problems into the study of success, the reality created in the

rehearsal room does not become a cumbersome task. For the Joker, the language of success that he/she uses can create a reality not hanging on the loose end. It will be tight enough to unleash certainty in participation and the desire to change systems of oppression amongst participants in the rehearsal space. One of the aims of this research was to show an understanding of xenophobia by the merging of AI and FT through a PaR approach for the women and presumably the readers. The next section highlights the lessons learnt about xenophobia from the rehearsal rooms.

4.6 Lessons Learnt about Xenophobia from the Rehearsal Room Perspective

Evidently, there was an intricate representation of the rehearsal rooms from the experiences that were shown by the participants, an indication that xenophobia is a sensitive and complex issue. As much as FT and AI gave the leverage to discuss, debate and act out xenophobia in the fictional spaces, its sensitive nature may have been the contribution to the difficulty experienced in the rehearsal rooms. The sensitive part was seen throughout the rehearsal rooms, from the time the participants started outside of Hillbrow Theatre to the performance at Emakhaya. The sensitivity was also realised in the language spectrums. On one end of the spectrum, the language of xenophobia is harrowing as it is associated with unpleasant aesthetics. It has these aesthetic associations: fear, anger, frustration, despondency, lack of trust, pain and suffering. These were expressed by the participants, through their bodies, in each rehearsal room. It was learnt that xenophobia has an effect on the women's bodies. This was expressed in Chapter 2, when their bodies were seen to have been stimulated positively to the various exercises. This was also seen in how they moved from thinking that their bodies trapped in cold margins and then moved to freedom. There were notable physical altercations of their bodies. On the other end of the spectrum, the language stubbornly gives entitlement to one faction over the other. Those in the dominant positions become autochthons who are entitled to the resources, language and culture of their land. They stubbornly refuse to accept suggestions of peace proposed by outsiders. At Emakhaya, the locals refused to accept the story of xenophobia as told by the participants because it was not 'language/scripted' by them. The language of the play made the story of xenophobia more sensitive because it was one sided. The sensitivity is not only felt by the foreigners, but also by the locals. In as much as the rehearsal can give affordance to the participants to rehearse what they can do outside of the rehearsal space, xenophobia will remain stubbornly sensitive if the two governments of South Africa and Zimbabwe and other stakeholders do not use lessons learnt from the rehearsal rooms to effect the change.

The rehearsal rooms offered a space for border crossing in the xenophobia discourse. The rehearsal rooms were political sites that were proposed to enable the participants to cross borders of not belonging and fear to acceptance. Xenophobia was a political topic that was pedestalled on precarious platforms of binary thinking, stubbornness, disunity and discrimination. Giroux (1996) argues that political discourse that perpetuates othering should be afforded facilitation platforms that de-stabilise its disequilibrium. Xenophobia perpetuates the problem of binary thinking, hence, it becomes difficult for fighting factions to find a common ground of understanding. With binary thinking there is limited understanding of the other. The rehearsal rooms, as border crossing platforms, tried to challenge the binary thinking to necessitate crossovers that challenge the xenophobia discourse. Border crossing re-maps and de-centres such discourses in which dominant cultures create borders of fear and stubbornness.

Xenophobia affects women the same as anyone else. When the participants created their images outside of Hillbrow Theatre, the men created similar images. From all the participants there were motifs of discomfort, the need to avoid certain spaces, fear of creating friendships with someone different, distrust of the law, the fear that their culture is

inferior to that of locals, prejudice, finger pointing and blame. Even though the men sometimes created images that projected women's feelings and actions, they explained that xenophobia also affects them the same way. In the rehearsal rooms where there were locals, the sensitiveness was heightened. The xenophobia debate between the two factions escalated to entitlement and ego from both sides. The foreigners stuck to the notion that they were part of the African continent and the locals argued on the virtue of indigeneity and borders.

4.7 Conclusion

This chapter has focused on the symbolic conceptions that relate to the thoughts on rehearsal space, (inclusive of place, location and environment) as being pertinent to the findings of this study. The framing of space has also been predicated on the processes and method of Appreciative Inquiry and Forum Theatre becoming rehearsal rooms for a rehearsal for and of life. The chapter has also how rehearsal rooms became a space for the discussion of xenophobia and the lessons learnt about it. These rehearsal rooms have been positioned as containers for managing human behaviour. The configuration of the rehearsal rooms is explained in a framework of the politics, aesthetics and performance of xenophobia. The chapter has also delineated the interface between reality and fiction as a platform to generate and underscore the ideology of transformation and consciousness raising, in rehearsal spaces, through combining Forum Theatre and Appreciative Inquiry.

The arguments, in this chapter, demonstrate that the major goal of Forum Theatre is the rehearsal of various forms of action, within the space of the theatre, to prepare participants for action (about xenophobia) beyond the theatre. In examining the complexity of the xenophobia issue and possible strategies for effectual reaction to it, Forum theatre "trains [the oppressed] for real action", ideally developing a sense of intensified creativity, potential, and desire to carry such practice into everyday life (Boal 1979: 122; 142). On the other hand, Appreciative Inquiry prepares the participants for a more intensified and rigorous act of sustaining their desire for a future where they can explicitly deal with xenophobia.

In their metaphorical capacity, the rehearsal rooms were a battleground against socio-cultural and political injustices perpetrated by xenophobia in Johannesburg. The women were enabled a warrior status where they had to shed blood and sweat while discerning the causes and effects of this warship. They, as well, used the weaponry of the rooms to construct and deconstruct ideologies surrounding socio-cultural and political mechanisms of discrimination and prejudice as formulations of urban decay. To bring about the desired change, Forum Theatre rehearsal rooms should bring about a spirit that reasserts the desire to fight against needless bigotry. The experience of the battle ground was a continuum between a condition of fear and that of critical liberation.

The distinction between drama and life can be discovered at the intersection of two autonomous domains. Bridging the two worlds of reality and fiction, in the rehearsal spaces, was a way of fostering meaning making between what is and what can be. Not only does this research seek to find data or information on merging the two methods, it also tries to find out how the women can be capacitated to make meaning of their citizenship as discriminated foreign nationals. As such, the articulation of metaxis is an impetus for how the women can use the rehearsal room as a distancing mechanism to make comprehensible the difficult topic of xenophobia. The aesthetic language of the two worlds offered, the women, a space for reflective and mindful deconstruction of the xenophobia oppression. It was a platform for border crossing as postulated in Giroux's (2005) theory that emphasises spaces of knowledge generation, such as the rehearsal rooms, as sites for a critical pedagogy of change.

The inclusion of Appreciative Inquiry in assisting to facilitate a more sustained intervention in the rehearsal rooms, was inclined to cultivate a positive effect among the participants. On top of a sustainable meaning making process, the method facilitated the building of trust among the participants and self-trust as endorsed by the AI focus. It intensified creativity which encouraged critical thinking and resilience. Be that as it may, there were moments of uncertainty in positive thinking and behaviour because the participants would struggle with the approach being utopian and failing to make them realise an integrated thinking outside of the rehearsal rooms. Overcoming the problem of xenophobia seemed to be just a theoretical undertaking. There is need for an intensified implementation of the method in the integration of positive thinking for the participants.

Although the rehearsal rooms offered the women a chance at coming close to winning this battle, by themselves, there was a vacuum placed on how other sectors of society could collaborate and assist to alleviate this problem.

Xenophobia, as well, results from the failure by policy makers and politicians (from Zimbabwe and South Africa) to problematise postulations around the influx of Zimbabwean women into South Africa. This creates uncertainties and insecurities among foreign nationals. The next chapter makes a case for the participation and inclusion of the women into the social and economic terrain of South Africa.

Chapter 5

Participation while Living on the Margins: A Crucial Accompaniment to the Socio-political and Economic Struggle

5.1 Introduction

This chapter looks into the lived experiences of the Zimbabwean women against the backdrop of literature and concepts that expose how migrant women have lived in the margins of society in South Africa. The chapter balances literature that acts as historical information with what transpired in the workshops. The chapter leans more on concepts that support the actions of the women in the workshops. It should be noted that the chapter is also guided by the research done by other scholars on the topic of participation and xenophobia. What is taken into account is the impact of the women's way of life through the participation lens. Participation is a concept that has been explored in depth by many scholars and it gives background to the experience of the women. Because practice-based research provides a radical democratisation to knowledge and people's experiences more, I realised that this chapter would push me into delving a little deeper into the women's way of life especially their participation in a Johannesburg riddled with xenophobia.

In the argument of the radicalisation of practice-based research, Rutten (2016) explains that the notion of the methodology raises questions around the reflective researcher-practitioners whose perspective is towards praxis. The praxis is guided by Freire's (1983) notion of men and women acting upon the world to transform it. A closer look at my research questions will demonstrate the questioning around reflexivity and praxis²². The thrust of this is in xenophobia, participation and 'giving voice to the women' through the selected methods. The ethnography modality has experienced its evolution where praxis, in the arts, is concerned. Hjorth and Sharp (2014) articulate Rutten's thinking in that the ethnographic modality probes into reflexivity and redefines participation in the arts. They point out that the modality has increasingly moved towards localised social, political and cultural participation with a flair of reflexivity. As such, ethnography approaches complement practice-based methods that have questions derived from social participation and reflection (Siegenthaler 2013). Siegenthaler argues that this evolution necessitates a reflective documentation of the field work that extends aesthetic analysis that would include social and reflective practices. She calls this the 'artistic qua social practices'. This is what this chapter seeks to do. It should be noted the documentation is also guided by the research done by other scholars on the topic of participation and xenophobia.

The significance of this chapter is its focus on the topic of xenophobia and the participation of the women. The social and political narrative needed to be articulated. The first four chapters have provided an understanding of the technicalities of this research such as the conceptual and methodological inclinations of the research and theoretical underpinnings that propelled the participation of the women to levels of consciousness. This chapter has more of a thematic thrust on how the women participated in the undertaking of the issue and topic of xenophobia.

²² 1. To what extent can the use of Appreciative Inquiry together with Forum Theatre effectively address xenophobia on/among Zimbabwean women living in Johannesburg?

2. How can an integrated Practice as Research approach to Forum Theatre and Appreciative Inquiry give voice to Zimbabwean women affected by xenophobia?

As argued, in the previous chapter, the influx of both documented and undocumented migrants into South Africa creates insecurities and uncertainties among foreign nationals and locals alike. This chapter delineates what these insecurities entail - living on the margins and the socio-economic struggle as the point of reference. It articulates what it means to live on the margins whilst trying to be incorporated into the 'normality' of social living and economic livelihood of Johannesburg for the women participants. The word normality has been captured because it is relative and contextual to this study. Normality is articulated as the need and desire for the women to be part of Johannesburg and the greater South African social, political and economic living culture according to how they viewed local South Africans living in the 'centre.' The centre, too, is viewed as the illustrative space for socio-political and economic acceptance in Johannesburg.

The chapter demonstrates how the women envisaged navigating their participation into the socio-economic development structures of South Africa as they tried to make their lives, as foreigners, more meaningful and worthwhile. This includes problematizing political and policy making decisions from both South African and Zimbabwean civic administrations with regards to living on the margins amid the xenophobia system. It will also highlight how the women, through the influence of AI and FT, were enabled to think of how they could circumvent the fear and challenge of the margins. The influence of Appreciative Inquiry on Forum Theatre made a case for them to realise that "One key perspective is that to create a more positive and connected future for their communities, they must be willing to trade their problems for their possibilities" (Brook, 2009:04). A positive and connected future is what the Appreciative Inquiry thrives to create among its participants. Cooperrider in Stratton-Berkessel (2010) asserts that history has shown that the ability to imagine a positive future is at the core of human survival. Stratton-Berkessel further explains that investing into images of a positive future remedies the patterns of focusing into past and current deficits and failures. This is likely to improve people's outlook to life and well-being in general. This is not to assume that the Forum Theatre approach cannot improve their outlook but, from what the participants explored and on an argued perspective, can stifle a positive standpoint especially when participants are already dealing with highly injurious issues.

Pertinently, the rehearsal rooms (workshop processes) provided a platform for the participants to explore possible ways of living on the margins and challenging its negative effects. This is where the aesthetic, social and reflexive implications of this study were generated. The rehearsal rooms became a space where they could plan and reflect on improving their socio-economic lives while understanding the precariousness of their living statuses and/or conditions - xenophobia being the cause of this precarious nature.

This chapter further articulates how living on the margins becomes a notion and bone of contention with respect to xenophobia. Kihato (2013), Hassim *et al* (2008) and Mbelle and Patrick (2005) underscore that the everyday lives of migrants, in South Africa, are examined through a fluid location where they reside. It is on an 'uncertain liminality' where they are only entitled to a limited range of social and economic rights. This is because of the prejudices they face as foreigners. This fluid location is an apt description of living on the margins and xenophobia creates it. Bloch and Mackay (2016) argue that the fluid location literally suggests being forced to live in the periphery of society with a range of restrictions and fear of being deported.

Forum Theatre and Appreciative Inquiry instilled, in the women, the value of participation in transforming their social, political and economic ‘stalemated’ lives - stalemated in the sense that their lives are met with restrictions and they cannot even imagine going back to their countries of origin. A lucrative option is for them to actively participate in improving and developing their lives even at the peripheries of the societies they are in. The workshop processes were in their own way an initial platform for the beginning of their participation into transforming their lives socially and economically. This chapter elucidates the concept of participation according to the findings of this study and what it (the participation) meant for the women. For them participation was the key to challenging their socio-economic struggles. These struggles include being socially excluded, prejudiced, discriminated against, insulted and feared for being ‘alien/makwerekwere’, impunity of xenophobia offenders and false accusations on criminal activities; not getting access to equal economic and financial rights which include equal job opportunities and work remuneration, scarcity and scramble for resources. As such, participating on redressing these socio-political and economic dysfunctions is/was the key for the women to transform and develop their lives.

With the realisation that the Theatre of the Oppressed takes on a political and revolutionary stance, the women contended that they could approach this problem through a political *modus operandi*. Through the Marxist perspective²³, Boal (1997) contended for a theatre experience that is par excellence political and revolutionary that aims to consciously manipulate “content and technique to empower the underprivileged... to gain socio-political and economic rights and overthrow... repressive institutions of civil society” (Osakwe 2018:01). This is where the women would advance a problematization of political and policy making decisions. They proposed and made recommendations, in the rehearsal rooms, on some of the ways they could encourage political leaders in South Africa and Zimbabwe to redress this problem, with them (women) actively participating in the dialogues. For them this was set to provide a *modus vivendi* until such a time when Zimbabwe would have regained its freedom.

The Forum Theatre performance propelled the participants and audience members towards the realization that the technique can influence them to become politically conscious and critical. However, the raising of this political consciousness, through Forum Theatre, might have made the participants realise that there are limitations to them solving the problem of living on the margins socially, politically and economically. Hence, the channelling in of Appreciative Inquiry helped to raise their level of understanding organisational development and the politics of transformation. It helped them gain even more confidence and value into their human vocation despite their foreign status. Chapter 2 argues for this synergy in the notion of consciousness raising in Freire’s pedagogy, Boal’s poetics of the oppressed and Appreciative Inquiry principles. These are best articulated in existentialism, human functioning and critical reflexivity as an essential human vocation. Tino expressed that, after seeing the spect-actors in action trying to solve the xenophobia problem, she felt a raising of her political consciousness and believed that government leaders could be instrumental in alleviating this problem. The other participants agreed, but suggested that they could not leave it in the hands of the leaders; they too had to take an active role. This was in the Design stage of Appreciative Inquiry where they were enabled to explore more assertive ways of participating in the fight against the social and

²³ A later awakened consciousness in Karl Max that political action was a necessity in bringing a revolutionary consciousness and change among the exploited and oppressed <https://revisesociology.com/2016/04/10/the-marxist-perspective-on-society/> Accessed 6 July 2019

economic struggle. These assertive ways will be explored through the illustrative arguments on Appreciative Inquiry. However, this does not mean that this political consciousness was not raised in other stages.

The concept of belonging deserves special mention in this chapter. Yuval-Davis (2006) describes belonging as a dynamic process of self-identification or by others. It is constructed from emotional attachments, social locations or political value systems. The description that befits this study is the social locations perspective. This perspective highlights social and economic locations which are interrelated to and have implications of power relations in society. The issue that the struggle for the women's recognition and belonging as predicated on social and economic locations cannot be ignored. It is for this reason that this study focuses on marginality as the basis for belonging or the lack of. The sociometry exercise (mentioned in chapter 1 and articulated here) was an exploration of the positionality of the women in terms of their social and economic locations in Johannesburg. In the spect-acting activities, the women were trying to explore what belonging means to them. Yuval-Davis (2015:16) describes belonging in these terms, "... belonging comes into being between people and things, and between people and people, through material conditions." It is the material conditions that define people's identification. In the framework of xenophobia or politics of difference, a material perspective unveils the underlying power relations that are reflected in socio-economic aspects of belonging. This is in the same ideology that Karl Marx provides on the emergent 21st oppression of women. The power relations are no longer invested on gender relations but on the positionality of women's social and economic status. It can be argued that one of the prominent themes in the workshops about xenophobia was belonging, but was predicated on the women's social and material identification. Belonging receives attention also on the marginality discussion.

5.1 What Transpired in the Rehearsal Rooms

To illustrate the women's participation and movement and the exploration of marginality, I will describe what transpired in the rehearsal rooms (workshops).

Before the merging of FT and AI, I had to explain the steps in each process of the two methods. I explained how Appreciative Inquiry was done through doing it practically. We physically went through the steps while at the same time explaining verbally what each step entailed. I explained Forum Theatre verbally because the participants knew the method. In the process of explaining AI, I discovered that it had the potential to raise the consciousness levels and the transformation of the women. They also discovered the theme of marginality from the stories that they told in the Discover stage even in this explanation stage. The stories of success were set in the vicinity of their surroundings in Hillbrow and with their fellow foreigners. There were a few stories that focused on their victory exploits in settings where locals were involved. The women expressed that it was difficult, however, to get promoted in the workplaces run and owned by local companies. They were not recognised for promotion because they were foreigners. This made them conscious that they were second class citizens who could only remain at the margins of employment. In the Dream and Design phases, they realised the importance of conceiving the possibility of changing their circumstances. The Design stage was a case for exploring ideas of how they could challenge the story of marginality. The plans that they designed were considered around transforming their relationships with their local counterparts and finding ways of being incorporated into the mainstream occupation system. In the Destiny phase, they offered strategies on how they could approach relevant South African and Zimbabwean stakeholders to help them address the problem as people in need of recognition. Appreciative inquiry may be considered as a transformational activity that can promote change

in how people think and act (Bushe and Kassam, 2005). Phases also highlight the possibility of the potency and efficacy of AI in transforming women's lives from positions of marginality to belonging.

In the first phases of AI and FT, the participants were asked to focus on their bodies and explore initial stories and thoughts about xenophobia. These games enabled them to pick out themes of xenophobia. One of the themes was marginality. One game that articulated this theme was the 'Circles' game or sociometry exercise. Sociometry is not a TO game but it can be used to draw stories of oppression. This is a sociometric exercise where participants are placed in different circles that show levels of their experience of fitting in. There were three drawn circles, one in the centre, one in the middle and another in the outer circle. The participants were asked to place themselves in the circle that they felt they belonged to in terms of their existence and co-existence with locals. The circles had these labels: the inner circle - those who feel 70 to 100% accepted in Johannesburg, middle circle - those who feel between 45 - 60%, and outer circle - those who feel 44% and below. Most of them got into the outer circle and two of them got into the middle one. They were asked to reflect on why they placed themselves where they did. As much as the game was leading the participants to reveal their placements, the circles were a symbol of the structures of belonging in Johannesburg. The outer circle revealed the high intensity of marginality. The participants reflected on how strategically positioned the outer circle was with its lower percentage of acceptance. They explained that being in the outer circle meant that they are experiencing differential treatment and are ostracised. This also meant that there is fear of being in the centre. They were not outside because there were not any opportunities to get in, but the fear of the animosity at the centre. The two that were in the middle circle indicated that they could see the opportunity to enter the inner circle, but also because of fear, they could not fully do so. The two had legal South African paper identification, but that did not mean they could be fully assimilated into the South African society. The fear of being labelled snatchers of jobs and criminals was imminent. Though it is seductively affirming to be in the inner circle, the affirmation does not become 100% for the immigrant women in Johannesburg. The sociometry exercise was a way of measuring the positionality acceptance of the women. Sociometry can help to discover, describe and evaluate structures and status among groups that are divided (Sabin and Marcel, 2014).

In the same exercise they were asked to explore ways of how they could get into the inner circle. I improvised the use of chairs as imagined obstacles and challenges for them to get in. They were asked to creatively to remove the obstacles. I asked them to reflect on how and why they moved the chairs from each margin of the circle. For example, what was in their minds for them to move the chair the way they did? Those in the outer circle had to remove two margin lines and the ones in the middle had to remove one. It was a cumbersome task for the ones in the outer circle. They thought it would be easy to do, but I challenged them by being a further obstacle. I would lie on the chairs or sit on them or add items on the chairs. I also asked them to name the challenges that the chairs represented. Then I timed them to get the chairs out of the way. They reflected on that this meant that for them to get into the centre, they had to negotiate their way in with the factor of time. Most of them said that time was a factor in their lives in Johannesburg because it was possible not to be employed for the longest time. Negotiation involved many things such as strategically removing the chairs, using the appropriate language to negotiate with the body on the chairs and analysing the significance of the named challenges. In negotiation, they realised there was a need for a language of appreciation. This is as well as the acknowledgement that margins are necessitated by the inherent desire to defend

territories against intrusion from foreigners by the locals. This defence includes protecting their economic and cultural resources.

Another first phase exercise that projected marginality was Image Theatre. They were asked to create real, transitional and ideal images showing what they understood to be the xenophobia oppression. In the real image they showed anger, frustration, fear, and despair against the locals. First, they showed the images as individuals and they took them to a group image. There was one participant, Sindie, who positioned herself away from the group image and showed an image of fear. She even faced away from the group image. That image sparked a conversation on marginality. When asked why she had positioned herself there, she explained that “We are in South Africa because there is something that we want money [genuine response], but we know we do not belong here. These people [red flag of binaries] do not want us. We are forcing ourselves. When we try to be part of them, they indirectly tell us we are Africans who are half humans. Since they can’t expressly chase us away, they oppress us so that we feel the pinch and go away. They want us away from here where we cannot be part of their jobs and resources.” Deco picked this up as a sign of being on the margin. The other group members were then asked to come out of their images that they had created as the oppressed and take up characters as locals to work with the new image. They had to imagine how locals would react towards Sindie. One image depicted the desire to accept the foreigner, but not fully. The others showed animosity. Their faces drew attention in this exercises. They showed disdain and indignation at the foreign character. There was a motif of ‘chasing away’ in the hands too. Most of their hands were finger pointing and waving the foreigner away. Sindie came out of her image and explained that her colleagues had shown exactly why she had moved away in her image. She had experienced the disdain and this made her feel marginalised.

We continued to work with this image towards the transitional and ideal. I asked Sindi to find her way back from the marginal position to where locals were. The other group members (who imaged the locals) were also asked to find a way to bring Sindie in. This was the transitional image. In the transitional image participants have to focus on the movement of their bodies to analyse a rhythm of change. They have to focus on each inch and nuance of movement. Interestingly, it was Sindie who moved towards the rest of the group and not the group towards her. The movement of the rest of the group looked awkward. They were all trying to call Sindie in, but the movements were exaggerated. This was a poignant realisation that it is not easy to bring in those from the outside circle especially if there is ingrained bigotry among those at the centre. They will pretend to accept the outsider, but there will be a deep-seated mistrust of the outsider. When Sindie arrived in the group, she was not placed in their midst but on the outward circle. I asked why they did not bring her in, they explained that it was not possible for locals to fully incorporate a foreigner into their circles even in marriage set ups. Sindie’s movements were slow and she had dragging feet. The explanation behind this was that time is a factor in getting locals and foreigners to be at the centre together. The slow movement was also directed by the uncertainty of assimilation caused by the already existing stereotypes between the two groups. Even though this exercise might seem subjective because foreigners were portraying locals, they were expressing what they experienced with the locals. However, the danger might also be that the experiences are articulated out of stereotyping. Notwithstanding, the participants pointed out stereotyping as one cause of marginality. Stereotyping usually provokes fear and cynicism towards the other.

The exercise left a stale taste of anxiousness in the mouths of the participants because there seemed be no accomplished way to be fully integrated into the centre. When such attitudes and actions emerge in Forum Theatre,

there is need for the provocation of the appreciative language. I tried to get them to add words, to the images, that are encouraging to see if the scenario gets better when assimilating Sindie. Some of the words they gave, were “welcome/wamukelekile, it’s okay, ngena (get in), you are one of us, sister.” The participants said the words came out of pretence and were floatingly unreal. However, we discussed if locals were made more aware of the words and the language of appreciation, would it be easy for them to accept outsiders? The words did not expressly change the way the oppressor characters moved, but they made it awkward for them to say the words. Tino pointed out that this could be, possibly, the way the locals would also feel in their bodies. We were trying to bring the positive story-ing approach of AI in the problem stories in FT. As this did not totally succeed, it may indicate the unchanging conditions of the world that are embedded in binaries and problems.

Boal (2002) explains that imaging can enable the oppressed to explore their own feelings and experiences in a less forbidding way through its improvisational techniques. This is because they use their body language as the tool of expression. Imaging allowed them to express movement and change especially with the transitional image. The stories of transition provide a way for the spect-actors to identify what and how their bodies react to problems, question reality, discuss and analyse so as to solve problems. In the same process, they are enabled to reflect, through their bodies, on their future needs.

After they had made initial explorations of xenophobia, they scripted the Forum Theatre play, presented it to each other and spect-acted it before showing it to the bigger audience. The play was scripted from the themes that were generated through the games and Image theatre exercises. Marginality was one of the themes. In scene one, the Home Affairs official complains about serving Zimbabwean foreigners at the Home Affairs office. He believes they are not supposed to be in South Africa, in the first place. The participants found it ironic that such sentiments are passed in government institutions whose mandate is to serve foreigners. In the second scene, the official is heard stereotyping foreigners as disease and crime propagators and job snatchers. This characterisation indicates the disdain that locals feel towards the presence of foreigners. In the third scene, Dumisani tries to help Tendai, his friend, who suffered xenophobia attacks to the extent of disability. The NGO that they have approached helps women find justice. Unfortunately, the Home Affairs official seems not interested in helping them because they are from Zimbabwe. This is an indication that those at the margin cannot receive the opportunities at the centre. The participants also found the irony in that some NGOs that are sponsored by international funders for women’s social justice rights discriminate against the same people that they are supposed to serve. The play shows that there is a centre and a margin between the locals and foreigners.

While scripting and developing the FT play, actors become spectators of their own reality (Schonmann, 2011:95). The reality that was explored in the games and images was demonstrated in the scripted play. Schonmann explains that the process of scripting is a demonstration of understanding the ideology of society themes and what characters (from that society) would say. The participants scripted what the locals would say in the different scenarios when they are in contact with foreigners. This was also against the backdrop of understanding oppression dynamics between locals and foreigners. Thus, they use their intellectual power to analyse society from their own perspective (Schonmann, 2011).

During the internal foruming and spect-acting, they would act out one scene and the rest would be spect-actors. They played as both local and foreign audience members. This was to make them rehearse for the real audiences as they

would be the oppressor characters. At the same time, they were exploring how they would act as the spect-actors of their own play. This was also to gauge their consciousness levels. Marginalisation can be evaluated against the conscientization of people. The participants had moved from exploring, analysing and understanding the oppression of xenophobia through embodied exercises and intellectually scripting the play. Levels of conscientization could be noticed in these stages. The forumming exercise offered a platform for the participants to analyse and evaluate humanness in themselves as they played both dynamics of the oppressed and oppressor. In one of the spect-acting moments, as the oppressed, Tino asked the Home Affairs official if it were, really, a crime to work in South Africa. To up the game and challenge her colleague, the official (actor) said that that was the reason why borders were created so that people should live and work in their separate countries. She told Tino that xenophobia was a crude way of keeping Zimbabweans out of South Africa. They were tired of being subtle about chasing them away. This denoted how Zimbabweans should not be incorporated into the system, but stay at the margins. The participants tried to find ways in which they could act out being accepted by the South Africans, but it seemed difficult. The scenarios that they were creating against each other showed a desperate and exaggerated bid to get whoever was watching to see that being incorporated into the inner circles of the South African society was difficult. To bring in Appreciative Inquiry, I asked them pause in one of the tense moments and reflect on how they thought they would react had there been a reversal of roles and they were the oppressors in Zimbabwe. The question was, what language would they use with politically and economically desperate foreigners? This was challenging and some of them said they would also keep the South Africans in the margins by using a language that was offensive and discriminatory. Those who spoke from an appreciative point of view and as people who have suffered worst forms of discrimination said they would give the foreigners the chance to deliberate on what could be done for them. We tried that through using the Dream phase strategies of planning from the positive stories that they shared in the Discover phase. There were some interesting plans such as documenting all the illegal immigrants, initiating language and culture education programmes. Documentation, culture and language are some of the causes of marginality in Johannesburg.

The main event of Forum Theatre with the audiences in Hillbrow and Emakhaya theatres exposed the marginalisation of the women more. In Hillbrow, the spect-actors debated on the issue of borders. This is when one of the spect-actors told the Home Affairs official character that borders were not created by black people. Black people believed in the power of assimilation so South Africans should not use the borders as an excuse to keep Zimbabwean women away. The locals who were in the audience argued that systems had changed, and borders were to enforce lawfulness and thwart lawlessness including illegal migration. If Zimbabwean women wanted to be assimilated into the South African society, they had to respect laws in South Africa. One spect-actor brought in the issue of documenting all illegal migrants - a point that was raised in the internal forumming. He told the Home Affairs official how the Home Affairs department in South Africa was supported to function through and by international mandates. Amid the debates, I asked everyone to take a moment to reflect on the tensions that were emanating from the forum. I got them into groups and in each group, there were at least two actors (the research participants), locals and foreigners. The research participants wrote the group findings in their journals, and they were explored in the internal reflections of the group. The participants picked up that the theme of marginalisation was a motif in the various groups. I asked each group to list activities that could be implemented to solve these tensions and how they thought they could be involved in the actions to implement change. This is a strategy in the Design phase of Appreciative Inquiry. The designs are explored so that people may focus on the action of change rather than resigning to conflict. Resolving conflict by planning

together is one strategy that Appreciative Inquiry employs. Hutchins (2018) avers that positive collective strategizing is one of the deliverables of AI. It improves understanding and cooperation while strengthening relationships among stakeholders. It bridges gulfs that separates groups of people. Their perspective and experience are re-balanced.

At Emakhaya Theatre, the theme of marginalisation was also noted. The spect-actors acknowledged that it was unavoidable to experience marginalisation in Johannesburg because of the economic and cultural positionality of the city. They argued that after independence, South Africans lay claim to the gains of their liberation struggle. In the wake of that liberation, they had to share the gains and that was not fair. The majority of the spect-actors were South African and they said they felt that they were being exposed through an exaggerated play that underplayed the reprehensible behaviour of foreigners. It was the foreigners were to blame for the marginality because they perpetrated atrocious evils and crime in Johannesburg and they had to be pushed away. They had no-one to blame, but themselves. It was not easy to have a similar exercise to the one done in Hillbrow (the positive strategic planning) as there was no time to do it. Most of the time was taken by arguments about how the play portrayed a darker side of South Africans as oppressors. There was an attempt to use the appreciative language, but most of the time, it was to quell loud arguments. The participants felt that the reality they explored about marginalisation in their internal foruming was taking shape at Emakhaya. Biggie wrote in his journal that, "Zimbabwean women may try to find their way in, but as the same as their men counterparts, they are perceived as criminals. Appreciative Inquiry is desirable, but in the reality of deep-seated hatred and prejudice, it will fail."

As one of the final reflections, we revisited the sociometry exercise. The question was that, after experiencing the workshop process, in which circle did they think they fit? They still returned to the same circles. Those in the middle circle indicated that location was important in determining if they could be accepted into the inner circle. In a location where there is a mixture of locals and foreigners, it is possible to be assimilated. However, Hillbrow is not seen as an epicentre of South African society. In places, that are heavily populated by locals, assimilation is but a dream. They explained that Appreciative Inquiry thrives under the same conditions of location. Forum Theatre would survive in most conditions because it tries and tends to be realistic in its approach to problems as it problematises problems. Arguably, the women were creatively enabled to imagine the dramatic shift from the margins to the centre of the society; that is, from a state of disequilibrium to an assumed equilibrium and vice versa. At times the women saw the light at the end of the tunnel, but at the most they experienced despair at ever being incorporated at the centre. There are other examples, from the rehearsal rooms, that have not been expressed in this section, but have been analysed in this chapter.

5.2 Living on the Margins, amid Xenophobia, as an aesthetic perspective

The study provided an interesting focal point on the description of margin, marginalisation and marginality. There was a discovery that Johannesburg had a way of making foreigners less important more than other regions. The participants claimed that Joburg had a way of excluding foreigners, especially Zimbabweans, from significant participation in matters of livelihood. This was realised especially in the discover and dream phases where through the games and image making processes, the participants showed how they were struggling to be accepted into the Johannesburg centre of belonging. This exclusion was also informed by ethnic prejudice stories as a push factor towards the perimeters of society. Ethnic in the sense that although some of the foreigners (such as the Ndebele people

from Matabeleland in Zimbabwe) had their historical roots in South Africa, they were of an inferior ethnic group to the Bantu speaking people of South Africa. This discovery prompted a definition of marginality as that with contextual undertones of ethnic discrimination, forced move towards the periphery, exclusion, and worthlessness. The theme of marginality was raised and explored a lot in the workshops. Sindie expressed that it was one of the wounds that left an unrelenting scar among the foreigners.

“To be in the margins, is to be part of the whole but outside the main body”, (bell hooks 1984;204). In her re-writing of the perception of marginality, hooks explains that understanding marginality as position and place of resistance is pertinent for oppressed women. She explains that the issue of place and location compels difficult exploration of pain and silence. The issue of place and location is importance in the study of xenophobia because it resonates with complexities of belonging for the migrant women in Johannesburg in this study. From hook’s assertions, it would suffice to describe margins as places where people literary exist at the edges and are not fully part of that society. They are not part of the centre. They are derogatively called the marginal. They live outside of socially accepted norms and are deprived of socio-political and economic power. They are treated as aliens to be excluded from the fullness of life and as people who could contaminate the locals through a proverbial leprosy. This means that they are undesirable elements of society. Xenophobia, as a discriminatory practice, places these people under such treatment and exclusion.

This description of ‘margin’ implicates a delve into the merging of FT and AI as methods that could help the women address xenophobia and find their voices as they participated in this project. It was desired that the methods could provide a language that would help them move beyond and counter discourses and boundaries of domination. (hooks 1984). The word margin attracted a connotation of severe conflict and oppression among the participants. Combining the two methods was perceived as a stronghold for elevating this participation. The concept of marginalisation here depicts a system of conflict where labels are attached to the locals as the antagonists and the foreigners as the protagonists. The initiating of Appreciative Inquiry into Forum Theatre was driven by the extent of xenophobia as a critical conflictual stretch in the business of oppression. It was envisaged that AI would bring more conviction into the facilitation of the xenophobia project. Duncan and Ridley (2014) assert that AI empowers participants to develop critical thinking, discuss, challenge and subvert issues of power, identity and conflict. They explain that identities that have been constructed by society and within communities are challenged through the simultaneity principle of AI. The simultaneity principle is about asking questions and deepening our inquiry senses so that we change our world. It was hoped that both FT and AI would be useful through their art of questioning to encourage the women to participate to change their marginal status.

Forum Theatre has a way of exposing the struggles of those identified as living on the margins and illuminates their voices revealing a possibility of them moving from the margins to the centre. It challenges marginality as the source of dehumanization. To be human means to fully belong. Considering this, the oppressed cannot negate the desire to be assimilated into the centre. In the workshops, the strongest desires was for the participants to be recognised as full humans so that they become part of the centre. The desire must be illuminated through exposing that which stalls the oppressed from moving from these margins to the centre. However, because of the hegemony inherent between the centre and the margins, the assimilation may prove difficult. It is the role of Forum Theatre to make participants aware of the reasons of the difficulty and how to overcome them. It helps, through its systematic manoeuvre, the marginal to

cross social borders that restrict passage to the centre. This is evident in how spect-actors at the margins of theatre are enabled to cross theatre borders (fourth wall) to challenge what happens on stage. When the participants spect-acted on their own, they were trying to cross the borders through their own understanding of how locals would behave towards them. The spect-actors are enabled to hurl down that wall and annihilate the status quo of marginality presented on stage. The spect-actor then becomes fully human when he/she is accorded the chance to strategise crossing borders. I witnessed the research participants practise and execute this move during rehearsals where they took part as actors, spect-actors and scripters of the play. The play was divided into 3 scenes so they could easily switch roles. They also experienced the crossing of borders from watching the spect-actors take on roles of the protagonists. It was interesting to see some Emakhaya spect-actors taking the characters of the women in the play. Tino expressed that she found the spect-actors as humble citizens of the world who believed in solidarity. She said that such spect-actors understood the power of the metaphor of participatory theatre. It is in the participation that they believe the world can change. However, the participants explained that crossing the borders sometimes felt unrealistic and sometimes challenging because they were just doing it within the confines of theatre space and wondered if they could do it in the real world.

Kralj (2013) outlines why it may be difficult for those living on the margins to crossover to the centre: She pins it on the supposed nationalist discourse. According to her, the nationalist discourse is promulgated on localized rejections that are invigorated by illusory images that represent immigrants as outsiders who are enemies of their nationality. These outsiders are also seen as undermining their (the locals) naturalized autochthony as they are the majority part of society. Noticeably, Forum Theatre exposes these naturalized identities of the oppressors and tries to expose them for what they represent. This is how she outlines it:

First, the nationalist discourse divides the world into us and them positing a homogenous and fixed identity on either side. The discourse of nationalism is exclusive and tends to simplify and reduce the world in a dualistic manner to distinguish between good ones and the bad ones... Second, the nationalist discourse exerts its hegemony by affirming a homogenous national-cultural identity. Like other discourses, nationalist discourse is about power and domination as it legitimates and produces hierarchy among actors... Third, the nationalist discourse naturalizes itself. Nationalism treats national identity as a system of absolute values. National values are no longer seen as social values, but appear as facts of nature. (2013:98).

The three (3) pointers of nationalist discourse outlined here actually highlight the cracks of xenophobia and marginalisation. When the discourse endorses otherness from a promotion and position of autochthony, locals begin to see other people as aliens who need to be pushed to the margins so that they do not dilute their indigenouness. When the audience at Emakhaya Theatre, adamantly, saw the Forum Theatre event as a conceivable way of trying to lobby for the inclusion of foreigners, they became uncomfortable. It was not necessary for them to even participate in the event. They clearly showed that they wanted to see the foreigners at the margins. One audience member even suggested a solution where the government could design structures that would be only for foreigners. These designs would make it mandatory that foreigners do not have the same and equal resources as the locals. Sullivan (2007) challenges such thinking as being retrogressive to development. He argues that Freire, who influenced Boal's thinking on the democratisation of dialogic processes, considerably stood for humility and respect to promote tolerance and increase engagement between oppressors and the oppressed. As the Joker of these dialogic endeavours, I think I failed to promote

tolerance between the conflicting parties. Sometimes, I felt that the experiment was not working and should not have been done in the first place. It felt as though these margins had been imagined.

It is a careless assumption that all foreigners are bad especially when they come from socially, politically and economically disadvantaged countries. They become accountable for anything bad that happens in the country, be it crime or even environmental mishaps. In one of the workshops there was a debate that foreign women were responsible for the spread of HIV in Johannesburg. This aspect was included into the Forum Theatre play because the women participants expressed that they found it so offensive and compromising to their femininity. Tino explained that this was the reason why, in most cases, Zimbabwean women are treated with scorn in some HIV clinics. To add insult to the injury, the reason given for the spread was their desperation for money and livelihood such that they exchanged their sexuality for mere Kentucky Fried Chicken (KFC). Tino said that she does not eat KFC food because of that insinuation.

Marginality also highlights the danger of cultural ethnicity. Deco articulated that Africans, have been known to value cultural ethnicity from what he has seen happening in spaces where different nationalities meet. The tarnishing of it in Johannesburg, sometimes, underplays the spirit of uBuntu²⁴. Ubuntu is the key to all African values and involves humanness, a good disposition towards others, and a moral nature (Kamwangamalu 2007: 24-41). Although there is a claim of embracing uBuntu in South Africa; treating foreigners as inferior and ethnic outcasts has a strong leverage on pushing them to the margins. Jakes gave an analogy of a polygamous situation of how a woman can easily find herself on the margins of her co-wives if she is treated as culturally unfit. In the Image Theatre exercise, Sindie showed how she felt despised as a woman in Johannesburg. This was in the image where she physically extricated herself from the rest of the group by maintaining a noticeable distance from the rest of the group. She also explained that she did this to demonstrate the ethnic gap she observed and experienced between the locals and foreigners. Being on the margins culturally may also imply economic marginalization in a traditional African set up. For example, wealthy people are considered as ethnically astute human beings and they usually belong to the centre while those less affluent are thrown to the margins. Jakes expressed that this all came with the presumptuous African pride which is also exacerbated by land borders.

What I noticed at Emakhaya was that the experience challenged the merging of the two methods. Although I tried, as the Joker, to get the audience to plead humility through Appreciative Inquiry, I failed to realise the extent of the conflict inherent in this space. James (2020) posits that a properly executed AI process should invite conflicting parties to approach each other in the spirit of interest rather than judgement. The FT impression seemed to overshadow the AI one. James explains that this is because the problem-solving view constrains the fertile imagination of solving problems and liberating the people. She also explains that in such cases some participants (especially the oppressed) hesitate to speak because they fear potential costs to their identities. This is true because the research participants failed to freely express themselves in this occasion. I should have been more aware and prioritised the extent of the conflict and I would have built relationships based on interest and curiosity between the two groups. Then I would have given the participants an exhilarating and liberating experience that would have enabled them to move from the margins with confidence.

The Theatre of the Oppressed models and sets in motion the thwarting of dogmatic existentialism. Sullivan (2008) postulates that Boal's Forum and Image Theatre techniques help to deconstruct susceptibilities and cumulative loss of

²⁴ A social and philosophical belief in unity of purpose and kindness in African socio-cultural systems of co-existence.

power among participants. He points out that Boal demands a steadfast commitment to speaking truth to power in a way that honours the ideas, actions and feelings of others. Tied to socio-cultural marginality is the notion of naturalizing nationality values to absolute/facts of nature. Most South Africans, according to the findings of this study, seem to confuse nationality with dogmatic indigeneity/autochthony. Jakes argued that most of them, due to ignorance, do not understand the history of migration of the Bantu people and the origins of mankind. They assume that geographical borders institute identity naturalization. Nationality should not be used to indicate or measure ethnic origin or social value of individuals, but should be a reference to a legal connection between a person and a state (Ramanathan 2016). While FT helps to deconstruct absolute truths, AI comes in handy here as it opens for knowledge that exposes blind spots through its prioritisation of humility. Sometimes FT fails to prioritise humility for both protagonists and antagonists. If not dealt with, these blind spots create consistent separations based on manipulated identities.

It is incumbent upon African governments, on their policies, to address problems of nationality that were created by the history of colonization and migration so as to build a lucrative present and future for the citizens. AI and FT both seek to promote options for the people who are affected by problems in the past that deter their futures. In this way the FT event and the AI proceedings are used to uncover past events, analyse present circumstances and rehearse alternatives for the future. These nationality policies should be brought to legality in keeping with international human rights laws and enshrined in the African Charter on Human and People's Rights (Kralj 2013, Loring and Ramanathan 2016). Again, when nationality values are treated as facts of nature, locals become easily puffed up and gain energy to push foreigners to the margins. With Zimbabwean women ascribing to second class citizenry, naturalizing nationality worsens their social standing. Taking on its political strand, Forum Theatre challenges the protagonists on taking second class roles. It's dialogic and spect-acting impetus challenges participants to become protagonists of their lives. Protagonists do not subscribe to identity victimisation; they fight to destroy manipulated power structures. Appreciative Inquiry brings the cherry on top, to guide the protagonists to be more rigorous in their move from oppression to liberation. In all this, both approaches guide the participants to become more reflective in transforming their identities and social positions.

Some of the salient themes of marginality that the participants identified were paper identification and documentation in South Africa. Documentation gives credibility to any person's social identity and belonging in any country. Because of its history of migration and the influx of foreign nationals, paper identification can easily and readily push foreigners to the margins (whether documented or not) in Johannesburg. There are many factors driving this. The intensity of this problem made the participants to incorporate this as one of the pertinent themes in the Forum Theatre play and thus framed the title of the play, "Office 0027". The title was a metaphor recalling the Department of Home Affairs as being a representational framework of xenophobia and belonging in Johannesburg. For any foreigner, the first attempt to assimilate into the society and community of Johannesburg is to be properly documented. As obscure as the proof of documentation may be, at the heart of each Zimbabwean woman is the desire to live legally in Johannesburg. Failure to obtain these papers would be an attraction of a miserable stay. Not having the green ID (Identity Book), whether in the form of a passport or other identification document, can mean one is on the margins.

The process of attaining the documents in Johannesburg is long, tedious and harassing. Desai (2008:56) reveals some of the words that were used by South Africa's judges during "the litigation against immigration and asylum procedures

of the Department of Home Affairs²⁵ in South Africa”: He says that they are shameful, horrifying, dysfunctional, unconstitutional, unlawful, hypocritical nonsense. He argues that these words were very revealing of a “debilitating picture of gross inhumanity” (2008:56). This is a demonstration of acts of manipulated power that Forum Theatre seeks to thwart. Based on the belief that manipulated power tends to create a broken society, FT equips and empowers the disenfranchised people to examine these dysfunctional and unconstitutional tendencies within governments. Linda as a spect-actor in the internal spect-acting session asked the Home Affairs official (HA) why it is difficult for officials to be civil and courteous towards foreigners. HA responded that their civility would cost them the influx of foreigners into the country. As such, they have to create and maintain systems that instil fear in the foreigners and are bureaucratic. This bureaucracy would deter foreigners trying to get papers. Linda argued that then it would cause lawlessness when people are undocumented. She questioned if lawlessness was better than pushing people to be undocumented. It was not a coincidence that the local judges painted such a grim picture of documentation procedures. These procedures push people to the margins.

Appreciative Inquiry then provides an integrative initiative through its social constructionist principle. A principle that posits that those in positions of power can make choices to work amicably with those that they serve to solve the problem of segregation through their actions. The AI language focuses attention on the capacity to heighten positive thought, action and dialogue. However if systems already allow for such segregation, it may be difficult for the outsiders to be incorporated legally into the centres.

Jack, who usually took an objective stance towards xenophobia, raised something important on how foreigners were also to blame for the marginalisation. He made reference to the border chaos. He argued that some Zimbabweans are not illegal in the country because the systems have pushed them out, but out of their own volition and the dual corruption at the border posts. He problematised the issue of border jumping as a grave concern. He argued that if he were a local, he would be aggravated by the influx of undocumented foreigners who end up getting jobs. Mncwango (2019) posits that corruption at South Africa’s border posts and migration offices undermine the function and role of Home Affairs. He claims that these conditions are the cause of escalated tensions between citizens and foreign nationals. He attributes his opinions to the failure by the failing ANC (African National Congress party governing South Africa in 2019) to implement stringent measures against this form of corruption which he thinks keeps refuelling marginalisation and xenophobic violence. For Jack, this meant failing both the locals and foreigners residing legally in South Africa.

Lefko-Everett (2007) is of the opinion that for some women, marginality can be a means of problem-solving or strategic response to their socio-economic conditions in response to various situations such as the pursuit of better job opportunities and relationship hardships. For some, she argues, it could be because of serious political instability in their countries of origins and the lack of socio-economic integration thereof. The examples that she gives validate the contextual evaluation of marginality as being self-inflicted. Some of the women participants validated that they also are living in the margins because they left the ‘comfort’ of their homes to come for greener pastures in South Africa. Intrinsically, they are currently suffering out of their volition. Deco pointed this out that some foreigners come to South Africa out of their own volition. The political and economic instability in Zimbabwe does not give an outlet of

²⁵ The Department of Home Affairs is responsible for issuing out permits to live, work and study in South Africa.

hope for women immigrants. Deco argued that it should be the responsibility of Zimbabwean leaders to address the socio-economic problems so that Zimbabweans do not feel the pinch of marginalisation in South Africa. He expressed that the marginalisation is bound to continue as long as they are seen as desperate job seekers.

Mncwango (2019) also points out that the lack of foreign documentation policy implementation makes it possible for foreign migrants to be exploited as cheap labour whilst that invigorates the anger of unemployed South Africans towards foreigners. One wonders how the locals would then not want to push the foreigners into the margins.²⁶

Furthermore Desai (2008) reveals that Home Affairs top ranking officials have been accused of stalling and sabotaging reforms of laws governing migration and they have been reluctant to act because of political sensitivity with regards to rights of foreigners amid the violent xenophobic attacks. Tino explained that if the government stalls such processes, it clearly shows them that they are not important to the policy decision making processes of South Africa. That is why the participants felt that they need to challenge the notions of being treated as marginals.

Desai (2008) outlines the factors marking the beginnings of living on the margins. He references sentiments that were articulated by the Minister of Home Affairs, Mangosuthu Buthelezi (1998) in parliament and the 1999 White Paper, thereafter, as being the greatest fuel in labelling foreigners as undesirable. The sentiments depict foreigners as competing for scarce economic resources and public services such as health care and housing. These sentiments are still and currently echoed in the streets of Johannesburg. In 2018, 2019 and 2020, the NEWS was abuzz with public hospitals denying immigrants health care and how foreigners were causing land shortage and accommodation problems in Alexandra²⁷. The sentiments also highlighted foreigners competing for scarce job opportunities where even bargaining agreements are compromised for locals. This has been a recurrent and amplified reason for pushing the foreigners to the margins. What is realised here are undertones of propaganda perpetuated by a leadership that is seemingly xenophobic. The participants were made aware of these media occurrences as part of the propaganda to discredit and push them to the margins. Through its liberatory techniques, Forum Theatre offers and advocates alternatives that enable the oppressed to resist oppression by inspiring critical thinking. This is achieved through the conscientization process which can lead to thwarting even deeply entrenched norms such as propaganda (Brahma *et al* 2019). When conscientized about the dangers of propaganda, the oppressed are awakened to its machinations. Hence, they are on the lookout for its defeatist effects.

The participants also expressed a concern over the accusation of foreigners being responsible for the high crime rate. They were accused of compromising the rainbow status of the country by fraudulently acquiring documents. Even though this might be true, to a certain extent, coming from a high-ranking Minister of Home Affairs would not ameliorate the situation. It permanently stays in the minds of any local listener to continue hating foreigners. It would also cow any foreigner to live on the margins for fear of being attacked for the supposed misdemeanours.

²⁶ Zwakele Mncwango | 02 April 2019, "Dysfunctional Home Affairs fuels xenophobic attacks"
<https://www.politicsweb.co.za/politics/dysfunctional-home-affairs-fuels-xenophobic-attack> Accessed 7 July 2019

²⁷ Medical Xenophobia: Public hospitals deny migrants health care services - SAHRC
By Orateng Lepodise • 29 March 2018 www.dailymaverick.co.za/article/2018-03-29-medical-xenophobia-public-hospitals-
Accessed 7 July 2019
Foreigners to blame for most shacks' - MEC Uhuru Moiloa, <https://www.sowetanlive.co.za/news/south-africa/2019-03-14-foreigners-to-blame-for-most-shacks/> by Penwell Dlamini, 14 March 2019, Accessed 7 July 2019.

It would suffice to argue that the concept of marginality cannot be articulated in one phrase as explained by Mirjam de Bruijn *et al* (2013), Lefko-Everett (2007) and Hanh and Klute (2007). To do so would be downplaying the circumstances and contexts that lead to it. These scholars suggest that the concept is relative and contextual. Mirjam *et al* (2013) aver that some people may see themselves as marginalized while others are labelled by the locals as marginal. Thus, living on the margins is dependent on factors such as these. They also aver that this relative concept is a process and is subject to change while at the same time may be affected by feelings (of those who think they are marginalized and those who label other as such) and reality during a particular time and context. This means that marginality can be evaluated in different ways; it can be evaluated either by default or external contributory factors. In the Image Theatre session where Sindie distanced herself from the group image, she was quizzed by the other participants as to what prompted her to take that stance. She explained that it was because of her self-judgement propagated by her social position as an immigrant woman in South Africa. I asked everyone to think about where they would also place themselves had they been labelled as marginal by the locals. They all expressed that they would place themselves at the same position as Sindie's, but with a different body posture that depicts more despair because being labelled as such. The derogatory words such as makwerekwere can be part of the marginalisation labelling.

The issue of marginality also caused emotional stress for the women. When Welile said that she did not belong here and it was difficult for her to go back to Zimbabwe, I felt the trauma overtones in her utterances. At that moment, I had to employ some of Boal's therapeutic approaches. In his *Rainbow of Desire* (1995), Boal developed some techniques that can help the oppressed deal with mental oppression. One of them is 'cops in the head'. In this technique, the participants examine internal forms of oppression caused by manipulative power structures. They, in the mode of theatre, find ways to overcome these cops to counteract them (Boal 1995). Some of the cops that were identified were being called makwerekwere and border jumpers, self-identifying as marginals, locals who discriminated against them at work, the anxiety caused by lack of belonging, the police and Home Affairs officials.

To challenge these cops through AI, I would go back to the Discover phase of Appreciative Inquiry and ask each one of them to tell re-tell the story of being accepted in Johannesburg despite the xenophobia. I would ask them to use this 'positive cop in the head' to think of a situation where living on the margin would become a celebrated norm because of the envisaged beauty there. Somehow that alleviated the anxieties that would have been perpetrated by the concentration of problematic stories. The *Rainbow of Desire* techniques and AI aided the reflective moments of some of the sessions. Boal states that by creating an autonomous world of images, participants start to imagine liberation. He argues that it is possible to determine how liberation can happen if they do not to reduce themselves to stories that stress them out. Telling beautiful stories or stories of success, in Appreciative Inquiry, also contributed to the emotional loosening and consciousness was awakened - The consciousness of belonging.

Hahn and Klute (2007) warn that the notion of marginality can be dangerous if articulated in a single phrase because if wrongly understood and misinterpreted it can be reduced to a mere clash between 'autochthones'²⁸ and foreigners and yet these margins could be a result of political factors. Shor and Freire (1987) highlight the complexity of language in oppressive situations. The phrases/vocabulary/language uttered in single phrases of oppression can exacerbate tensions

²⁸ (an inhabitant of a place) indigenous rather than descended from migrants or colonists. Online dictionary <https://www.google.com/search> Accessed 7 July 2019

between oppressors and oppressed. Freire (1970) warns that communication which operates through words can be dangerous, limiting or full of possibilities. However, if the communication is one way, it limits possibilities of liberation. He points out that these complexities should not forsake the liberating power of language. An example is when Government officials, of the host country, vie for petty populism by carelessly denigrating the status of foreigners as exposed by Tau Tawengwa (2015) on how King Goodwill Zwelithini and George Zuma, Former President Jacob Zuma's son expressed how, "we [South Africans] are also unnecessarily accommodating illegal immigrants in this country." He also said, "you never know whether they [foreigners] are funding ISIS [Islamic State in Iraq and Syria] and al-Shabaab." Such language becomes pervasive in the sense that sometimes it generates a thinking that derogatory language (against foreigners) can go unpunished. Examples of such careless use of language was also seen at Emakhaya and Hillbrow Theatres where the audience used language such as "abantu bokuza/bangaphandle, amasela, izifebe," (aliens/border jumpers, thieves and prostitutes).

It is in this light that Augusto Boal developed Forum Theatre as theatrical language that seeks to thwart one-way communication and vocabulary that promotes hatred and conflict. In the TO theatre as language phase (where FT is located), Boal brought forward Freire's notion on language function that fosters equal interaction and opportunities. The theatre as language stage gives the spect-actors alternative ways of communicating for their freedom and teaches both parties to start using a language that will release the control of power from one group. Language has the power to break or make society, push others to the margin or draw them to the centre.

The government officials of the migrants' country can contribute to their exiled citizens' being labelled and pushed to the margins. The participants explained that the fact that they left Zimbabwe mostly because of economic hardships that were fuelled by unprincipled political choices and decisions, is a valid context for their being marginalized. The Zimbabwean Government has for a long time failed to address and redress some of its political and economic policies that have seen the exodus of women to South Africa. Sindie even suggested that the Government officials were taking a rather silent stance on this because their neighbour (South Africa) was babysitting for them while they were enjoying sipping tea with their wives at the State House. Consequently, this may give the locals the advantage to disrespect foreign women and push them to the social margins as they will be viewed as human beings without a supportive backbone from their countries.

5.2.1 It's Cold at the Margins

The participants expressed that anyone living on the margins of society would attest to the feeling of pain. Whether by default or other factors, living on the margins can be stressful, scary, traumatic and unhealthy. Analogously, the regions towards the equator at the centre of the earth are warmer whilst the Antarctic regions at the periphery are colder. Even in society it is more comfortable to live at the centre than on its margins because the coldness of being ostracised socially and economically can be uncomfortable. The equator and Antarctica analogy buttresses the sentiments expressed by the participants about how xenophobia has pushed them to cold margins socially and economically. From the scripting of the Forum Theatre play to its showing, the participants were working towards highlighting the coldness of marginality and exploring how they could address it. The channelling of Appreciative Inquiry became a prescription on how they could be happy and 'warm' whilst they are living on the margins and/or as an attempt to move away from the margins.

Usually when participants sit down to script a Forum Theatre play, they would have been prompted by initial discoveries of stories and themes of suffering and pain that they want to expose about their oppressed status. They do not just script it because they want to show off their skills, but they want to use it as a social intervention tool. Scripting a Forum Theatre play is like creating a laboratory experiment where everyday life experiences are re-produced. The story is oriented towards an unresolved ending so as to leave the audience instinctively wanting to do ‘something about something.’ The form and content are about crafting stereotypical characters and situations that will depict and augment the participants’ experiences of the coldness of life. Stereotyping the characters should not be a problem because pushing people to the margins, is mostly caused, by stereotyping them. The themes that were included in the script had denotations and connotations of people living on the margins: Being discriminated against by nurses at the clinic, accused of spreading HIV, denied access to documentation, accused of competing for scarce job opportunities, accused of perpetrating criminal activities. The lines that highlighted these themes were crafted to deliberately indicate the desperation of Zimbabwean women to augment the coldness of discrimination although some audience members felt that some lines in the play were highly exaggerated, alarmist and stereotyping.

Scripting a play about everyday reality without bringing it to a happy ending can be cumbersome. However, when scripting our play about xenophobia, the participants were asked to imagine it having a positive ending (from an AI perspective). The imagining was easy, but the believing was difficult because already the participants were aware that the reality that they were exploring was tangibly hectic. Creating a positive ending to the play would have downplayed the seriousness of addressing the problem of xenophobia. It would have proven idealistic. Creating the light of idealism had its own twist to the plot, beauty and complexity of the play. The predisposition of tapping into what was wrong with being on the margins and creating the themes of xenophobia exacerbated the feeling of coldness among the participants. Distinctively, paying attention to what is wrong and imperfect about them emphasizes and amplifies a creation of a language of deficit thinking that infiltrates their thoughts and words. It is at this juncture that the margins feel cold for them. Appreciative Inquiry then tries to illuminate this idea of idealism by reminding participants that they are good enough and their stories can have a positive ending if they search with anticipation, creativity, and self-believing. However, this requires confidence and commitment. They were given an exercise to re-script the play where they imagined their lives as affirmed and as contributing successful members of the community of Zimbabwean immigrant women. They were asked to reflect on the exercise in their journals. These are excerpts from Sindie’s, Tino’s and Welile’s journals:

Sindie: *“I wonder what it is like to script such a play if I am not in a position of social and economic freedom. But it feels good, but it’s not real. How can I do it when I feel this pain inside of me. The pain of not belonging. But I can achieve it if I focus positively. But I can’t do it alone. The government and other women can help me.”*

Tino: *“Structural oppression is as a result of not being accorded my human rights as a foreign person residing in South Africa. Creating a play with the pretence that everything is alright is highly presumptuous. But it gives me a good feeling and hope. This exercise cannot be a success because it asks us to be idealistic. Idealism is not good because it gives me false hope. This play can’t have a happy ending. I need my voice to be heard instead of pretending that there are happy endings. I need to participate in realistic ways so that I find my place of belonging in South Africa.”*

Welile: *“The streets of Joburg have toughened me to be butch. But this is encouraging me to go back to my soft feminine side. And script something with a soft language. Maybe I need this softness to enjoy being myself again. This play needed a soft woman. But I must be tough to best live in this city. Only tough women belong in this city.”*

To some extent, Sindie showed confidence in focusing on the positive compared to Tino, but both of them showed the lack of committing to that imagined future. In this journal entry, Tino did not realise that her voice could also be heard even when she was not fighting as she would in the Forum Theatre processes. Appreciative Inquiry offered her an alternative at making her voice heard without her throwing stones. This is not to say that Forum Theatre is about throwing stones; it has a way that gets participants to think they are physiologically waging an aggressive war. What Welile makes us realise is how Appreciative Inquiry languages a toned-down register when finding alternatives. Because Theatre of the Oppressed is perceived to be highly revolutionary and political, participants tend to respond to its register of aggression. Without confidence and commitment, the participants somehow thwarted their chances of swimming into rivers of positive possibilities. These journal reflections also highlight a sense of hidden anticipation of what it would mean to re-script a life full of possibilities. After problem-posing, participants are inspired to investigate the possibility of a positive presumption that life is at the centre of constructive capacity. They start to wonder if they can discover potentials and possibilities and this investigation is accompanied by anticipation and excitement about the future (Cooperrider & Whitney 2003, Stratton-Berkessel 2010, Whitney & Trosten-Bloom 2010 and Ludema & Whitney 2003). Without excitement and anticipation, people may fail to envision the warmth at the centre.

Asked about what made the margins cold, the participants highlighted mostly being accused of many illicit acts which led to them being hated, prejudiced, discriminated against, insulted, not tolerated, being treated with contempt, bullied and harassed. The Forum Theatre play actually revealed these descriptions as problems that were faced by the women. The first scene sets a Home Affairs scenario where the migration officials reluctantly serve a desperate young lady by moving her from pillar to post and confusing her. The scene portrays how the need for paper identification/documentation can play out the contemptible behaviour from South African locals towards foreigners. Instead of Home Affairs officials being keen to help foreigners, who want to be properly documented, they show a detestable attitude towards them. The participants revealed that such treatment was worse for women because they received the hostile lash from both female and male officials. Caught between the hammer and the anvil, the women no longer know whether to pursue getting the documents or simply give up. Welile decried the choice of giving up as it attracted deportation or worse being sent to the notorious Lindela (a South African waiting ‘prison’ camp for foreigners to be deported).

For the women, the issue of paper identification posed a highly gendered complication. The participants claimed that, in most cases, they were prone to forms of sexual harassment from male migration officers and policemen who arrested them for documentation crimes. They claimed that the corruption at Home affairs also allowed for sexual advancement from the men. If they did not consent, it would be difficult for them to be served. Sindie explained that some women consented and got their papers, but most of the time the relationship with the official would be short lived - a big compromise for Zimbabwean women who claim moral aptitude. The participants also accused the policemen for the same uncouth behaviour. In most cases, in areas such as Hillbrow, Berea and Yeoville, police round up foreigners for documents and if without, they bungle them into their vans. Then they go through a screening process where there are some foreigners who claim that their documents are at their places of residences. The police

usually accompany these people to prove that they are truly documented. Sindie maintained that this is when the women fall prey to the policemen. The sexual advances from the police are as a result of xenophobic attitudes that Zimbabwean women are morally loose. The participants revealed that usually Zimbabwean immigrant women in Johannesburg are not bestowed with cultural aptitude and rights as would be the case in their country. Because the sexual abuse would have been committed by a law officer, it becomes difficult for the women to report such cases. What exacerbates this situation is that the women cannot also report this to their husbands or partners who might leave or chastise them for allowing the policemen to exploit them. Welile ascribed this to the fact that there is also no familial or stable communal culture and support structure, in Johannesburg, and this impacts the women negatively.

Lefko-Everett (2007) points to a study by the Human Rights Commission (HRC) into police methods of dealing with migration issues and expresses disappointment at the significant failure of the police to comply with the requirements of the law. Making sexual advances to offending women is a monumental example of this failure. Everett also states that the study alleges that in some instances the police would tear up the documents even when they produced them. This brutality of the police against the women leaves them prone to other xenophobic misdemeanours such as being continually disrespected because the locals also know that the police do not always protect them.

The second scene is a highlight of what Mangosuthu Buthelezi (1998) decried about foreigners competing for scarce job opportunities. The accusations that they are taking jobs from locals, exposes them to abuse and exploitation. In the play, Sophia's co-worker accuses Sophia's fellow Zimbabweans of stealing their jobs and offering cheap labour which compromises economic bargaining for local South Africans. Most Zimbabwean women, with education qualifications or not, end up doing menial jobs such as domestic work and waitressing in restaurants. Sindie explained that this is because that is how far they can be employed without the hustle of paper identification. Because they come to South Africa for job opportunities, it becomes harrowing when they feel that they cannot be accorded the right and equal opportunities as their local counterparts to work. The participants agreed that it is true that Zimbabwean women exchange their labour for cheap remuneration and it is because they will be at their last desperation for survival as they have to provide for themselves and their families back home. This riles up South Africans a great deal to levels of xenophobic anger. Alley (2003), Lefko-Everett (2007) and Crush & Tevera (2010) attest to the meagre earnings of Zimbabweans and how this has constructs national differences that have created a rift between Zimbabwean foreigners and locals. Alley further points out how local domestic workers have disparaged foreign women for 'stealing' their jobs and compromising the minimum wage bracket as they work for peanuts. Without economic stability the women find themselves on the edge of survival and cannot vouch for complete lives as foreigners. Tino stated that it is even worse for educated women who have to face the embarrassment of doing menial jobs and being at financial par with some women who they once looked down upon back home. Hence, the margins become colder for them. When spect-acting on this scene, Jakes professed that the women only stay on those margins just out of endurance and coping resistance. Spect-acting the character of Sophia, he said "you know, we only stay and work in Johannesburg for peanuts because we have to endure or else our families will die of hunger. No matter how difficult it is, we Zimbabweans are strong. I wonder if you South African women would be this strong."

The same scene highlights the insulting connotations of immoral behavior among the Zimbabwean women. The conversation between Sophia and Disetsang (the local co-worker) heightens to trivia. Disetsang denigrates Zimbabwean women for being financially desperate to an extent that they end up prostituting to earn a living. The

most derogatory part being that they even exchange their bodies for Kentucky Fried Chicken. Disetsang also included, in this conversation, why nurses in public hospitals disparaged Zimbabwean HIV positive women. When the participants spect-acted this part, I asked them to freeze and create images of how they felt at such denigration because when Sindie scripted the lines for Sophia, she showed annoyance and wrath at the accusation by contorting her face and biting her lower lip. In the image Sindie continued with the same image. Tino spread her legs apart in an advancing position with a clenched fist towards Disetsang, ready to pounce on her. Andile looked away in disgust with pain on his face. All these images showed the extent of the agony and anger of being pushed to the margins.

Creating images was a prompt to locate their feelings on their bodies. As explained in Chapter 2, the body can be used as an imperative and radical tool for research into the participants' thoughts, feelings and actions. I argue here that the body illuminates a critical consciousness on the oppressed that articulates a virtual language that desires to define and authenticate the participants lives as people who live on the margins. I also asked them to show the next image of how they would react to the accusation if they were given a platform to work out this dispute with characters like Disetsang. Sindie lightened up her face, but maintained the bitten bottom lip to emphasise the seriousness of her approach. Tino reduced the distance between her legs and the clenched fist was opened and she put her forefinger on the side of her head as invitation to Disetsang that they should both use their brains to solve this problem. Andile turned his face towards Disetsang, put his right hand on his chin and showed a musing facial expression to show that he understood Disetsang's myopic thinking, but was willing to dialogue with her.

The creation of the images for the second time was to bring in the Appreciative Inquiry perspective. This was done to invite the participants to share their ideas with an aspiration to increase the value of their marginal lives - an invitation to provide feedback and insights on improved outcomes of their dreams (Cooperrider and Whitney 2005). The first set of images seemed typical and required the participants to respond as they would in any Forum Theatre spect-acting, but the second solicited a move towards increasing the valuing of how they thought they would move to the centre with improved vigour.

The third scene depicts a more gruelling perspective of xenophobic hatred. It exposes how callous South Africans can be to the extent of causing disability in their brutal hatred of foreigners. The scene is more of a narration of how Tendai suffered arson brutality and was tortured, her fiancé murdered and daughter raped in front of her during one of the xenophobic attacks. Shse became disabled and their identification papers were burnt in their shack. To compound the problem, the story reveals how the perpetrators got away with impunity. The story of this young man highlights a double tragedy of living on the margins for Zimbabwean women. The woman's fiancé's disability deterred social and financial progress for both. The woman must deal with the fact that her fiancé is not employable and cannot receive a disability grant from the South African government as she is no longer documented.

The issue of impunity is usually an accompaniment of violent acts of xenophobia which is symbolic of moral decay in Johannesburg. Benyera (2017:140) alludes to the public pronouncements made by public office bearers as contributory to the resultant violence and impunity. He spells out that when these officers make hateful public utterances that label foreigners as criminals. They perpetuate, among the general locals, an invigorated desire to act violently towards the so-called criminals. He quotes Herman Mashaba Mayor of Johannesburg (2016) who announced on radio that foreigners were criminals that were holding the country at ransom. Not long after that foreign people's

houses were burnt in Rosettenville and Mamelodi²⁹. No perpetrators were brought to book. Benyera argues that such utterances by high-ranking officials, “reinforce stereotypes, legitimizes and confers a sense of impunity on the perpetrators who feel nationalistic bound duty” Impunity constitutes the abuse of legal and human rights. More so, Home Affairs officers seem to drag their feet in addressing such problems and this is because people like Tendai fiancé are incapable developing the country because of the disability. Going back to Zimbabwe would not be an option because disabled people suffer the worst there. The situation is a heightened version of living on the margins.

Stereotyping demonstrates non-reflective attitudes in interpersonal relationships. Appreciative Inquiry proves useful in advocating questions that provoke an inquiry into people’s attitudes towards each other. The attitudes of Home Affairs officials tend to push foreigners into the margins. AI engages participants into learning about each other before they judge each other. A thorough investigation into the stereotypical tendencies of Home Affairs officials, during spect-acting with the audience, highlighted progress in allaying the prejudice. AI questioning encouraged the participants to view the best in each other. One question that I asked a spect-actor at Hillbrow theatre, was, “Would we have negative views about foreigners in Joburg (Johannesburg) if Home Affairs and government officials reinforced the rights of foreigners through legitimising lawful documents for them.” I asked this question because it exposed the notion that foreigners are not entitled to legal documentation. If locals understand that foreigners also have rights, stereotyping and impunity would not be an issue.

One of the audience members, who was South African whom we shall call Miss X, claimed that the representation of the character of Dumisani and Tendai was alarmist. Another spect-actor, from Botswana (Mr. Y), challenged Miss X to think about how impunity, stereotyping, loathsome rape and helplessness would be challenged if not investigated. What happened to Tendai would have pushed anyone to the margins of destitution and yet Miss X thinks the story is alarmist. Mr. Y contested that if this story had not been told in an alarming way, the voice of the woman would not have been heard. Some audience members agreed that without such alarmism, as Miss X had labelled, most xenophobic perpetrators would continue denying that xenophobic violence is wrong; and its impunity would be a political, social and psychological drawback for South Africa. Their argument was that what is legitimately alarming is that even the impunity itself goes without castigation from the government. The spect-actors felt that maybe Miss X passed these sentiments because she was one of the South Africans who lived in their cocooned worlds and saw xenophobia as deserving for Zimbabwean women who they accused of stealing their jobs and spreading HIV. As much as the audience believed that fear and alarm were the only options; they believed that there was still hope and optimism for Dumisani’s and Tendai’s story. It was through the AI questioning that this hope was envisaged.

McArthur and Cockell (2018) assert that Appreciative Inquiry can build resilience among people and get them to weather storms of conflict and marginalisation and this is through the interplay between inquiry, hope, and forgiveness. The inquiry is based on what is best about people and is a powerful ally in the journey of people understanding each other. The same can be said about Forum Theatre because it teaches the oppressed to be resilient

²⁹ Xenophobia a convenient scapegoat for Rosettenville and Mamelodi
Govan Whittles 13 Feb 2017 00:00 <https://mg.co.za/article/2017-02-13-00-xenophobia-a-convenient-scapegoat-for-rosettenville-mamelodi> Accessed 8 July 2019

to the machinations of the oppressor. When they do this, they start to believe that there is hope in liberating themselves.

I asked the audience members to volunteer to enact solutions that were driven by optimism to help the women going through these hardships. Three audience members offered various propositions: For Dumisani's friend to rally other Zimbabwean women to take their plea to various non-governmental and governmental organisations without protesting but with petitions for dialogue; to take Tendai back to Zimbabwe to be looked after by family members; and going for trauma counselling. The option to take her fiancé back home was the most resisted by Tendai (as a woman protagonist). She explained that going back home and for counselling were very superficial offers for the trauma that she has experienced, what she needed were more practical solutions. Some of the audience thought the same way, but there were offers for organisations that could help her. These are some of the organisations that were suggested, UNICEF for psycho-social support, Saferspaces, Dullah Omah Institute for Human Rights, Lawyers for Human Rights, Department of Social Development, Centre for the Study of Violence and Reconciliation (CSV) and International Organisation for Migration.

Practically, the women wanted a reversal of all the contemptible encounters that the locals had posited on them including regaining their trust, retrieving false accusations, and uncomplicated access to documentation and legal representation, cultural and moral respect and support, equal job opportunities and to be incorporated into the socio-economic fabric in general. As enticing as these retrievals felt for the women, they needed to swim with life belts to get there so as to conquer storms and tempests (that was the resilience needed for the women).

Channelling Appreciative Inquiry into the spect-acting was also a strategy into investigate what warmth the women expected at the centre (and why they wanted to move away from the margins) and for them to start thinking about how they would get there. When Tendai resisted some of the offerings from the audience, she needed more affirmation and motivation that would make her realise her personal strategic intent. At this juncture, the important thing was for the women to strategise on how they could get to the centre. While Forum Theatre is more about exploring these strategies than arriving 'at the centre' (Babbage 2004, Boal (2000) and Cohen-Cruz & Schutzman 2002), Appreciative Inquiry provokes enticing images of the transition. Stavros and Torres (2005) reflect on the Anticipatory principle of Appreciative Inquiry that motivates people to improve their lives if they have a distinct image that they would have internalized. These are images about 'moving towards the centre'. Stavros and Torres see this as a paradigm which enables people to:

Imagine a life of opportunity, one full of possibility and potential. Imagine a life where you have a sense of wholeness and connected with others [even with those already at the centre], this kind of connection is fluid, positive, enriching and dynamic... Imagining celebrating conflict as a catalyst for discovering diversity in knowledge and opinion as well as differences... Imagine feeling alive, vibrant, curious, empowered, safe, valued, joyful... There is nothing stopping you from moving towards this imagined world (2005: 29).

The striking feature in this paradigm posited by Stavros and Torres here is about imagining celebrating a conflict. On the surface, people would see Appreciative Inquiry as utopian in changing the world, yet it enables people to take perspective of their situations of conflict and oppression as aspects being overshadowed by serious negativity. Sometimes conflict can be an outlet for dialogue to achieve unity. What is more remarkable is the assertion no-one can

stop people from feeling and being empowered as long as they have a vivid image of how they want their future to look like. Addressing the conflict can help them realise their similarities more than their differences.

When asked about what they thought about the centre, the women expressed the desire to make connections with the world, foremost. As Stavros and Torres suggest, a sense of connectedness pulls individuals' re-assessment of their self-value, self-worth, self-esteem and self-love before even other people can affirm them. This is all entrenched in the Appreciative Inquiry principle of simultaneity which puts forward an understanding that change happens the instance participants ask questions or inquire about life (Stavros & Torres 2005, Cooperrider *et al* 2008, Orem *et al* 2007, Cooperrider & Whitney 2005 and Whitney & Trosten-Bloom). This principle acknowledges that the source of change is what people investigate, talk about and discover. The authors believe that questions and inquiry inspire images of change and the future. The questions or inquiry establish what is to be discovered. These images are or should be embedded in affirming the self-worth of the individual. For example, when participants start inquiring about what they can/should do in order to get to the centre, they start having images of that posited positive future. That means they will be articulating stories about what the future (centre) holds for them. Without these imagined stories they may not be inspired to think of 'what might be'. The simultaneity principle, therefore, is centred in the juxtaposing of the questions/inquiry and change at the same time. The authors argue that these two are inseparable.

It is worth noting that questions should be pedestalled on positive questioning. Orem *et al* (2007: 15) aptly assert that people "... sow seeds of change with the very first question we ask. The kind of questions we ask set change in motion in a particular direction. If our questions are negative or focused on troubles, the client may defend himself against change or become depressed at the prospects of marginally improving weakness." This was seen when Tendai emphatically refused to be sent back to Zimbabwe or even go for counselling. The questions that the spect-actors (audience) asked had no foundations of allowing Tendai to dream within a positive framework because going to Zimbabwe was a more horrendous option and going for counselling reminded her that her case was entrenched in maniac desperation and depression. In a Forum Theatre set up, Appreciative Inquiry questioning is filled with a compounded metaphorical symbol of renewed breadth. This symbol builds on the latent questioning of Forum Theatre which may provoke change but pedestalled on annoyance and depression. Appreciative Inquiry questioning is like planting seeds on fertile ground.

For the participants to transition from the margins to the centre, they had to locate a certain energy for the change process. Hammond (2013) declares that an Appreciative Inquiry workshop should leave participants recalling moments of success with renewed and positive energy. Whenever the participants revisited the stories of success, they showed relaxation. The women showed satisfaction and pride when they shared how they worked hard in their companies and how they were instrumental in bringing productivity in their work places. The energy explicated here is one contextualized within the frameworks of Freirean liberation and pedagogy of commitment and bell hooks's (2015) feminist objectives of social justice. Freire and bell hooks believe that liberation and feminists movements should be the most affirming based on their unrelenting dialectical analysis particularly for marginalized women. This was seen when they witnessed their local counterparts at Emakhaya also affirming them through offering suggestions of what could help them move to the centre. This dialectical analysis engenders a critical consciousness of their reality and then facilitates an enthusiastic energy to transform their marginalized lives. For bell hooks, the dialectic analysis follows Freire's dialectic of oppressed/oppressor relationships. hooks understands that oppression

dehumanizes both victims and oppressors within the frameworks of socio-economic relations. She argues that within this paradigm, power is distributed unequally between those at the margins and centre and this underscores the loss of energy for the victims - to regain that energy becomes an insurmountable task. However, she believes that this energy can be restructured so that women can reposition and humanize themselves again. In accordance to Freire's and bell hooks assertions, Hammond avers that the Appreciative Inquiry approach inspires that critical consciousness to revive hope and action.

This energy was clearly seen from the rehearsal rooms to the two community theatres. Even though the women had perceived themselves as victims and oppressed, the space in the rehearsal rooms offered that tiny spark that ignited the energy for them to embark on a journey that would, hopefully, revitalize their lives. Each moment when Appreciative Inquiry was introduced, they knew that it was a challenge to shed off negative impulses and energy. The participants were put into a mind-set that enabled them to proactively and purposely generate energy through the choices of what to focus attention on. This focus was on them framing a future that is realistic and kind to their foreign status. This energy would make them embrace Appreciative Inquiry as not utopian. In this way they realised that when cultivated properly, Appreciative Inquiry would not be found wanting as promising them false warmth at the centre. Relating the appreciative energy to their action is more than merely attaching what is positive on something that is not working. It goes beyond merely seeing the destructive facets of situations and people who oppress them. It does not imply approving ineffectiveness and suffering. However, this does mean they had to pretend that terrible things did not happen to them. Actually, it allows for excruciating recollections to be regarded as historical information that will highlight the opportunity to create action for a healthier future. The energy is about the ability to reframe problems toward an inordinate interpretation of the future. By re-examining reality in a positive way, the participants exposed themselves to considering new constructions at the centre. When they saw this centre, that had previously eluded them, they gained new insight into their status.

5.3 Participating to Liberate Themselves from the Socio-economic Struggles

With the realization that living on the margins is a setback for the women, it is important to articulate what they did and what mechanisms they employed to participate in this liberation process in order to free themselves from the socio-political and economic problems. Participation is contextualized around how the women proposed ideas of liberating themselves in the research workshops and the envisaged ways of action taking after the research project. This means that this study views workshop action as part of the participation process and rehearsing for the future, in Boalian terms, as part of that process. Freire's, Augusto Boal's and the Appreciative Inquiry principles and theories provide a framework for the analysis of participation in this regard.

Gumucio-Dragon and Tufte (2006) point out that Freire's views on participation emanated out of "his experience of living, working and reflecting" (2006:476) on reality. They emphasise that praxis, as a dialectic of action and reflection, is a key concept of participation that illustrates an organic interplay of living and questioning reality in the context of social and economic development. This means taking part in something. In his later works, such as the *Learning to Question*, Freire extends his focus on praxis to a more Marxist-humanist stance based on the impression that human vocation is to be freed from the shackles of socio-political and economic struggles. As such, authentic participation would constitute not only a consciousness of their problems but a self-sustained effort to act against

subjugation so as to achieve authentic liberation. The praxis ideology acted as an impetus for the Zimbabwean immigrant women to act in an informed and responsible way built on value added existence.

The strength of Freire's praxis, in participation, is its appendage to and importance of dialogue. Shor and Freire (1987) assert that dialogue is an instinct for human beings as it hallmarks the art of naming and knowing the world. Human beings cannot name their world and act upon their reality if they cannot and do not communicate with each other. This would mean having monologues that only excite the imaginations of individuals. According to Shor and Freire, dialogue is the starting point of inquiry into the world of oppression and its machinations. Participants cannot carry out inquiries individualistically. Dialogic inquiry is motivation for participants to open new possibility through collective participation. According to Freire (1970) dialogue is about action and reflection. In the same light, it is part of the process of participating to transform to become human and not to just achieve some preferred outcome. It is within the realms of interacting that allows both those at the margin and centre to negotiate and not allow one party to indoctrinate the other. Both parties participate creatively in communion of people thinking collectively. Dialogue enables participants to challenge assumptions that they would have held against each other and create emergent collective meaning.

Dialogue was developed in the rehearsal rooms because of the participatory nature of Forum Theatre and Appreciative Inquiry. The illustration of dialogue, in the rehearsal rooms, was in two strands: The participants dialoguing among each other to change their circumstances and proposing ways of dialoguing with those at the centre. Because of their participatory aptitude, Forum Theatre and Appreciative Inquiry presented the participants with the propensity for active and functional engagement and involvement.

Each part of the workshops kept the participants active in their participation to change their marginal statuses. The images, scripting of the play, performing, spect-acting and discussions kept them busy as they strategized on how they could move. All these activities relied on participation as the drive towards their liberation. As viewed in the guidelines of development initiatives, Freire (1970, 2002, and 2017) vies for active participation as the resultant social and economic liberation. Freire (2017) argues that the passivity or inaction of the oppressed to change their lives also results in them being dominated politically, socially and economically because those who dominate them want to sustain their authority and still keep them silent on the margins. For Shor and Freire (1987), active participation is an indispensable tool for social, political and economic development. Tufte and Mefalopulos (2009) concur with Freire's standpoint on participation and active participation as they describe it as a practice and involvement of people to eliminate unfair hierarchies of knowledge (naming the world) to challenge power relations and unfair socio-economic distribution. Practically, this includes "improvement of competencies and capacities required to engage the defined development problem." (2009:4). The rehearsal rooms were the bridges upon which the participants could improve their competence to dialogue for their present and future as well as develop their capacity to act upon it.

In order to practically develop their competencies, capacities and potentials to dialogue for change, Forum theatre capacitated the participants' participation aspirations through creative practice. It is in the theatre stage/rehearsal room that participants demonstrate their active participation in Boal's principles and poetics of participation. Babbage (2018) is of the opinion that in 21st century performance culture, there should be the radicalization of participation in the sense that audience involvement in the theatrical performance is considerably familiar and wide-ranging. There are

currently many theatre approaches that are radicalizing audience participation that are not necessarily Theatre of the Oppressed. She argues that immense audience participation, in Forum Theatre, necessitates interaction that foregrounds active participation while illuminating the participants' power to explore reflections and actions for new possibilities. Tino expressed that Forum Theatre got them to be immersed in activities that demanded them to be active and participative. Active participation was witnessed in the workshops as the participants invested in the dialogues and actions that would help them move away from the margin or find ways of enjoying being there. Freire's trajectory of participation contributed to Boal's development of Forum Theatre in this regard.

Participation, in Forum Theatre, seems to bring with it an ease of dissatisfaction that implicitly implies that if not satisfied with something, people should do something about it. The women were not satisfied with their living on the margins and they acted upon it. People should not be satisfied with passivity at the expense of their happiness (Adrian Jackson in Boal 2013). Jackson articulates that happiness should not be a static condition. It should be accompanied by fully participating to bring participants closer to the world of the happiness they want. The spect-actor, as an active participant, takes on an active role of participation to liberate herself/himself from unhappiness. However, xenophobia thwarts this happiness by propelling the social and economic exclusion of the Zimbabwean women in Johannesburg. Rehearsal rooms exposed a culture of unhappiness by the simple attachment of the word 'xenophobia' amongst the participants. Deco challenged that being in xenophobia workshops dampened their spirits, but they participated because they are aware that they should also take initiative as foreigners and not be just passive.

In challenging traditional forms of participation in theatre, Boal invited his audience to take part in the play in order to capacitate them to become more human. White (2013) contends that participation aims to engage the audience in their personal and human development. He adds that when spectators become physically involved in the performance, they participate in ways that produce a desired 'edginess' of social activism. The activism is pedestalled on a personal effrontery and satisfaction that they are involved in the story of humanity. I realized that during moments of spect-acting (in the internal spect-acting sessions and with other audience members) this edginess was stimulated. Most spect-actors who volunteered to offer solutions showed a satisfaction that they had solved a human equation. Whoever found analogy in the presented story would always remember them as the hero of the day. Boal believed that people should leave the Forum Theatre workshops with a sense of willpower to solve their problems because of this invitation to participate in the theatre. When I asked one of the audience members at Emakhaya Theatre about how they felt about going on stage to offer their solutions, he said "Oh my gosh! Today I participated in policy making. In my own way I was a policy maker for my fellow Zimbabweans. I hope they will use what I offered them and fix their lives instead of crying foul about our systems."

The Freirean and Boalian praxis of participation posits a collective sharing of experiences among participants. Berkessel-Stratton (2010) alludes to that in any AI workshop, participation accelerates the sharing of experiences while creating great consciousness that will improve collaborative mind-sets. In this way Freire and Boal's theories on participation resonate with the constructionist principle of Appreciative Inquiry. This principle underlines the purpose of inquiry as inseparable and entwined with action. People act to shape/construct their social reality. Cooperrider and Whitney (2005) profess that this construction is created in conversations among people and what develops as knowledge is a far-reaching social agreement generated among individuals through communication. Furthermore, when people resolve to alter their beliefs about a certain social construct, they collectively change its reality. In

organizational structures, Cooperrider and Whitney, illustrate that human knowledge and organizational destiny are interwoven implying that there is a constant sense of naming and understanding the world around them. Collectively, the women participated to create their reality through their participative conversations. They continually reinforced this reality through the questions they asked and when they reframed the narratives that they explored. The narratives of exploitation were imminent with the women. They articulated that what they felt as the most painful factor was how they were exploited by their bosses at work, female colleagues, males in services provision offices and their own partners because of another narrative of their vulnerability. Sindie noted that narratives of exploitation would be thwarted if they were able to name their causes and if they were enabled to also reframe them through participative conversations.

Since humans have a tendency of moving toward images they hold, it was prudent to get the participants to participate while focusing on a positive image. Appreciative Inquiry solicits an energy to participate in a setting well suited for the exploration of positive images of success. This energy helps them to improve their innovation. In this view, they make strategic innovations of a future based on achievement and accomplishment. This means, the women were thriving to finally arrive at a centre where they are tolerated, trusted, not prejudiced against and their voices are heard.

This strategic innovation was also pushed by the Appreciative Inquiry's propensity to allow for bottom-up participation. Fry *et al* (2002) lay claim to a description of bottom-up participation as a manifestation of democratization of the world that encourages everyone's voices to be heard. No-one is discouraged to air their views if they are in the confines of responsibility and agency. Despite the Joker leading the workshop sessions, the participants were enabled to express their views in an open democratic space. As they responded to the Joker's questionings and probing, they were aware of their power to alter the research project in the direction that they thought fit for their progress with regards to challenging passivity. Bottom-up participation also encourages active participation. Because Appreciative Inquiry is platformed on a democratic space, it creates opportunities for participants to make meaningful contributions to decision making, thus intensifying the efficacy of participation. In this light, participation becomes an anti-thesis of the xenophobia passivity. This is because xenophobia bears an attitude of excluding those considered to be outsiders from any involvement in the social and economic planning.

If participants are denied participation, they become dwarfed and believe that there is no outlet to their oppressed situation. There are instances when the oppressors may deny the oppressed their participation or pretend that they are giving them the latitude to participate and yet they are offering what Freire calls false generosity. When denied participation, they cannot name their world and they may, sometimes not even know that they have rights. Tino explained that some Zimbabweans did not know that they had the right to appeal the denial of documentation. For them, that meant going back to Zimbabwe or living illegally in South Africa. Deco even claimed that he did not know that Zimbabweans could apply for the disability grant even without proper documentation. This was something that he learnt during the workshops.

Stavros and Torres (2005) bring to light the narrative of the elites who when seeing the dangers and threats that lie ahead of them, by allowing the oppressed to participate, try to stifle their participation. At the centre are privileges and social statues that can only be enjoyed by the elite few. Allowing those at the margins to be part of the enjoyment, would be erroneous to their social expectations. As such, the elite, according to Torres, gather in groups and

associations. These groups are usually constructed around intellectual and financial elitism. They pretend to give aid and form intervention institutions and organisations that will help alleviate the problem. These organisations just alleviate the problem, but do not stop it. During the 2008 xenophobic attacks such organizations loomed in Johannesburg. Ironically, some of these organisations were money generating projects for some individuals since the funding is generated from international donors. Torres contends that the creation of such organisations and aid are an attempt to forestall people's participation. This is one reason why Tendai was sceptical of some of the offerings to go for counselling and organisations that could help her and her daughter. Zimbabwean women do not want to be given handouts as it intensifies their marginal status. Welile said that she was not happy when the audience members advised them to work with non-governmental organisations as she knew that some of them were charity oriented. She felt that charity incapacitated their active participation to move from the margins.

In the previous chapter, I highlighted the lessons learnt about xenophobia from the rehearsal rooms. The argument on marginality made me discover the potential of PaR in leading to special insights on the topic or issue under study. The following section highlights the insights on xenophobia from the women's perspectives on how merging AI and FT aided their capacity to imagine how to transition from marginality to freedom.

5.4 Lessons Learnt about Xenophobia

From the women's perceptions, their marginalisation in Johannesburg stems from xenophobia. The attitudes and stereotypes that people create about those different from them encourages the pushing of others to the margins. This is because they do not trust them. Those in the inner circle then become xenophobic towards those outside as they accuse them of some misdemeanours. Xenophobia creates gaps and boundaries between those in the centre and those on the margin. Those on the outside feel that the hatred perpetuated by those in the centre is a divisive gap and boundary that should keep them apart. Without xenophobia, it would be easy for the centre to hold different people. Sometimes foreigners can draw xenophobia towards themselves especially if they do not use the right channels and take feasible actions that help them not be marginalised. An example is border jumping. Border jumpers invite punishment from the law. This should not be perceived as xenophobia but the urge to correct wrongdoing. However, those who are not well versed with the law will further the xenophobia discourse when this happens. Sometimes xenophobia stems from ignorance. When outsiders are forcibly removed or not allowed in the centre, they tend to think that it is because of xenophobia yet sometimes it could be the that the centre is full and there is a struggle for resources. Material and economic dispositions of a country are a contributory factor of xenophobia. Xenophobia may cause mental anxieties for those on the margins. When foreigners do not belong, they become anxious about their future. Anxiety creates mental instability and disequilibrium in their lives. Lack of proper identity documentation is another cause for anxiety and it propels xenophobic attitudes from the locals who find it unimaginable that undocumented foreigners would take jobs from them. Xenophobia is a social construct that is driven by narratives of self-identity and identity by other people to create divisions between locals and foreigners.

5.5 Conclusion

The conjecture is that being or living on the margins is a culmination of xenophobia predicating social and economic exclusions of those considered as outsiders. Although there has been an understanding that the exodus of Zimbabwean women into South Africa is because of the socio-political and economic turmoil in their country, Johannesburg has not accepted that because the influx has necessitated a lot of pain, anger and suffering for the locals. This anger has

compelled that the women be pushed to the margins so that, perhaps, they can think of returning to their country. The opposite has proved to be true because the women continue to be an expansive thorn for Johannesburg and its civic citizenship policies. It is of note that the pain has not only been experienced by those affected by xenophobia, but even those accused of perpetrating it. As such, the socio-economic struggles have been pedestalled on a pro rata basis although this chapter has articulated it more on the side of the Zimbabwean women. The South African government has had to compromise some of its development policies to accommodate the assimilation of the Zimbabwean women to maintain a good international image of diversity and democracy.

Living on the margins has offered a temporary, but not safe escapade for the Zimbabwean women to fully integrate or assimilate into socially accepted norms or economic standards of Johannesburg. This temporary refuge has complicated and derailed the advancement of the women's livelihoods. Deliberated on the negative assumptions of at-risk behaviour, the argument for living on the margins has been posited as a call for the protection of the women and their voices to be heard by all parties concerned. The context of assimilation has been built on the hypothesis that the Zimbabwean immigrant women also need to achieve social and psychological well-being that will encourage an undertaking towards economic liberation.

Participation as a prerequisite of the transition from the margins is a prescription to socio-economic liberation. Participating to liberate themselves was an indisputable way of not relying on other people to help them address the problem of xenophobia. While other people are practicing exploiting them, they noted that they would participate to counteract the exploitation. The link between participation and decision making was key to enhancing empowerment. Participating in the workshops was a starting point to reverse socio-economic inequalities driven by xenophobia. Thus, the participation perceived in the design of combining the strategies of Forum Theatre and Appreciative Inquiry presented a strategic focus on the attainment of liberation as it related to the women.

Appreciative Inquiry enhanced Forum Theatre in helping to build stronger bridges that would help the women cross over from depleting their energies and sense of goodwill towards those at the centre. After some time, the deficit-based view of Forum Theatre may suck the participants' and everyone's energy because it thrives on finger pointing and divisions rather than motivating everyone to meet at the centre to deliberate their differences. Appreciative Inquiry provides an emergent paradigm that is premised on the culture of co-construction. Sustained collaborations are opened through its principles of simultaneity to help ascertain opportunities and design how to get there.

Observing how this study has been arguing for the enhancement of Forum Theatre by Appreciative Inquiry, it would suffice in the next chapter to articulate how the role of the researcher/facilitator (Joker in Boalian terms) played out in combining the two methods to help the women address xenophobia. Making arguments for the purported outcomes of the combining process through the data collected is one thing, but explicating how this was done is another. Researching on methods that promote transforming lives while trying to leverage an activist stance may sometimes necessitate a navigation of the role of the researcher.

Chapter 6

The Joker's Traits: A Play Between Freedom and Dilemma

6.1 Introduction

In the previous chapters, this thesis has highlighted the inventiveness of this research both practically and theoretically. The chapters have included:

1. The concept of the raising research participants' bodies to levels of consciousness as embodied tools for investigating xenophobia among Zimbabwean migrant women. This concept of consciousness demonstrated how the participants could transition and transform to levels of greater understanding through Forum Theatre and Appreciative Inquiry.
2. The representational case and sense of the Forum Theatre rehearsal spaces as being symbolic in constructing and deconstructing xenophobia.
3. The struggles of the oppressed women as living on the margins and challenging marginality as the source of dehumanization. Through the exploration of merging Appreciative Inquiry and Forum Theatre, it was realised that xenophobia can stall the progress of foreign women to move towards the centre. However, the merging could counteract the possibility of stalling this progression especially in the extent to which Appreciative Inquiry would have motivated them to move towards the perceived centre.
4. The gathering and discussion of these thematic and theoretical strands highlighted the importance of the methodological approach of practice-based research as core to this study. The Practice as Research method underlined the significance of ethnography in the role of the facilitator-researcher who is driven towards reflexivity.

Gray (2003) is of the opinion that it is tempting for academics to hinge towards theoretical accounts of their research reports while the project naturally requires that the practice and theoretical claims be questioned and investigated interchangeably. Gray argues that usually when a practice led research approach leans on the ethnographic side, the researcher becomes more than a mere data collector and enters into a range of exploratory and personal dialogues with the research participants. Here, the role of the researcher cannot be ignored. It is noticeable that the previous chapters dealt with the researcher's roles as an observer of events, collector of generic data and was 'audience' to what the research participants were doing.

This chapter seeks to bring into focus a very important aspect of the researcher's role in this Practice as Research approach. This is a role that encapsulates the function of a Theatre of the Oppressed Joker. The chapter delineates the concept, role, function and person of the Joker as considerations of methodology and theory in this study. The role added relevant data and information to the research topic. This chapter explores and examines how the researcher used the role of the Joker as that of researcher-facilitator, with nuances of conceptual and representational roles.

Consecutively, this role was one of the prominent ways of collecting data and the role itself generated data that was collected whether by design or chance. Gray explains that such a methodological role is extremely useful in asking and answering the epistemological questions of ethnographic and practice led research as it enables the researcher to realise a flexible and reflexive approach in the study. The interesting part is that there is no such thing as the disinterested knower suggesting that the researcher must reflect on the epistemology of knowing what she knows and how she will come to know (Gray 2003).

As the Joker, I was directed by the rules and guidelines of facilitating FT and AI processes. The Joker does not operate autonomously outside the framing methods of AI and FT. In Forum Theatre, he/she has a duty to listen to everyone and try to understand the meanings and intentions of all the interventions. Therefore, he/she must transmit positive energy, excitement and an enthusiasm for tackling problems. The responsibility for structuring and deepening the intervention experience as it unfolds is carried by the Joker. Most importantly, the Joker has to be in the service of the oppressed to try and make them explore and understand the dynamics of oppression. The Joker is guided by the methods and techniques of the Theatre of the Oppressed. This means that in each stage, from knowing the body to theatre as discourse, the Joker follows a systematic and orchestrated procedure of facilitation.

Facilitating/Jokering in Appreciative Inquiry involved restructuring the problem-posing approach in FT to enable the participants to improve their outlook to life in a more positive way. Ludema and Mohr (2003) emphasise that facilitating in Appreciative Inquiry is based more on transformational relationship building than on human behaviour change. The emphasis is not imposing one's values and expectations on the group experience, but working with them to identify and analyse their own values. Core to Appreciative Inquiry facilitation is the 4D cycle which proposes the actualisation of change. The facilitator enables the exploration of participants' narratives of their past and present lives. He/she enhances their curiosity of existing relationships and helps them to uncover their potentials and dreams. In the creative domain, the facilitator should encourage participants to be as creative as possible as they imagine and enact possibilities of a positive future. In a nutshell, the facilitator provokes specific actions that will help the participants establish better relationships while openly sharing knowledge, resources and learning (Bhebhe, 2013).

As much as this chapter would love to acknowledge this flexible and reflexive role, it is set to discuss, at length, the mechanisms, and challenges of the role of the Forum Theatre Joker. While it is understandable that my role as the Joker formed the basis of the data collection in this study, this research project informed me that there are strengths and risks attached to the role practically, theoretically and pedagogically. The pedagogical foundations of Forum Theatre and Appreciative Inquiry are that of the recurrent exchange of researcher-facilitator and participants as guided by Freire's (1972) teacher-learner problem-posing dialogue. This subsequently affected what and how the knowledge (epistemologically) was gathered. It was essentially through embodied work (theatricalisation) and a particularly oppressed-centred discourse and staging that the Joker in Forum Theatre enacted this pedagogical role. The pedagogical role became a process of inquiry into existing living conditions, circumstances and situations of the Zimbabwean women. I must stress that it was the engagement of the research participants that helped to forge this pedagogical endeavour necessary for the data analysed in this chapter. The workshops were experienced as platforms for enabling the women to address xenophobia as they were helpful in giving information on how to merge AI and FT. They also helped the Joker to discover different narratives and ways on how to facilitate a Forum Theatre and Appreciative Inquiry processes.

Every time I joked a session, I realized that I could not separate the Joker from the researcher. This role and function enabled me to gather more data about xenophobia than I would have, if I had used interview questions in general or just observed the participants. Video recording and journaling my role as the Joker aided this approach. I realized that I asked pertinent questions when I was a Joker. Interesting enough, the research participants responded more effectively when they saw me in that role. At the same time, the Joker role had more challenges and risks where audience members were involved.

6.1.2 Who and what is the Joker?

In the previous chapters, I explained briefly what the Joker concept entails. In this chapter I delve deeper into what the concept, role, function and person of the Joker is about. The explanations (about the Joker) given here will be guided by what I gathered in the field and through literature review. The literature review is also guided by the theoretical findings of Boal's poetics of the Theatre of the Oppressed and what other Theatre of the Oppressed authors and practitioners have gathered in their work about the Joker.

In some of his early work and writings about the Theatre of the Oppressed, Boal proposed what was known as the *Coringa* (in Portuguese) or the Joker System. Boal developed the Joker system in the 1960s during Brazil's highest political turmoil. It was part of his approach to challenge many systemic discrepancies rampant in Brazil between those in political and social power and the disenfranchised in that regard. Schutzman (2018) outlines Boal's proposition as that of a disruption of existing theatrical conventions to meet his new aesthetic ends of the Theatre of the Oppressed which he deemed political. It should be noted that Boal did not want to disrupt party politics per se but saw this new aesthetic culmination as some form of political action. This was political action that functioned to correct the social order and transform the people's lives to that of democratic radicalization - a praxis of transformation to empower the oppressed. Boal's political stance was helpful in the sense that it was easier for other countries with similar problems to adopt this method. It became a universal method for addressing issues of oppression.

In the birth of the Joker system, Schutzman (2018) explains that Boal, in his chapter of the 'Need for the Joker' in *The Theatre of the Oppressed* (1979), needed to create a theatrical chaos that was necessary. The theatrical chaos was about challenging traditional norms of theatre presentations that sought to create a status quo of elitism in the stories presented and in the way theatre was experienced. I find the term 'theatrical chaos' highly political here in the sense of it referring to issues of transformation. First, this was about disrupting the play's scenes so as to highlight moments of oppression faced by the oppressed character/protagonist. Second, it was to interview characters in critical moments of complexity in the relationship between protagonists and antagonists. Third, the joker was a satirical mechanism to question the dogmatic intentions of society as presented in the play. Fourth, to deepen pedagogical inquiry into dynamics and complexity of oppression. Fifth, Boal wanted the Joker system to provoke reactions from the audience for them to destroy narrative coherence that would otherwise be seen in conventional theatre. This is achieved through opening avenues of dialogue between the audience and the Joker and amongst the audience themselves. The sixth and most written about function of the need for this theatrical chaos was to destroy the fourth wall in theatre (Paul 2016, Brown 2013 & Brecht 1961). To maintain this theatrical chaos, the audience is invited onto the stage to take up, mostly, the roles of the protagonists. The audience is asked, by the Joker, to act as adjudicators and round table panelists to determine their reality and actively critique and transform their realities. According to Schutzman and Boal, this Joker's act essentially aggregates this chaos as a necessity for the initial introduction of the Joker role. From these features, the Joker can be described as a 'provocateur of chaos'. That is, the one who intentionally provokes and pushes the audience to engage with and challenge their reality through necessary chaotic means.

What Boal and Schutzman have given us is the reality and basis of their thinking around using the role of the Joker for facilitating transformation in theatre. In the disposition of my research, one wonders whether the listed features and contentions would suffice in the description of the 2020 Forum Theatre Joker. Facilitating the xenophobia workshops for a month moved me to critique and honour Augusto Boal's undertakings of the description and necessity of the

Joker. With the strengthening of pedagogical conceptions of the Theatre of the Oppressed in the 21st century, it can be argued that there have been shifts in the description of the Joker. For me, the two words that seem to necessitate the emergent description of the Joker is interventionist and inquirer. These words seem to purportedly serve as the findings of this research. This, however, does not mean that these words are not inclined towards Boal's initial descriptions; they do and yet stretch that to emergent discoveries in the systematic (according to plan and argument) function of the Joker.

The word intervention, for me, demonstrates a kind of incessant involvement and mediation in just a single workshop by the facilitator of Forum Theatre. The word inquirer exhibits a dual premeditated interrogation of existential activities of humanity - dual in the sense that the participants' roles are interwoven into the role of the facilitator. I realized that when I was joking, the participants saw me more as an inquirer (and an interested part in their lives) than a mere follower and disruptor of theatrical conventions. However, I was also resolved to make them co-researchers and facilitators. This was the Joker's show of solidarity with the oppressed. This could have also been affected by my somewhat auto ethnographic and ethnographic stance towards the research. Hence, this aided to my description of the Joker. Maybe, it can be argued that this was a further stretch of disrupting theatrical convention that Boal initially sought to do. This is not to suggest that Boal was not in solidarity with his participants, at the time he was also trying to find a convenient method of 'coringaring' (joking) a Forum Theatre session.

Applied Theatre scholars such as Tim Prenkti (2015), Hughes & Nicholson (2016), Baxter & Low (2017), Prendergast & Saxton (2009) are of the view that intervention is the conception of facilitators and participants taking part in a theatre of humanity. This positioning of intervention posits co-creating, collaborating and negotiating the journey of transformation and understanding what living means. The resonance with my depiction of the Joker would not just be incidental here; it reverberates with what this research taught me would be the emergent description of the Joker. The Forum Theatre Joker is a custodian of an interventionist strategy of social change among communities. Additionally, there is a suggestion from the scholars that the interventionist concept cannot be a stand-alone without the mention of inquiry or the role of the inquirer thereof. They aver that in the process of involving the audience interactively with the performance invokes an interventionist and pedagogical role which is critical for questioning and deconstructing the social lives of the participants. This positions my assumed description of the Joker as one with an attitude to embrace a 'Girouxian critical pedagogy' (from Henry Giroux 2007) of border-crossing. The critical pedagogy is affirmative in the helping of participants to cross and re-build borders of discrimination (such as xenophobia) and intolerance, respectively. This attitude manifests a strong-willed function by the researcher to be a critical interventionist.

So far, I have tried to articulate what the Joker is, it would be appropriate that I bring in the person and persona of the Joker because of the performative function of the role. This bearing necessitates special consideration and care as it forms the thrust of my describing the Joker. The two words (interventionist and inquirer) also play a pertinent role in describing who the Joker is. These words garnered their potency through how I approached my workshops. When I first explained my role as researcher on xenophobia and the merging of Forum Theatre and Appreciative Inquiry, I already had a predisposition that this was going to be difficult and sway my research intentions towards an activist role. In most cases, Forum Theatre and Appreciative Inquiry Jokers/facilitators have an ultimate objective to see that the spect-actors/participants leave the session as empowered communities and ready-to-change-the-world advocates.

Even in my other Forum Theatre interventions which have not been necessarily research on Forum Theatre, I have made sure that I encouraged a revolutionary stance for the participants. In this project, I had to take precaution to allow for the revolutionary stance and yet be cognizant of the researcher-facilitator role. As such, I found that the interventionist and inquirer functions were tenaciously perceptible. The revolutionist, in me, did not hold itself back otherwise I would not have been true to the initial Joker pedagogy. Hence, the research made me realise that the Joker is not only a function, but connects itself to the persona of humanity. In this, there is a strand weaving the Joker function into the existence of this person to what it means to be human and facilitate humanity in an unjust world.

The Joker pedagogy that focuses its consideration of theatre as a vocation for human beings (Boal 1995) cannot be altered. It involves the deliberation that the Joker is a 'carer' of people before ideas. Research would require that one concerns him/herself with new ideas; the Joker role (even in research) would remind one that people come before the data that is collected. This research showed me that the terms 'intervention and inquirer', therefore, have overtones of humanity. One of my reflective journal extracts reads:

I wonder what the participants think of me from when I introduced myself as a researcher to how I have become a Joker in these sessions. Sometimes I feel like throwing caution to the wind and allowing these sessions to become activist revolutions against xenophobia for the women. The subject of xenophobia and women is close to my heart. But yet again, being a Joker has lightened my burden of asking difficult and critical questions about this issue because I am playing the role of the Joker more than a researcher. How do I dialogue with the participants such that they realise that I'm pleading humanity even as a researcher. The way I open this dialogue with them is important. But this is hard because if I were an ordinary researcher, I would have sat down with the participants and asked them typical interview questions but that would have put a lump in my throat. (Journal entry, 2016)

Thus, the role of the Joker influenced the Joker pedagogy that extends to the whole theoretical framework and pedagogy of the Theatre of the Oppressed. This is a pedagogy about the 're-humanisation' of humanity. The Joker, therefore, cannot extricate him/herself from that pedagogy even in the interventionist and inquiry approach. This was a reminder that the Joker was a fellow human being and need not fall into the trap of ethnographic patterns of behaviour that impede existent communication and empathy with the research participants. This provided me with the definition of the person of the Joker as the one who sensitively enquires into the lives of the participants with the intent to collaborate with them in perceptively understanding their way of life. In his offerings in the pedagogy of Love and Democracy, Freire (1998) explains that, at its best, pedagogy is about a political (also Boalian terms) and also moral practice that enables participants to explore a world full of humanly possibilities. This is a world where participants explore what it means to be engaged in the collaborative participation. This is what substantive democracy presupposes in the promise of a more humanly socially just and equal future. As much as I was the researcher, the Joker role was a predisposition of this humanity disposition. Intrinsically, a Joker who appreciates and makes his/her participants realise democracy is inundated with humanity. One of the objectives of this research project was to capacitate the participants to dream of a democratic Johannesburg that allowed them to fit in and accept diversity. Even Jackson in his preface to *Games for Actors and Non-Actors* (1992) described this kind of humanity as "indescribably immense and warm".

Describing the person of the Joker as an inquirer may, somewhat, challenge the human endowment. This brings back the Joker to the scholarly locus of research. This is not to say the aforementioned locus is not scholarly, it drags the description to that of an academic standpoint. The attitudinal bearing of my role as the inquirer shifted to that of deep analysis and evaluation. The inquirer position was predicated on the concern that I wear a different mantle on my role as the facilitator. This mantle required that I deepen the political enquiry of Appreciative Inquiry and Forum Theatre as enablers of understanding the complexities of xenophobia. My personality and character also appealed for a more heightened investigation into the aesthetic philosophy of merging Appreciative Inquiry and Forum Theatre.

For me, the Joker here becomes a person who questions the demanding intellectual endeavours of the complexity of the aesthetic language of Forum Theatre (and presumably Appreciative Inquiry) vis-à-vis the humanly disposition of intervention. The inquirer somehow predisposes him/herself as an intellectual and academic to the research participants and this tangles the interventionist role. I noticed that when I became too critically inquisitive about the women's xenophobic conditions, they also wanted to show (back) how they categorically knew and understood the principles of xenophobia.

Compellingly, I arrived at defining and describing the person of the Joker as, foremost, a person who understands, embraces and appreciates what humanity entails. While the Joker is aware of all this, he/she is a kind of person who should figure out that Forum Theatre, as an intervention platform, is open to strands of critical inquiry especially if it takes on the thread of the research enquiry. In any case, Forum Theatre is a form of enquiry in itself. As such, the Joker is tasked with opening dialogues that make use of the humanity discourse that is as dialectic as possible. The dialectic discourse gives access to the Joker not to fear being critical and sounding academic in some of the questions that he/she asks. It is through this critical conscious level that the Joker attains and ascertains his/her person as an interventionist and inquirer in Forum Theatre. This description ties in well with how in the 2nd chapter I argued for the significance of critical consciousness as mechanism of the praxis of transformation in Forum Theatre for both the participants and researcher-facilitator.

The description was aided by the reflective practice inherent in Practice as Research. It enabled me to realize that the person of the Joker also acts as a function that explores the human process of experiential meaning making as a process of critical consciousness. This is about how, as a researcher-facilitator, I had to connect to the participants through reflexivity. Reflexivity enabled me to value my experiences, situation and interests as they influenced and were agreeable to my Joker (person) role in this research.

In light of the above, the person of the Joker provides the researcher with an exceptional relationship with the participants and the way he/she analyses data. Practice-based research, in the arts, has far reaching implications that seem to offer new insights into data collection and analysis to deconstruct researcher role complexities. They argue that this gives the researcher a critical stance that also situates the participants and the data collected in their own and deserved contexts.

6.2 How the Joker technique was employed in the generation of data

For the purposes of analysing the dilemma of the Joker, I will give a description of some workshops that generated the data for this chapter and study. This description comes from my observations of a typical facilitation experiences from Knowing the Body to Theatre as Discourse and Discover to Destiny phases of FT and AI.

In the Knowing the Body and Discover phases

I introduced myself as the researcher, but this was a subtle and creative introduction that actually suggested that I was more than a researcher. I did a short skit of wearing different hats with different colours. The red colour represented the academic researcher, the blue colour represented the researcher-participant, and the blue and white represented both the FT and AI facilitation roles. The helped to explain my different roles.

The participants were instructed to do exercises and play games that warmed them up and introduced the topic of xenophobia. I selected these games based on what Boal would identify and describe as games that help participants explore and understand the existing oppression. This part entailed the giving of instructions. The instructions were from the position of the participants' understanding of their reality. A knowledge that their past and present were riddled with social injustice, pain, suffering and inferiority. I had to give instructions that were followed by a disclaimer that they will have to use their bodies instead of their mouths to describe how they felt as immigrant women and what they understood about oppression and xenophobia. Another disclaimer was that if they felt that the experience was becoming traumatic, they could stand aside and not engage. I expressly asked them to listen to their bodies and pick up nuances in the stories of oppression. I did the same when I introduced the concept of AI. I also explained that positive and negative stories were found in their bodies. I informed them that I would mostly observe their actions and behaviours and jot down how and what their bodies exposed oppression in these stories. I took an existentialist position in my instructions. It was clear and apparent that I valued their human experiences through giving disclaimers that showed sensitivity to their bodies. Sometimes the body can trigger trauma in knowing the body exercises.

Because FT and AI value reflection, the games selected were reflective in essence. The Columbian hypnosis and the sociometry games enabled them to be reflective. The sociometry exercise is explained in chapter 5. With the Columbian hypnosis, participant A leads B using one of the palms of their hands. The game shows how one person leads and the other follows. It is an interplay between leading and following. In the moment, each participant reflects on what it means to lead and to follow. They translate the game to the dynamics of the oppressor and oppressed roles. The Joker is aware that participants are not only defining the roles of oppressor and oppressed, but also gives them the opportunity to analyse, in the moment and in discussion, what their bodies are telling them about oppression. Strategically, the sociometry exercise put the participants in a reflective mode. The Joker wanted to find out how the participants would behave when standing in the particular circles. In such instances, the Joker is aware that there are sparks of reflection that need not be expressed verbally, but the body can only give off those sparks. As the giver of instructions, I also gave the rules of the games. The giving of rules puts the Joker in a strategic position to get participants to play in a certain way so that the data is directed in the questions that he/she may be having in his/her mind.

In the Making the body Expressive and Dream phases

In the Image Theatre exercises, I explored the transitional image more than the others. The participants had to focus on how they moved from the state of oppression to their freedom. I had initially asked them to focus their attention on particular parts of the body that spoke to the oppression that they were experiencing. They had to dynamise, through adding movement and sound, their actions. This was so that they could pay attention to how they transitioned towards the ideal. For me, the dynamization and the emphasis was to gather data on the process of transformation. The question was whether I was managing to get them realise the transformation as a facilitator of change. It is the facilitator's mandate to keep checking if the objectives and goals of the intervention are met. The idea was to allow them to express ideas and actions through their bodies. In the transitional image, the idea of the process of liberation was intended and expressed. I asked them to freeze at a moment where they felt they had arrived at their liberation, and they created the ideal image. I asked them to imagine that they had arrived at the ideal image because of the stories of success that they had shared in the Discover phase. As the Joker, this was a ploy to bring in the AI focus into the image making exercise. I realised that it was easier because the Dream phase intersects fluidly with how participants dream about a future without oppression in the transitional and ideal images. In this phase, I also kept questioning as guided by my positionality as researcher, practitioner and facilitator/Joker. For example, when I asked to them to dynamise their images, it was out of the practitioner positionality. With the ideal image, the researcher role was comprehensible because the questions that I asked were from an investigator's position. I realised that I used the practitioner position more because I was invested more in and curious about the transitioning of the women from a position of despair to hope. The participants also fluidly created the images because they could see the activist and practitioner in me. However, I also realised that sometimes the participants developed a familiar relation with me. They either created images that they thought I would want to see or they would negotiate making of the images. This compromised my researcher position. Doing these image exercises, helps the Joker prepare for the intense use of the FT language in the coming FT performance. The Joker gets prepared for the dilemmas that lie ahead when facilitating the tensions between spect-actors and actors. I had a premonition that it was not going to be easy to Joker the FT sessions with both locals and foreigners present so these preparation exercises were important.

In the Theatre as Language and Design Phases

This was a moment of recognition for me as a Joker. In both performances at Emakhaya and Hillbrow, I introduced the event as research oriented and myself as the researcher and Joker of the event. I gave the rules of engagement and highlighted that this was a research intervention. My introduction as the researcher may have influenced the way the audience reacted to and in the performances. They responded as information and knowledge givers of xenophobia. I realised this in the way they debated about the issue. Some of them were conceptualising xenophobia. There were others who were invested in trying to solve the problem as is demanded by FT. I had to be strategic about how I encouraged them to come and act out the solutions and how I structured my questions. To encourage them to participate, I explained that Johannesburg would remain in a stalemate with relationships because of the reality of the presence of foreigners. Stakeholders had to come together to solve this problem. The word stakeholders did the magic for the Joker. The questions that I used to win the day were: Does this happen in this community and what would you do differently? The former question made them realise that xenophobia was indeed a challenge that needed to be addressed. The latter made them realise that something had to be done to change this scenario. My strength was in

asking critical questions that probes into the women's understanding of xenophobia. These critical question elicited critical responses and actions. These are the data strands that I collected in their addressing xenophobia.

At Emakhaya, the AI facilitator hat was challenged because xenophobia stubbornly stood its position. Only the problem-posing approach of FT could help me try and get the participants to solve the problem. At Hillbrow theatre it was easy to joker with both AI and FT hats because the audience experienced the problem and there was a willingness to participate. They were willing to use the positive language of AI. Nevertheless, they did it out of curiosity. At Emakhaya the AI hat could not be used. The audience flatly refused to find any positiveness in the puzzle of xenophobia and that was after they had identified the play as an exaggerated portrayal of locals as monsters. I had to ask questions that were more theoretical than experiential to try and explain some of the misconceptions of the portrayal. The audience also presented themselves as abstract respondents. Notwithstanding, that was helpful because it helped me with conceptualisation of xenophobia. This compromised the intervention. I was not true to the protocols of jokering. Jokering should be used to facilitate amicable transitions and serve participants to solve a problem realistically as human beings not as pretentious academics.

The Theatre as Discourse and Destiny phases offered me, as the Joker, the opportunity to reflect on the intervention processes and analyse the efficacy of merging the two methods. I did this together with the participants. I also journalled my thoughts about the whole process including my jokering. We used other techniques of TO such as Newspaper theatre as Rainbow of Desire to help analyse my Joker role. What came out is that jokering is a transposable and fluid technique that can be used to gather data while at the same time help the practitioner extend their service in the TO intervention. I discovered that it is also the Joker who is responsible for forging theatre as a language in TO.

6.3 The Function of the Joker

The function of the Joker warrants unprecedented attention in this chapter. The Joker played an important role in the merging of Forum Theatre and Appreciative Inquiry and the exploration of xenophobia. The term function draws upon itself the impression of purpose more than the description of what and who the Joker is would do. Undoubtedly, when discussing the person and conception of the Joker, the idea of purpose comes into the consideration. However, this study mandates that the function be dealt with extensively to comprehend the complexities of the Joker role in this research. The principal function perceived in this research was: Shaping the creative philosophy of the researcher-facilitator and as enabler of the xenophobia discussion. It should be noted that the argument of these conceived functions also draw from and are guided by Boal's initial and generic rationales of the Joker.

6.3.1 The Joker as a Research Instrument

The discussion on the role of the Joker as the researcher-facilitator has been touched on briefly. This section seeks to demonstrate the functional role of the Joker as predicated upon the artistic and creative forms of the Forum Theatre Joker in practice-based research. Arguably, this function has offered emergent philosophical insights into how the Joker unfolds methodological strands apparent in Practice as Research that may not have been conceivable in traditional research. This philosophy is also guided by the values and beliefs located in Boal's methodological philosophy and praxis of the Theatre of the Oppressed which positions the development of critical consciousness into revolutionary and liberatory action. This line of argument is based on the imminent function and method of the Joker

and jokering (the action performed by the Joker) as based on theory and practice. The discussion here and the research findings will also culminate into the expansion of the term researcher-facilitator.

It can be argued that the function of the Joker in this line of argument is premeditated by techniques that the Joker uses. Although it may be argued that jokering does not portray a methodological function, in a research domain it does. Jokers have several techniques that they use as tools to perform this role. These techniques are: The art of questioning including critical questioning; relaying of information from the stage to the audience and vice versa; taking a directorial position in the Forum Theatre event; relaying doubts and uncertainties in the forum discussions; strategizing how to challenge obscure and magical intervention; creating symbolic workshops for critical consciousness for the participants; creating a dialogic and level ground for conversation; assuming a midwife stance to give birth to transformation; opening up spaces for interpretation and analysis of domination and facilitating the deconstruction of the dynamics of oppression, oppressor and oppressed (Boal 2002). It is these techniques that extend the research function of the Joker. Strategically, jokering can be positioned to contest the researcher-facilitator conventions of traditional research. Since the Joker follows the structural procedure of Forum Theatre that is guided by rules, it means that he/she also has to take a methodological stance in facilitating in the research process. It is from this argument that the function of the Joker was conceived as contributing as a method of data collection in this research project.

Babbage (2004) supports this claim by emphasising that Forum Theatre contextualizes itself as a training method. In that training context, there has to be a trainer. Debatably, the trainer has to be the Joker. Babbages's argument is that the function of the Joker, therefore, would encapsulate training the actors to stand vigilante in their portrayal of the audience's reality; if not the Joker would not be able to solicit for comment and reflection from the spect-actors. Getting spect-actors to identify and deconstruct conflict structures also presents itself in the training context. This means that the Joker has to bring with him/her a package of strategies. This has, undeniably, a research methodological appeal to it. While we went through the interventions, I simultaneously trained the actors. I trained them on how to present the oppressor and oppressed characters in their acting. They were also trained on the dynamics of the two characters. I trained them on how to spect-act so that they knew how react to the spect-actors from Emakhaya and Hillbrow theatres. I also trained them on how to script the play. This was all done from the angle of the Joker function. I questioned and quizzed the spect-actors on their solutions. This was to train them for real life outside of the rehearsal space.

In my jokering of the workshop processes with the research participants and Forum Theatre performances with audience members, I observed that in both instances the helmet of data collecting depended upon a functional categorization of my role. When I joked in the workshop processes, (whether in facilitating games or in spect-acting), I was aware that the participants and the audience knew that I was gathering information. This affected the way I asked my questions. They were not typical Joker questions that sought to lead the participants to a certain way of thinking around the issue of the presented oppression. This required that I became strategic and inventive in my questioning through probing to solicit responses that would align themselves to my research questions. This is the moment when the function of the Joker is radicalized towards being intrinsically research oriented. Of note, is this example when I facilitated a session at the Hillbrow Outreach Foundation. This is what transpired:

Joker: So do you think the situation presented in the play is about how Zimbabwean women are discriminated against in Johannesburg? Please show how the play presents this discrimination.

Audience member X: For me this does not look like discrimination at all. It is the hatred of people in its purest form.

Audience member Y: Vele amazulu aworse ukusizonda. Yes you can call it discrimination but thina sithi yinzondo . (Actually, the Zulus emphatically hate us...we say its hatred)

Joker: So hatred constitutes prejudice and intolerance. Ukwahlukanisa abanye abantu ngokungafuni ukuvuma ukuthi ngabantu. (It's actually hatred). How would you describe hatred?

Audience member X: Angithi yinzondo leyo njengokutsho kwami. (It is actually hatred as I have said before)

Joker: So would you say inzondo leyo (the supposed hatred) is an attribute of xenophobia against women? Please show in what way.

Audience member Y: Inzondo ihamba phambili kwakho konke. (Hatred is the leading factor). Izondo is about seeing another person as less human than you.

It is clear that in this instance I had put on the helmet of the researcher-facilitator. Though the audience members wanted to explore the issue of hatred as one of the factors of xenophobia, I was pressed for my own data. My questioning was, inexcusably, leading and tilted towards getting the audience members to follow my personal deliberations on xenophobia. In such moments, the Joker experiences what could be called a research instinct syndrome. This syndrome may mar or build the intervention and investigation. Nonetheless, being innovative in this function can get the conversation back to its desired objective.

In the headstrong world of research, the notion of the function of the Joker can be disputed as entertaining and not efficacious for proper research. Hence, arguments for this function that relate to its reflexive role would suffice. This is dependent upon the relationship between the Joker and the audience. If the Joker clearly outlines his/her role as that of researcher, there emanates a collective imagination and capacity to engage collaboratively in the research. The Joker and audience members both experiment with the rationality of this joker function within a broader context of research. This might produce efficacy in this function of the Joker. Boal (2006) spells out this function of the Joker acts as an aid to transforming reality as it may not be enough just to interpret it. Through his/her research oriented and investigative questioning, the Joker's objective would be to arrive at the formulation and analysis of data that would have been developed coherently and contemplatively. In this respect, Boal explains that it is because the Joker meets the audience on the same level of dialogic power and reasoning.

Although it may be argued that the leading role of the Joker is to be a Master of Ceremonies, this research taught me that this is secondary. The primary aim of jokering is to get the participants to deconstruct, critique and analyse the

dynamics of oppression including the relationship between the oppressed and oppressor. This is where the thrust of the Joker function in research is. The Joker transforms the Forum Theatre space into a data gathering platform. Within this context, the function and purpose of jokering is to elicit and illuminate meanings in the issues that mark the lived experiences of the oppressed. In the Jana Sankriti Forum Theatre projects, Brahma et al (2019) affirm that facilitating/jokering Forum Theatre sessions adjusted messaging-based performance into data gathering where the actors were enabled to analyse the oppression. The Joker would use the data from how the participants would have analysed the issue and in turn would use it in his own data sets. They attest to how the perception of performance, as one-dimensional flow of information, transformed into data collection.

Premised on Babbage's (2004) training argument, the strategic intention of the Joker presents him/her with a fertile terrain to function as a wild card (in the deck of game cards) (Schutzman, 2018). According to Schutzman, this wild card notion gives the Joker a paradoxical vantage point. The vantage point is postulated on the Joker trying to function as a liberator of the oppressed and yet trying to research (together with the participants) the complexities of the presented oppression. The metaphor of the wild card posits an insider and outsider role of the Joker as he steps in and out to identify complexities and problematize ideas that emerge in the process. I tried to maintain the conversation by grounding it to human level as one who still understands the empathic facet of the research.

When Tino commented that she had, on some occasions, seen me joker Forum Theatre workshops, and had noticed a difference in the way I conducted myself currently in the research workshops that I had with them, it became palpable that as the Joker I had to have a unique function in all this. I realised that this definitely affected my role because it translated to that of researcher-facilitator more than a Joker. However, I had to maintain a critical projection of the role to see if it enabled them to explore xenophobia. I was predisposed with reclaiming and maintaining the legitimacy of research that would not certainly destroy and stifle the creative process of the workshops. Duffy and Vettraino (2010:199) explain that, "It is one thing to cut out a cloth to fit your circumstances. It is quite another to compromise your pedagogical process."

Because this project hinged on problematizing the concept of xenophobia, it was important that this Joker function would not lead to a superficial exploration. My experience was that I had to meet the specific creative conduits of the dialogic model of Practice as Research. The researcher's role went beyond generating theoretical perspectives, but entrenching instrumental data. This meant adhering to the Forum Theatre model while at the same time allowing the Joker to transgress the rigour of its rules. This shows that the Joker is able to control what gets talked about in Forum Theatre and that such discursive guidelines may be critical in shaping the exploration of xenophobia. This is through the systematic function of jokering that a high degree of inventiveness and innovativeness in the story of research is initiated.

6.3.2 The Joker's Investigative Traits on the Merging of Forum Theatre and Appreciative Inquiry

It is imperative in this section to explore how the research methodological function (explained above) of the Joker generated the facilitation of merging FT and AI and data collection. The objective of this study is to illustrate how AI has the potential to advance its asset based approach in enabling women to explore and deal with xenophobia. Although only predicated on the creative and artistic workings of Forum Theatre, jokering was the element through

which this was facilitated. The study is pivoted on experimenting on the practices and principles of Appreciative Inquiry as the means to improve the efficacy of Forum Theatre. The techniques of the Joker were the leading enablers of the merging process. This section explains the efficacy of the Joker in its function as a supposed research instrument. It will also show how AI conversely functioned on influencing joking and the Joker through its positive, potential and innovation orientation.

When I started my research work and facilitating the xenophobia project, I knew that I would be faced with pedagogical irregularities. The first irregularity was experimenting on combining a theatrical method and a highly non-theatrical one (corporate for that matter) in arts-based research. The other irregularity was the method of facilitation selected to facilitate the workshops. In AI, usually the facilitation takes a boardroom approach (although creative, to some extent, and dialogic) where there is no room for aesthetic engagement as would be seen in FT. Intrinsically, the joking method is instituted in its own domain, in the Theatre of the Oppressed, and with its established rules and guiding principles. It was these irregularities that gave me the persistent thrill to investigate how the arts world could be incorporated or have a mark in the greater corporate world and vice versa. This meant that the Joker cap was going to be the most affected and on top of this, I had to wear the researcher's and Appreciative Inquiry facilitator caps.

The appreciative Inquiry facilitator is also governed by rules and principles. To manage this role, the best way is to understand the design and execution of the Appreciative Inquiry workshops. The workshops demand that the facilitator, strictly, understands that the ultimate rule is to move participants from problem-centred orientations to an affirmative focus (Cooperrider & Whitney, 2005 and Cockell, *et al* 2020). I realized that joking has elements of moving the participants in that frame, but the Joker is more oriented towards the problem-based conflict resolution mode. However, with regards to data collection, the Joker was able to weave in the Appreciative Inquiry frame of facilitation. It is just that Appreciative Inquiry addresses problems in a slightly different way. While the Forum Theatre Joker focuses on problem thinking and analysing, the Appreciative Inquiry facilitator proposes the possibility thinking way that uses the participants' stories of strength more than their weaknesses. The Joker tends to listen to and use stories of suffering and conflict to initiate dialogue. It is at this juncture that Appreciative Inquiry would be effective in prompting feedback that has an increased ratio of data (that was positive) about the women dealing with xenophobia.

Telling stories frames the locus of research in Appreciative Inquiry. Storytelling becomes a tool through which data can be gathered about the issues of concern among the participants. The Inquiry begins with asking participants to tell stories of their past that affirm their lives. Storytelling provides a resourceful strategic advantage of getting to know the participants' lives: It helps to analyze what gives them the desire to continue living, what affirms their existence, what strands are in the story that demonstrate visions of possibility (Cooperrider & Whitney 2005, Whitney *et al* 2010, Cooperrider *et al* 2008). In addition, Whitney and Trosten-Bloom (2010) emphasize that these stories determine the factors that contribute to high-point experience. They unravel the root causes of success that are signifiers of motivation and vitality. In the same perspective, storytelling in Forum Theatre acts as a symbolic way the world achieves its collective meaning. Getting the participants to tell their stories of oppression, through performance and image making can demonstrate a kind of embodied knowledge that Conquergood (2013:33) describes as, "finely nuanced meaning that is embodied, tacit, intoned, gestured, improvised, co-experienced..."

As part of the processes leading up to the Forum Theatre events, I got the participants to create images that depicted their individual and collective understanding of xenophobia. These images had to take the form of stories. First, they created individual images of how in the past they individually experienced xenophobia as women. The men in the room had to portray stories of how their women relatives encountered these stories. They had been given a task to collect these stories on the previous day. We did two exercises where I asked the participants to tell their stories of xenophobia. Then they were asked to create images of the collective experience. What was gathered in the images was also to be used to create the Forum play. Innately, the images depicted the problem of xenophobia. Most pictures were that of violence, fear and hatred depicted through clenched fists, contorted faces and bodies in flight mode. I used the storytelling to deepen their understanding of xenophobia. I used the joking skill of reading body language to ascertain the data that emerged. It was easy to instruct the participants to create the problematic side of xenophobia. Moving on to ask the participants to create stories about the desirable aspect of being different in Johannesburg was a difficult task. This demonstrated that the Joker function had its limitations when it came to merging FT and AI.

Then again, as part of the data collection, it was an illustration that sometimes Appreciative Inquiry can and cannot achieve what it intends. The Joker managed to use the principles of storytelling in AI and FT to draw together information concerning the women's experience on xenophobia. Substantial and useful data was gathered here. Joking performed a pertinent role in its function as a research instrument. Joking the storytelling part in Forum Theatre and Appreciative Inquiry can prove to be a useful tool to collect and analyse data. However, when it came to ascertaining the potential of Appreciative Inquiry to enhance Forum Theatre and thereby answering the second research question, there were drawbacks and limitations. It was noted that the Joker could not instruct the participants to tell stories of xenophobia that signified vitality. Although the potency of Appreciative Inquiry is in these stories of hope, expecting the bodies of women oppressed and affected by xenophobia to tell stories of their success would be an insurmountable task. As such, as an instrument of research in combining FT and AI, joking was found to be deficient. I found it difficult to work through getting the participants to share the story of success and the design of Appreciative Inquiry did not make it easier for me.

Another possibility of joking being an instrument of research is its questioning characteristic. Questioning is a prominent facet of inquiry in research. It is through questioning that the researcher mostly gathers data and is able to draw links and connections for data sets. The Joker plays the role of interviewer in Forum Theatre. In this role the Joker seeks to prompt participants to be explicit, reveal their understanding of power dynamics and lead them to critical thinking and raised consciousness. Miramonti (2017:184) offers the basis of understanding questioning and using questions in Forum Theatre to, "clarify life experiences of the characters, their most urgent desires, their contradictions (counter desires) and their ideologies (the cognitive, and normative frameworks they use to interpret the world around them, their value systems etc)." This ties in with my argument that the Joker functions to facilitate the deconstruction and interpretation of the dynamics of oppression. What Miramonti gives here are the characteristic distinctions of interviews located in experiential research.

Forum Theatre questions are framed to be analytical; the Joker does not ask questions just for the sake of it but to unearth layers of thought processes. In these processes the Joker seeks to allow for problematization. The questions are encoded and laced with a problem-posing and investigative intrigue. One day Deco told me that he thought that when I was joking I was transfigured - that I became a private investigator of an "Oppressed United People's Firm."

This made me appreciate that there could be uniqueness in how I framed my questions especially being elevated to a supposedly high order investigation status. Deco stressed that my questioning provoked curiosity and ingenuity. This is an element that augments the substance and principle of research based on an insistence to excavate existential truths.

On the other hand, questioning in Appreciative Inquiry is largely guided by two principles: The Anticipatory and Simultaneity principles. The Anticipatory principle stipulates that people can create and change their situation through the questions they ask. The Simultaneity principle similarly stipulates that change can occur when people start questioning and inquiring about the change (Whitney and Trosten-Bloom 2010). These principles place emphasis on the types of questions that are asked. Similar to the Forum Theatre type of questioning, questions asked here show a catalytic effect of accentuating the social construction investigation. “Social constructionism posits that human communication is the central process that creates, maintains transforms reality.” (Whitney and Trosten-Bloom 2010:150). Cooperrider and Whitney (2005) stress that when facilitators ask questions about what gives life to people, they participate in the research of the construction of a reality of potential. These questions present themselves from the Discover to the Destiny phases because they are representational of the enquiry in the whole Appreciative Inquiry process.

I did not just ask the participants to create stories of xenophobia; I also probed into their choices for creating the images and what nuances were there in the stories. This means I had to use the questioning techniques of Forum Theatre and Appreciative Inquiry. The questions that I asked had a particular *modus operandi* attached to them. Tudorache helps to articulate the Forum Theatre art of questioning:

- They are open (most of them) which means a respondent cannot reply by YES or NO but with an open answer.
- The questions are neutral (they are not suggestive, nor do they include the opinion of the Joker.
- The questions are not judging or evaluating...
- Inclusive (they aim to include and motivate as many people from the public as possible. (2013:131)

What I would add to the list from my experience in this research is that, they provoke critical thought responses, focus on the present situation to articulate a liberated future and they are based on the belief that the audience has experiential knowledge (they respond from a knowledgeable position). This inventory of questioning techniques demonstrates clearly how the Joker can manipulate the art of questioning to achieve the task of data collection. These are some of the questions that I asked, but they are not single event questions; they have been extracted from various workshops:

- What does your body tell you about xenophobia?
- What do you learn about Zimbabwean women and perpetrators of xenophobia in these images?
- What happened in the play?
- Did you observe any challenges?
- What is the problem?
- What other opinions are there?
- What can the character do to overcome this?

- Why do you think the character is motivated to think this way?
- In this situation, how would you behave?
- Why would you behave so?

These questions led to the curiosity and imagination of the participants. They intentionally provoked them to gain insight into how they could deal with xenophobia. They also helped me gain an overview into the questions that this research sought to answer.

Appreciative Inquiry questions had a change of emphasis. The questions have a way of influencing the group towards an affirmative outlook to life. The questions are not just to influence affirmative responses, but are concerned with the research for change. These are some of the questions that I asked in the workshops:

- What makes you work at your best?
- How would working at your best, change the way you relate to other people even if they are dominant?
- What are your strengths and talents as a foreign woman?
- How do you feel when you are working at your best?
- Would you accept a leadership position in a company owned by mostly locals? If yes, what would make it easy for you? If no, what would be the limitations?
- How would it feel like to have both locals and foreigners sharing responsibilities equally at the workplace?
- How do you feel productive as a foreigner?
- What would you do to change the Home Affairs outlook for foreigners?

It was sometimes easy for me to frame the Appreciative Inquiry questions, but most of the participants showed that bringing in their best traits, in their responses, negates the struggle to wield the weapons of liberation. However, the questions worked well in my quest to use them to gather data about the thoughts and feelings of the women.

One of the most useful tools of driving the Transformation agenda in Forum Theatre and Appreciative Inquiry is questioning. In all the phases of Appreciative Inquiry and Forum Theatre, the Joker thrived on questioning to drive the method of research. All things considered questioning proved to be a most effective tool in investigating transformation in combined Forum Theatre and Appreciative Inquiry as well as producing data that showed that participants could think of transforming their situations and in the understanding of xenophobia.

6.4 The Joker's Role in Facilitating Transformation

Built on Freire's transformation pedagogy, the goal of Forum Theatre is transformation and liberation. This section illustrates how the concept of joking and the role of the Joker contributed to achieving this goal. As the leading mouthpiece of Forum Theatre, the Joker has a specific role to ensure that the spect-actors do not come to the Forum event to be entertained and just interpret the play. The Joker takes an illustrative or symbolic role in the Forum event in ensuring that the spect-actors also analyse the play so that transformation is achieved. The section also offers a critical assessment of the role played by Appreciative Inquiry in enhancing the Joker skills and abilities in facilitating the transformation of the Zimbabwean women and their grappling with xenophobia.

It is important to give a background of what transformation entails so that it does not only become a prescriptive concept, but as an aid to the illustration of joking. Freire gives a compelling emphasis on the goal of education as being transformative. Although this study does not rely on the education concept, it uses Freire's notions on education

as an illustrative instrument that guided Boal's thinking on the Theatre of the Oppressed. Freire's emphasis is on revealing struggles and social injustice faced by students in the classroom. In the same light Boal, seeks to reveal these among oppressed social groups. As such, with the teacher as the centre of transferring knowledge in the classroom, the Joker is also the epicentre of the Theatre of the Oppressed. Freire (1972) stresses that unless the teachers use a problem-posing approach to education, their students cannot be transformed. This is a suggestion that the Joker too must employ tactics that allow the audience members to also problematize their oppression. Problematizing is a form of analysing and/or thinking about the problem and then taking action to deal with it.

This gives an indication that transformation is embedded in a pedagogy of action and reflection. This is not just generalized action and reflection, but is open to a wide spectrum of imagination and possibility. This is praxis. Praxis begins with ideas and ideologies about the nature and causes of a problem or situation and continues to it being tested practically (Freire 1976, Roberts 2015, and Giroux and McLaren 1988). Built on this, the Boalian praxis uses theatre and performance as pedestals through which the oppressed can reflect on their lives and literally & literary act upon their problems. Literally on the FT stage and literary in their lives outside of the theatre. Because, traditionally, theatre does not allow the audience members to practice this praxis, the Joker becomes the enabler of that. The Joker becomes the channel through which the audience can think and talk about the ideas raised in the performance. This on its own is an act of transformation. I would have allowed theatre to be transformed into a discussion platform rather than it being only a space for the enjoyment of performance and watching stories about suffering Zimbabwean women. I aided in the transformation of the theatre stage through engaging in discussion/dialogue with the participants and amongst each other.

I noticed that most of the activities were motivated by dialogue. The PaR method allowed for dialogue to be the guiding mechanism in the workshops. A PaR researcher can only achieve the aims of the research by being actively engaged with the research participants through dialogue. It was not only the Joker's function that enabled dialogue, but also the guiding principles of PaR. Dialogue has not been so much celebrated and as incorporated in traditional research. There are theorists, however, who have argued for its value in research. They see it as a promising tool for creating new understandings (paradigm shifts in knowledge). They point out that dialogue may be a mode of inquiry (Shor 1992, Green and Chandler 1990, Guba 1990). Through the process of dialogue, the women and I critically examined xenophobia and saw how it could be an antithesis to them changing their livelihoods in Johannesburg. As the Joker I also came to critically appreciate the transformational characteristics of dialogue. Although this aligns with joking as a tool of research, it cannot be separated from the view that transformation is a facet of research where paradigm shifts are concerned. It is not by chance that dialogue played an important role in the women's transformation as much as it did in tying up the research strands. The beauty of this research is/was its multi-perspective focus in its ability to tie its methodological focus with the theoretical and pedagogical practices.

Besides dialogue, I also realized that the transformation of the women was affected and effected by the Joker's ability to also facilitate a creation of a level of awareness among the women; the Joker being in solidarity with them; treating them as human beings; giving room for diverse thinking; using the art of critical questioning and allowing for active participation. What is outlined here has a clear connection to Freire's critical pedagogy.

Changing the conventional theatre stage and system is the first level of transformation in Forum Theatre. Introducing the Joker into the system is another high point level which propels the social transformation of the oppressed in theatre. Transforming the people is more important than just transforming the system. However, it should be acknowledged that the system should be changed first so that the people can comfortably start dreaming about changing their own lives. If the system is well contained, then the people can also shift their attitudes contentedly. Changing the system first is a means to an end. The Joker facilitated the means to that end.

Change is the essence for any organization or community and its people. When David Cooperrider developed Appreciative Inquiry, it was to bring a new paradigm shift in how organizations embraced change as a catalyst for innovation and progress not just for problem solving. Joking helped the participants not just solve the problem of xenophobia but transform their lives to active and functional citizenship. The discussion continues in the next section to elaborate on how the Joker can facilitate dialogue as it plays an imminent role in the process of transformation.

6.4.1 The Joker in Facilitating Dialogue as a Transformational Tool

In the process of inquiry into the positive core, an organization enhances its collective wisdom and resilience to change and extends its capacity to achieve extraordinary results [through] the creative renderings that emerge when a group of people discover and share stories of their most positive experience and practice. (Cooperrider and Whitney (2005: npg).

Cooperrider and Whitney demonstrate the value of dialogue as a tool to create, among people, a capacity to transform their lives from a passive to active and empowered state. This section illustrates how the Joker is responsible for facilitating the aesthetic and embodied dialogue among the research participants and between the spect-actors and the actors to provide a transformational undertaking.

There was never a workshop when the Joker did not allow the participants to discover or share stories, thoughts, actions and experiences. The sharing, as purported by, Cooperrider and Whitney is done through encouraging the participants to creatively use their bodies (including the mouth which is the most used organ in dialogue). The creative rendering of dialogue in this instance was to give the participants a voice. They came into the workshops as shy timid foreigners who were not sure of their existentiality and humanness. When we started exploring images of xenophobia through the bodies, one could tell that there was something deep that the men and women wanted to articulate. I realized that without transforming their body faculties first, they would not voice out what they wanted. The Making the Body Expressive and Image Theatre exercises were helpful initiators of giving voice to the participants. Sindie, Andile and Jakes were the shyest ones and I wondered if I would ever get them to express what they felt and thought. Welile was not that shy, but there was something that was holding her back. When we played the Columbian Hypnosis game (From Boal's Games for Actors and non -Actors), I saw that they wanted to express how they did not take in easily to being pushed to the limit. Though played non-verbally, the game initiates certain awareness to the body that it should voice out a particular oppression. As the protagonist in that game, the participant starts to dialogue with his/her personal desires. After the initial self-dialogue, the participant negotiates with his/her partner to try and level the oppression. I deliberately chose this game to initiate critical awareness of the participants that they have internal voices before anything else.

It is not that Sindie, Andile and Jakes were innately shy, discriminatory practices of xenophobia had taken away their voices as human beings. In an exercise where they were asked to identify and place where they could freely express

themselves, Andile expressed that it was the theatre because that is where she could talk as someone else and not herself. In this exercise they were asked to create personal maps where their life experiences were centred. When, she got to where she has located Hillbrow Theatre, her countenance changed and started being expressive. As the Joker, I deliberately used this exercise not only to explore their expressions about xenophobia, but to get them to start voicing out about the spaces that took away their voices. These were spaces that stifled their voices before anything else. This meant that it was the Joker's role to get them to move from that space of unintentional quietude to action.

With the Image Theatre exercises, I realised that the Joker makes the participants engage in dialogue without thinking or even talking. It is the bodies that just communicate what they are thinking. This would be lateral dialogue. The participants are taken into the world of imagination and they get lost into it because they enjoy the silent dialogues. In these silent dialogues, they were enabled to confront their own fears and demons about xenophobia. I enjoyed these exercises because they (the participants) would be in a make-believe world where they have vast space and opportunity to dig deep into the conflicts that they experience in the real world. They even experience imagined conversations and dialogues with the people who discriminate against them. What is to be appreciated here is that the Joker allows for a non-violent dialogue. Everything is left to their discretion, but the Joker comes in to check if this discretion is not abused. Some of the ideal images were showing the participants violently attacking the foreigners as the intended resolution to some of the depicted solutions. This is when the Joker interrogated the images through verbal questions.

The idea behind getting the participants to verbalise the images is so that the Joker opens collective dialogue rather than allowing the participants to stick to fixed answers. This dialogue generates fluidity in perspective. In one of the group images, the participants created an image depicting solidarity amongst each other, but Sindie had her hand and foot extended outward. Everyone agreed that the image showed pure solidarity among foreigners as the only way to collectively fight xenophobia. Nobody spoke about Sindie's action. Even Sindie did not make reference to it. It was until I watched the recordings of the image in the video that I realised Sindie's particularised action that I opened up further dialogue about the image in the following workshop. Sindie explained that while she understood that solidarity may be a way foreign women can collectively fight their cause, it would not be enough with the government's and other civic organisation's involvement. This sort of fluid interrogation of the image by the Joker can enrich and expand perspective in critical reasoning. Morelos (1999) and Rohd (1998) are of the opinion that the image of the initiator's reality bears its own significance but strikes different chords and symbols for different people. The Joker then becomes responsible for negotiating and preparing for expansive debate that will necessitate multiple perspectives.

Because in a dialogue people think and act together, it implies that people no longer take decisions individually. The togetherness is about building relationships and working collectively to change systems of oppression. Dialogue would be a tool to create empathy whether between a group that has different understandings (or are just different from each other) or among a group that is integrated. When living in a foreign country it is easy to see the differences, 'foreigner and local', home and away' and 'us and them.' At Emakhaya and Hillbrow Theatres, this notion was clarified. At Emakhaya, the audience members were mostly South African and obviously the actors were from Zimbabwe. I could feel the tension in the actors (research participants) and they were fearful of presenting the story of

xenophobia to these groups. As the Joker, I knew that I had to create a platform that would open up empathy especially from the audience towards the actors.

I opened an initial dialogue through conflict resolution games. Everyone was invited to comment on the game. The game was about role reversal where, in groups, they would create images of the oppressed and oppressor characters. The Joker asked them to switch roles and talk about how it felt to be in somebody else's shoes. They were asked to comment on the game so as to initiate and ensure the building of empathy. Empathy became a signifier and expression of sensitiveness among everyone. In light of this, the notion of dialogue was radicalised as a strategy in the development and continued maintenance of empathy throughout the Forum event. As they exchanged ideas depicted in the game, they came to realise that oppression was a two-way process and people needed a certain level of understanding that was empathetic. Despite the game and discussion, there were audience members who, after watching the play, dissuaded their empathy from the Zimbabwean women. This shows that sometimes dialogue cannot motivate empathy. Cummings challenges us to ensure whether the empathy that occurs in political theatre is dialogic:

We have to unlearn the method of empathizing by identifying similarities or making analogies and pursue, in its place, a method of empathizing by engaging the other, imagining his or her situation, and seeking verification of ones' interpretations through dialogue and feedback. To empathize in this way means that, rather than latching on to what strikes us as similar in the other, we remain as receptive as possible to differences. This relearning also requires us to see empathy's role in a political theatre not as making the other worthy of concern because she is like me ...but of critically expanding our understanding of how others experience the world. (2016:33)

Maybe the answer that is needed is from Appreciative Inquiry. Although I struggled to maintain the role of empathy in the Forum events, I knew that there was something more forceful that I should introduce. Through Appreciative Inquiry I would have pushed for a more progressive notion and action on empathy through a dialogue that was forward-thinking. Forward-thinking in the sense that the locals would have imagined that despite the difference between them and Zimbabweans they could be ways in which the future of Zimbabwe was reliant on them working to facilitate change of political system and governance - not just to fight Zimbabweans for taking away their jobs. This challenged the transformational growth of both parties as would have been expected.

Ramsbotham *et al* (2016:60) offer that when managing conflict resolution, contemporary conflict resolution approaches (such as Appreciative Inquiry) between and across cultural divides requires a "move away from dialogue as mutual sympathy." Ramsbotham and Tom articulate that facilitators should use dialogue to push for the agenda of relational empathy which posits a more intensified interpersonal exchange which is based on social constructionism. They explain that this kind of empathy is based on both the affective and cognitive exchange. I realised that I focused on the affective part and somehow ignored the cognitive and this was because, as the Joker, I had also absorbed the initial tension into myself. Ramsbotham and Tom argue that this kind of relational dialogic empathy allows participants to open themselves to new meanings and engage in debate and dialogue more genuinely. This also allows them to embrace irreconcilable differences through open-mindedness instead of seeking falsified closure. An example was when an audience member, allegedly, from Botswana at Emakhaya Theatre, challenged his South African counterparts and everyone to stop shutting out the thinking around what it means to be a foreigner. I opened up dialogue around that so that everyone would start imagining cognitively and affectively what it means to be a foreigner. This somehow helped in trying to close the discussion not on a false level. The audience members were

drawn towards critical thinking around the issue. As the Joker I learnt that relational empathy is not complete without critical thinking.

Cooperrider, in Stravos et al (2018), illuminates that in order to create positive engagement, the facilitator should realise that when participants meet to change their lives, they engage their hearts and minds. As such, they should not be guided to share stories of just hope and despair, but the stories should be those that will transform and re-shape them with explorations of vitalised possibility. Their conversations/dialogues should pedestal on co-creation, trust, inspiration and relational empathy among other things. He argues that such conversations are likely to bring out a celebrated legacy. I mentioned earlier that had I been more forceful with the dialogues maybe the local audience and the Zimbabwean women would have strategized a future with the legacy designed and co-constructed by the two different and differing parties in a theatre set up.

The idea of relational empathy takes us back to the idea of dialogue as giving voice to the participants. One of the most celebrated Joker techniques is the ability to generate dialogue in the thrust of the Forum event during spect-acting. Before we presented the Forum play to the audience at Emakhaya and Hillbrow theatre, we had our own rehearsals that included the whole Forum event. Since the play was divided into three scenes, the participants (research participants) spect-acted for each other in the individual scenes. This was the part where I witnessed collective wisdom and remarkably compelling voices from the participants.

Sindie played the protagonist in all the scenes. The antagonist in the first scene was played by Jakes and Nompilo in the second. Sindie and Biggie presented a performative dialogue in the third scene. The other participants such as Welile, Tino, Deco, Sophia and Andile played the spect-actors. The first scene was a depiction of a Home Affairs scenario and the second one was a demonstration of xenophobic discrimination at a workplace. This is to give a background on how and from where the spect-acting dialogues emanated.

The first part of the spect-acting dialogue was when the participants had to replace Sindie. The Joker opened this up (as is the rule in Forum Theatre) by inviting the rest of the participants to take Sindie's role. This was done to gauge their understanding of the dynamics of the oppressed and oppressor relationships. Jakes was not very strong in maintaining his oppressor role especially where Tino's arguments were forceful. Here is an example:

Tino: So Jakes you mean to tell me that as a Home Affairs official you do not understand that it is important Zimbabwean women also get the right papers? Do you know that they are legally entitled to them?

Jakes: Of course they are, but you are a foreigner, I should serve South Africans first.

Tino: For me this is not about how who to serve, but your appalling attitude towards and lack of respect to foreigners.

Jakes: I am just doing my job.

One wonders whether Jakes' lack of strong-will in the dialogue was as a result of Tino's potent arguments or he did not so much understand the dynamic of a Home Affairs official as an oppressor. It could also have been that Tino was more strong-willed as someone who had been strongly harassed by xenophobia.

In the second scene, I allowed Tino and Welile to team up against Nompilo's character. They expressed that they did this so that they could ascertain the collective voice of Zimbabwean women. However, Nompilo seemed to have a firm grasp of how fellow South African women dialogued with Zimbabwean women:

Tino: Sisi Nompilo, koi we unozvitisa semunhu aribetter sa isusu. Unoziva kuti wapinda basa iri nemafavours eboss yakho not nematicredentials ako. (You did not get this job with the right credentials)

Welile: Tell her sister! And what do you mean that we came here to steal your jobs. Do we enter your Human resources offices and chase you away or steal your computers or hold you at ransom?

Nompilo: What I mean to say is that you forcibly use your articulacy in English to win over our white bosses.

Tino: Kani nhayi is that theft?

Nompilo: It is because you use cunning measures.

Welile: Uyamuzwa sisi uthi singotsotsi. (Do you hear, she is saying we are crooks) You! have you ever seen a tsotsi with the kind of education credentials that we have. And I think calling us prostitutes is taking into too far. Retract that statement.

Nompilo: I will not, because most of you also struggle to get decent jobs and then you use other illicit means.

Tino: You know what Welile, let us gather all Zimbabwean women and protest against Nompilo's baseless accusations and in front of her workplace to expose her and her likes.

The force of this dialogue was an exemplification of how, if given the right platform, dialogue can enable transformative action. This transformation is not just in words, but also in thought and action. When Tino and Welile finally decide to protest, they had realised that words are not enough. The dialogue also shows how the oppressed are not passive victims who simply accept the legal rights deprivation and imbalance of power. In the two examples, one can see that the oppressed have the desire to change their circumstances, but that is thwarted by the legal, cultural and historical imbalances of power in South Africa. As the joker, I did not take a judgemental position on the proposed alternatives, but I made sure that the dialogue stayed critical and non-judgemental. Spect-acting in Forum Theatre ensures that dialogues do not continue to be dominated by those who benefit from dominant power relations. Dialogue should serve the goal of augmenting and empowering women's voices so that they use them as their transformational tool.

The Joker does not end the dialogue in the Forum event only at spect-acting. The dialogue is generated to a reflective activity. This is not just at the end of the event; the Joker also brings it during or after each spect-acting moment. The dialogue does not become reflective, but also evaluative, but not judgemental. In Appreciative Inquiry, the reflection moment happens mostly in the Dream and Design phases. It means I had to bring in the Dream phase aspects into reflection moments. I noticed that in the Dream and Design phases the participants tend to engage in imaginative dialogue. The dialogue provokes the emergence of themes, desires and patterns of thoughts and these inherently emerge into reflection. I would ask the participants to reflect on the solutions they proposed when spect-acting and ask them to show how each alternative inspired them to change their lives if it did. Ludema *et al* (2003) postulate that, in these phases, the participants dialogue about new envisioned possibilities that inspire an invigorated future. In the

Design phase, in particular, they design, through dialogue, a possibility where everyone would aspire to be part of a community and future that they would want to invest their energies into.

Some of the alternatives that the participants came up with were: Protesting baseless accusations of prostitution and stealing jobs (the Nompilo case); working in solidarity to fight xenophobia; involving the South African government in solving the plight of the Zimbabwean women and trying to understand why the locals treat the foreigners the way they do. As part of the reflection process, I asked the participants to talk about how each alternative would contribute to promoting positive change in their lives. It was interesting to note that even in reflecting on these alternatives, critical debates were sparked. The reflections were not only personalised, but they opened up to more dialogue that was enriching such that some of the participants expressed that they wanted to invest their energies into working for the eradication of xenophobia even after the research process.

The Joker also concluded with the discussion of alternatives (dialogic reflection) so as to arrive at making explicit deductions as to why some strategies worked and others did not. It was also noted that some strategies contributed to the resolution of the conflicts while others increased the anxiety, fear and tensions of xenophobia.

6.5 The Joys and Pain of Joking Workshops as an Interested Party on the Topic of Xenophobia

It is noteworthy that joking provided one of the ways that I could collect data through distancing myself from the ‘burdensome’ role of researching. It also acted as a safe container for difficult discussion around the xenophobia topic. The combining of Forum Theatre and Appreciative Inquiry also relied on the Joker’s understanding of her role to bring in humanity into the research strand. By humanity, I mean that because of the sensitive nature of the topic of xenophobia, being too technical about the research would not have helped. The Joker’s role somehow managed to help alleviate anxieties among the participants and about the research process itself. Be that as it may, this role also brought the worst pains in me as an individual and as a researcher. This was because this research was also rationalized from a personal persuasion - As a Zimbabwean woman who suffered from xenophobia. Maintaining an objective stance was sometimes challenging. Sometimes I felt that both the research participants and audience members would think I was approaching everything from a prejudicial perspective. This means sometimes I could have imposed my own perspectives.

What helped me to succeed in the joking was the ability to use improvisation. In each activity, I would improvise a break in narrative continuity to decipher the participants’, actors’, spect-actors’ and characters’ actions. I would stop the activity/action so that the person (whether in character or as themselves) could explain their actions. This helped me ascertain the person’s thoughts and feelings or the direction the person was pushing the dialogue and action. I would improvise these breaks through questioning or through offering explanations. I also used exhortation where I would explicitly and implicitly encourage more action (more embodied work) rather than discussion. This also involved telling the participants not to forget that even if we were dealing with reality, we should remember that it was done in the domain of theatre.

Personal journaling was also an improvisational technique that I used to deal with my anxieties of joking. Instead of always dealing with dreadful amounts of ‘epistemological’ data for analysis, I would use my Joker experiences as

some form of easily accessible data. Janse van Vuuren (2007 and (2013 in Barnes) views improvisation as a process of self-discovery. A Joker can use this assertion to build on his/her strengths as a researcher, facilitator, inquirer and interventionist. In the same light, Blatner (2007) also asserts that improvisation in theatre makes people become aware of their capacity for self-expression and exploration - that it connects them to their inner beings and it promotes psychological and spiritual growth. Furthermore, "The improvisational character of Appreciative Inquiry creates an imperative for invention and continual learning." (Whitney and Troste-Bloom 2003:15).

The joking experience at Emakhaya was the most challenging because, like the research participants, I was faced with the tension of working with people who I thought to be in conflict with me. I had to be self-conscious about a lot of things: My engagement with the audience, questioning techniques, my response to their questions and contributions and the way I structured and handled the Forum event. This was about the way I mixed fiction and reality. I knew that as the Joker I had to work along the personal, investigative or even a political dimension, but avoid locating myself at either extreme. My impact and impression on the event were also to be guided by what some of the audience knew as the Joker rules and they were aware of my positionality in the event. This concerned, especially, my position to maintain neutrality. However, it can be argued that when Boal joked most of the events in Brazil, he was on the side of the oppressed and sometimes did not maintain neutrality. In his book *Legislative Theatre: Using Performance to make Politics* (1998), he establishes his position as an interested party. He even says:

Now we are back in Brazil: none of our social and political problems has been solved. It is up to us to try new ways of tackling them. I am a man of theatre: now that I am directly involved in politics, I use the means at my disposal! (1998:5)

The question arises as to whether this position also affected my ethical limits as the Joker and as the researcher-facilitator. This begged the caution concerning overriding my values and beliefs of research and my social responsibility as a change agent. Even though I had the Appreciative Inquiry 'toolkit' at my disposal joking was sometimes a challenging task.

Some of the milestones, presumably in the joy of joking, was the way I performed the Joker role. In moments where I became frustrated with the closeness of the xenophobia topic to me, I used the Joker role to distance myself. I did this through the way I held my body, used my tone of voice and wore a critical and provocative attitude. This helped especially when I facilitated where there were audience members. At Emakhaya, I would sit among the audience, move between the acting stage and the audience arena. I thought that was encouraging empathetic experience for the audience members. The critical and provocative attitude was managed by the questions I asked and how I asked them. Probing really helped because the participants (both audience and research participants) felt the seriousness of my Joker performance as a researcher. I would also, as a rule, keep reminding the audience not to forget that although we were exploring reality issues, we should remember that this was done in the spirit of theatre (fiction). Metaxis offered refuge from which I had to interrogate sensitive issues.

However, sometimes I was challenged because my closeness to the topic would, by chance, create some cathartic effect instead of the empathetic. This happened especially during the workshops with the research participants. In the internal spect-acting workshop, Welile and Tino participated as spect-actors. Welile focused on Scene three where Dumisani (character in the play) accompanies Tendai (character) to get help at an NGO for her raped daughter and to re-apply for her permit. Welile was drawn to this character because of her quiet disposition. Welile found it interesting

that Tendai does not speak at all. She asked to take Tendai's character. When she took over, she started with a croaky voice depicting Tendai's initial disposition. When she tried to put words into her character, she broke down. At first, we thought that it was part of the acting, but it was real. We stopped the spect-acting and asked her to take a break until she was fine. I, spontaneously, decided to take the character and asked one of the participants to be the Joker. When I got into the character, my eyes met with Welile's and I also could not continue. Instead of continuing with spect-acting, we had a discussion on what we thought Tendai would have said. Some of the suggestions are, that Tendai had been traumatised and the Home Affairs (HA) officer should understand her plight, that like any mother she wanted a future for her child and also ask the HA to, at least, give her advice on what she could do to re-apply for her permit. That was helpful and Welile asked to take the character again with the suggestions. She did a good job. At the spur of the moment, I hugged Welile. Boal (2013) explains that the Joker's role is to avoid any cathartic effect on the spect-actors. I should not have allowed that cathartic purging because it compromised my role as both the Joker and researcher. This was the moment that I could have used the positive strength of AI to give me strength. In this case, I could have asked the participants to reflect on this by going back to their stories of success and created images on Tendai focusing on her strength as a worker before the incident happened.

Tino did her spect-acting on scene two where Sophia (character who is a boss in an NGO) is being antagonised because she is a foreigner. Tino was violently aggressive in her spect-acting. I allowed that to happen. One of the rules of FT is not to allow spect-actors to use violence to solve a problem. I was on the side of Tino and I thought that HA deserved the lashing. This was an example of subtle catharsis. My feelings blurred the role of the Joker to act as mediator of the conflict on stage.

6.6 Conclusion

This chapter has articulated that the Joker's agenda is the goal of Forum Theatre. While I acknowledge that the restrictions of self-observation and reflection through my Joker role and joking function, it is important to note that Practice as Research gave exciting room to execute them. The researcher-facilitator's identity (as the Joker), experiences, position, and interests influenced the creative practice of this research. This also helped me to interpret, deduce and analyse the data from a defined data set of personal experiences as a researcher-facilitator.

Joking is key to developing an array of critical consciousness of xenophobia and transformation among the participants. I have also attempted to demonstrate and articulate how the Joker has contributed to the aspect of restrictive and innovative problem solving in Forum Theatre and Appreciative Inquiry respectively.

The Joker's creativity and communication aptitude have also been understood to create a platform for the research participants and audience members to come together and capacitate transformational community development. It was noted that through collaboration and critical questioning interaction and spontaneity, the Joker managed to make Forum Theatre and Appreciative Inquiry processes to be less cathartic and interactive. Having explored the levels of consciousness among the women, their participation as migrants in Johannesburg and the Joker bringing in everything to perspective. The next sums up the analyses and concludes this study.

Chapter 7

General Introduction

The previous chapters have argued how this enquiry was located in the emergent focus of practice-based methodology through the combining of Forum Theatre and Appreciative Inquiry. The combining of FT and AI has demonstrated the implication and significance of using practice-based approaches in transformational and interventional enquiry. When the problem-posing approach of FT was positioned against the AI asset-based approach, it was realised that the former cannot be a standalone. The first chapter introduced the initial thinking and planning of the whole research. It also gave background understanding of the concepts and terminology related to this study. The analysis chapters have argued and proposed for a shift in the 21st century practice-based research paradigm. The previous six chapters outline, articulate and discuss the process, thinking and conceptualisation of combining the two methods in addressing xenophobia.

7.1 Summary of Study

The thrust of this study has been its methodological focus whereby the practice-based lens led into insights of creating a continuum between theory/knowledge and practice. With the prominence given to the combining of Appreciative Inquiry and Forum Theatre, it should be emphasised that from the outset, this study required the blurring of theory and practice boundaries. This research valued its data collection as a real-life experience from the vantage point of reflection and action inherent in practice-based research domains. It was propelled towards an aesthetic texture where a variety of possibilities and ambiguities of themes of xenophobia could be explored. The research allowed for the flexibility of the analysis of themes to be an ongoing conversation rather than a rigidly structured and technical information generating platform. I enjoyed this flexibility because it allowed me to make theoretical assumptions that were deeply personal, experimental and experiential. Smith (2016) argues that such research represents the natural complexity of the world (its reality) as it is without trying to compartmentalise the knowledge into subsets of scientific information. He claims that it frames practice as a move to broaden and deepen theory to be an on-going conversation. Knowledge, therefore, does not become a quest for certainty but an open space for discussion.

This study lays a claim to the practical application of the field work as being experiential and artistic, hence, it gave credence to the research findings and the way they were analysed. This means that the research stepped out of the traditional zone (which stipulates strict data collection methods that do not focus on practice as being valid). It centred the body as a tool for exploration. The study argues that the body is interpretable, flexible and culturally specific to the interpretation of the nuances of belonging, identity and being. In such instances it becomes the nerve centre for knowledge. The body in its practical (live) disposition enabled the both the researcher and research participants to account for their lived experiences as codes of information. The second chapter articulates the body as an instrument and method of research. Raising the participants' bodies to levels of consciousness was an indication of how, in a practical set up, theory could be engendered in research through concrete dispensations.

The combining of Appreciative Inquiry and Forum Theatre was a proactive function on the decoding of xenophobia as a symbol of oppression. In the discourse of oppression, any form of discrimination embedded in prejudice is predicated upon malevolent connotations of conduct in any community. No community can thrive when othering becomes the norm even by the default of migration. It perpetuates an imbalance in the ecosystem of living. As such,

methods such as Forum Theatre seek to redress the imbalance. However, because of their deficit nature, such methods seem inadequate to transform communities to levels of stability. To counteract the inadequacy, in such approaches, and challenge the proliferation of the oppression discourse in communities such as Johannesburg, Appreciative Inquiry seemed to be a steer in the right direction. Appreciative Inquiry offered an asset-based analysis that threaded the loose ends of Forum Theatre as a method of change. This methodological function (of combining) was a thread in the interrogation of border crossing among the women from a state of naïve awareness about xenophobia to a critical consciousness of human behaviour amid the problem of discrimination.

As discussed in chapter 2 and 3, the framework of the methodology provided the backdrop of this research project. The combining of Forum Theatre and Appreciative Inquiry was based on the frame of juxta positioning the two methods graphically and conceptually. The combining panned out to design a new theatrical metaxis (in the Theatre of the Oppressed) and intervention concept (in the addressing of xenophobia). Table 6 shows a summary of how the two methods functioned in the addressing of xenophobia. Conclusively, the table shows the resultant generative form of inquiry in Appreciative Inquiry against the problem-solving approach of Forum Theatre and what the inquiry discovered as the results of this study:

Table 6: Data findings

Appreciative Inquiry	Forum Theatre
Generative and appreciative analysis.	Exploring causes of problems and problem analysis.
Structural and organisational style of enquiry.	Dramaturgical method of enquiry into the experiences of the Zimbabwean women.
Long term engagement.	Short term motivation.
Belief in the strength of one's ability.	Belief in the initial antagonism (weakness) to solve problems.
Great shift from the group weakness to group strength.	Shift from weakness to strength is slow.
Building trust.	Blame and finger pointing to achieve trust at a later stage.
Dialogue that is affirmative. Dialogue as a necessary tool for change.	Dialogue hinged on binaries. Dialogue as promoting critical consciousness.
The affirmative conversation as the propellant of success.	The revolutionary manifesto as the drive to victory.
Posits a paradigm shift that expands innovation.	Focusing on binaries limits innovation and growth.
The participants became self-actualised and autonomous.	Although autonomous, the participants' thinking was limited to revenge, hence, self-actualisation was tainted.

Awards self-actualisation.	Awards self-discovery and exploration through its various exercises of the oppressed.
The intervention starts with sharing of success stories to reveal the group's resourcefulness.	The intervention is built on stories of oppression that make participants aware that they have shortcomings.
Getting into what works in an unconditional and passionate way releases pressure on the participants.	Delving into what does not work puts pressure on the participants to quickly bypass strategic procedures that would have otherwise helped them critically analyse their situations
Capitalising on the potential as a strategy for innovativeness	Maximising on the desire for self-awareness and inventiveness.
Asking positive questions evokes positive emotions that increase and develop thought-action.	Asking critical questions broadens the praxis repertoire as an expansion for critical consciousness.
The 4 D cycle encourages the expansion of viewpoint and creativity.	The 4 underlying principles of Theatre of the Oppressed encourage critical creativity and big thought processes for change.
The group's success moves in the direction of constructive change.	The group's victory may flow in the direction of dynamic and yet disparaging change.
The positive principle evokes emotions such as inquisitiveness, purpose and hope which collectively promote to changing the participants' situation for the better.	The rehearsal for action principle evokes emotions of hope, generates solidarity and instils a sense of betterment and empowerment.
It is a little easy for facilitator/Joker to engage participants in the whole process because the focus is on positivism (an approach to positive thinking).	Requires great skill and aptitude from facilitators/Jokers to create a meaningful intervention and play.
The participants often make far reaching decisions in the destiny phase.	Seldom linked to decision making even among the participants/even at the end of the Forum Theatre event.
The participants may be too focused on their own successes and not value group cohesion and empathy.	Suspension of belief/distancing through theatre encourages empathy.
Promotes competent and positive organisational change. However, can only be limited to the world of intervention; reality may prove to be tougher.	The change that is promoted is critical and focuses on a collective and solidary political movement that can change a large part of the unjust systems of oppression. Also limited to the rehearsal of revolution.

Specifically focusses on building on top of what successfully exists to resolve brokenness in communities.	Emphasis on conflict and conflict resolution.
Utopian/idealistic and may not totally work in solving serious problematic issues of oppression such as xenophobia .	True to people's thoughts and feelings about oppression, but may maintain the status quo of oppression outside of theatrical settings.

The table highlights the data findings in the power of each method. Examples are (i) their ability to promote change - awakening a desire among the Zimbabwean women to change their (the women's) outlook regarding their xenophobia influenced lives; (ii) their capacity to create self-awareness and recognition among the participants; (iii) dialogue as a tool, central to both methods, for dynamic transformation and (iv) their limitations outside the spaces of intervention in the real world. There are also instances where Forum theatre strongly maintains its status as a lucrative method that can be a standalone in helping the women to address xenophobia. This is in the part where Forum Theatre is realistic in its approach in addressing real life issues of oppression. Approaching xenophobia from an asset standpoint can be infuriating and a drawback to the resourcefulness of its analysis. Focusing on what works is one thing but trying to fix problems of a great magnitude takes a lot of hard work as has been realised in the Forum Theatre processes. This is the reason why participants such as Tino, Deco and Sindie felt that they were short-changed in approaching the problem of xenophobia through identifying their success stories amid their pain.

Tudorache (2013) stresses that it is compulsory to share real stories in Forum Theatre. The argument is that some participants may invent stories from gossip or media. Because such stories may not be coming from the depth of the participants' experiences, they may trivialise the Forum event. This is not to suggest that stories shared in Appreciative Inquiry are false. They are real, but the intensity of sharing a story of pain is greater when compared to sharing the one of success. This is especially true if the life of the sharer is riddled with and embedded in too much suffering as in the case of xenophobia. There was little that the women could share about their success as they were reeling in the anger of prejudice and discrimination.

Because the participants were collaborators in this research, they found voice and became their own voices. Sindie, Jakes and Welile, who, when they joined the workshops, were shy, had this to say about finding their voices:

Welile: As a woman with a different orientation, it is not easy speak up because of fear. Forum Theatre has given me the platform to voice what I cannot say outside of this space. However, it's a start for me.

Jakes: I am a shy person, talking in front of people concerns me. Taking the role actor can encourage one to find voice. I need more practice through such theatre methods to affirm my voice. (Journal Entries 2016)

In the context of practice-based research, the way relationships between the researcher and participants are approached is very important. It is important in that it has a significant influence on the study and its outcomes (Ruch and Julkunen, 2016). Ruch and Julkunen propose that although researchers need to assert their role and expertise, they have to find ways of bringing the participants in as co-writers especially in practice-based research because such relationships are imbued with sensitivities. I am bringing this to the fore as a reason for my choice of this research

methods. Because of the closeness of the topic of xenophobia to me, I had to ensure that the participants and I became collaborators and co-researchers of the xenophobia story so that I would be helped with emotional distancing and production of content/knowledge. Practice-based research also emphasises the importance of co-creation of knowledge and the generation of change. The process involves experience and experience is imbued in participants and researchers working together. Ruch and Julkunen emphasise that since practice-based research calls attention to process, being mindful of the role of the participants will greatly affect the outcomes of the research.

The use of thematic analysis was pertinent to this study because of the ethnographic turn that the research eventually took. In their essence Forum Theatre and Appreciative Inquiry present a potential tool for analysis into the way of life and culture of the participants. Franz Rauch *et al* (2014) articulate that Forum Theatre has the potential, as a research method, to investigate political, social and cultural tensions to explore and address behaviour patterns of conflict. On the other hand, Appreciative Inquiry has a first-hand focus on the exploration of people's cultures and realities as they make meaning and sense of their lives. Both these methods work through their functional interactions with research participants. Per se, the use of thematic analysis in this ethnographic approach helped the researcher to account for codes in the behaviour and experience of and among the participants about xenophobia. This was done in consideration of the profiling of information in an interactive way as well as detailing the interactions among the participants and between them and me.

The interactions between the research participants and the researcher were not just verbally articulated. The participants' bodies played a critical transcendental role in the research around xenophobia. It was discovered that the body has a consciousness-raising appeal and potential when it came to issues of transformation and liberation. In the workshops, the women felt that the only way to transcend their oppressed situations was the effective use of their bodies as tools and mechanisms of change. This was so because in the initial workshops, they discovered that the xenophobic oppressions were embedded in their physical bodies more than anything. The body became one of the strong thematic codes discovered in the research.

This study highlights that as a consciousness-raising tool, the body can be used to drive self-reflection, promote social justice, challenge social and economic challenges and educate the participants about oppressor and oppressed relationships. The Making the Body Expressive and Image Theatre exercises catapulted an initial awakening of the power of the body. This was to the extent that in the later stages of scripting the play and rehearsing it, the participants were focused on their bodies as experiential and sensory knowledge containers relevant in telling the story of xenophobia. Before the participants' bodies could become expressive in Forum Theatre, they had to be enabled to identify specific alienating experiences and discourses of xenophobia so as to allow them to reach a heightened understanding in the later stages. In the scripting of the last scene, Biggie gave stage directions including body language that would augment the plight of the women.

Meyer-Dinkgrafe (2009) explains that the body, in theatre, is a critical tool that can help advance knowledge and understanding on the topic that is being explored. She explains that, in theatre, actors oftentimes report that during performance their conscious experience is altered. It would be noted that when they approach their acting parts or participant role (as in the case of Forum Theatre), their bodies are captured to react with improved awareness as affected by what they experience. They get into the domain of acting with heightened physicality, strong feelings and

intuition that ultimately makes them reach certain levels of consciousness. Meyer-Dinkgrafe's assertion offers a subversive (in the revolutionary sense) power of the body (in theatre) in its relation to the exploration of reality. What the women experienced in the reality of their lives would certainly be manifest in Forum Theatre. The difference is that outside of the theatre workshops, the women had not fully explored the nuanced acts of the body, but the Theatre of the Oppressed offered a platform for its examination. Forum Theatre is a manifestation of genuine experience, hence, the body also remained true to its function in helping the participants embody the awareness of their reality.

The argument has been that Appreciative Inquiry can counter the predilections of the negativity intrinsic in the xenophobia discourse and build on the initial level of consciousness raised in Forum Theatre. The participants bodies in Forum Theatre may somehow show an initial disposition of consciousness that is unhealthy and does not show vitality. Henry Giroux's (1997) assertion on participants first changing the language and discourse of oppression is aptly relevant here. He argues that the process should instil in the participants the desire to first change the situation that oppresses them rather than focus on the inherent evil of the oppressors. In agreement with Giroux's argument, Cooperrider and Whitney (2005), Whitney and Trosten-Bloom (2010) and Hammond (2013) posit that Appreciative Inquiry should propel the participants to make responsible and conscious acts of changing their situations first as this would help them move away from the self-inflicting pain of the inferiority complex. Xenophobia can seriously affect a person's complex because it creates in them a facet of autochthonous incompleteness as a human being. This is a feeling of being incomplete as a human being because one does not fit into and conform to native and indigenous standards of the local people. Arguably, the inferiority complex gets embedded into the body of the person suffering from it. The participants exhibited this behaviour in the initial stages of the research when they were still in the level of naïve consciousness.

Freire's theoretical guidance in this research influenced and effected a phenomenology drive to understand the context of doing this study and sense of my realities and those of the research participants. It was this phenomenological stance that made me understand that in the Theatre of the Oppressed, the human body can only celebrate liberation when it has reached a high level of consciousness so as to reach its human vocation. In his writings Freire (2007, 2005 & 2018, 2016 and 2017) argued that:

it is every person's ontological vocation to become more human; (b) both the oppressor and the oppressed are diminished in their humanity when their relationship is characterized by oppressive dynamics; (c) through the process of conscientization, the oppressors and oppressed can come to understand their own power; and (d) ultimately the oppressed will be able to authentically change their circumstances only if their intentions and actions are consistent with their goal. (Kim Diaz 2018, "Paulo Freire 1921-1997).

Kim Diaz (2018) gives an apt summary of Freire's writings of raising consciousness as the ultimate to any person's belonging and living. What is outlined here is what this study has woven in as the importance of the body as a tool for raising awareness about the xenophobic oppression. Augusto Boal's stages of Theatre of the Oppressed are captured in Freire's assertions from the "knowing the body to the theatre as discourse stages". Freire's phenomenological affirmations model Boal's theatrical ideologies about the participants' bodies' abilities to transition from states of inhumanity to critical consciousness and empowerment.

These affirmations have also been entwined into how Appreciative Inquiry uses and explores the body to function as a tool that gives life to human systems when people perform at their best. In the four stages of Appreciative Inquiry, goals are set from the beginning to the end to allow participants to strategically shift their actions away from problem analysis to “authentically change their circumstance” (see Kim Diaz quote) to identifying elevated possibilities. The most celebrated possibility was the participants’ ability and capacity to arrive at the understanding of their own power as women who can institute change for themselves and those around them with regards to xenophobia. The participants’ bodies would have moved from internalising their oppression to generating positive and constructive mechanisms of functioning as complete human beings.

The participants’ bodies made their mark in the rehearsal rooms where they became a conception for a rehearsal for life. This study attaches much value to the metaphor of rehearsal rooms as aesthetic spaces that were representational of meaning making and understanding xenophobia. These spaces represented foreigner narratives as contained in the play between fiction and reality. The spaces were also literally positioned in the Johannesburg location where the xenophobia narrative would receive its attention - Hillbrow being the hotbed of foreign habitation, survival and livelihood. And Emakhaya being a space of diverse nationalities, attention and significance. Rehearsing and performing at the Hillbrow and Emakhaya Theatres became a framework of the politics, aesthetics and performance of xenophobia. There was an interplay of the participants’ actions, feelings and thoughts in these spaces with their reality of xenophobia.

Rehearsing is one of the Forum Theatre’s goals of exploring various forms of action within the space of theatre to prepare participants for the life beyond the theatre experience. The Appreciative Inquiry workshop space also becomes a rehearsal platform for an improved life beyond it. Boal’s (2000:141) popular statement that “it is not the place of theatre [rehearsal] to show the correct path, but only to offer the means by which all possible paths may be examined. Maybe theatre in itself is not revolutionary, but these theatrical forms are without a doubt a rehearsal for a revolution” is to be observed here. Maybe it is also not the place of Appreciative Inquiry to elevate people’s lives to positive heights, but the 4D cycle workshop is a rehearsal space that is set to heighten the participants’ capacity to transform the actions into their real lives.

The experience of the Forum Theatre rehearsal spaces became a battleground for the continuum between performed conditions of fear, inferiority complexes, cultural egoisms and motivations for liberation. The participants had to connect meaning to these rehearsals and spaces in relation to xenophobia. We had a post-discussion with the participants after the experiences at Hillbrow and Emakhaya about how each space influenced their outlook to xenophobia. Sindie stressed that the two spaces offered different vicissitudes on their experiences. She expressed that the experience at Hillbrow was closer to home and it was easier for them to discover their narratives, develop their vigour to fight xenophobia and authenticate their critical capacity. This was based on the way the rehearsal rooms validated their experiences. The others argued that Hillbrow provided them with the capability to readily explore underlying root causes, relations and mechanisms of xenophobic discrimination. This was because the space offered localised modes of expression and perception. On the other hand, Emakhaya, by virtue of its intrinsic diversity and further-ness from the naturalistic habitation as provided by Hillbrow, limited the participants’ mode of expression. Biggie expressed that one of the spect-actors failed to show how the crippled boyfriend (the role that he played) could transform himself, he felt that it was done out of pity rather than empathy. I also noticed that some of the spect-actors

also struggled with addressing the plight of the Zimbabwean women. Most of them were inclined to the thinking that the play was an exaggeration of power hierarchies in Johannesburg.

The role of Appreciative Inquiry in intensifying creativity in the rehearsal rooms cannot be ignored. This encouraged critical thinking and resilience among the participants in the rehearsal rooms. It was achieved through the use of strength-based exercises that brought together the women and men with similar traits of the xenophobic plight. These exercises sought to encourage a conducive environment that allowed for the transmission of positive energy from one participant to the other. Some of the exercises included icebreakers that promoted creative learning; dream exercises that fostered a positive gaze into the future; opportunity storytelling exercises and excavating positive past stories to set positive emotions for the future. This environment built, among the participants, the aptitude to pay attention collectively and actively to each other's pain and strengths as people with a common goal of understanding the xenophobia narratives creatively.

Stratton-Berkessel (2010) offers her thoughts on using strength-based exercises in Appreciative Inquiry workshops (rehearsal rooms). She avers that participants shift their negative perspectives and start valuing collaborative mindsets which improve their performance and potentially transform it. Participation within this forum, she argues, becomes generative and participants share their stories in order to produce new knowledge. As such, the space of Appreciative Inquiry prepared the participants for a more intensified act of sustaining their desire to behave suitably and competently even outside of the theatre space. Although the AI rehearsal rooms offered the women a chance at overcoming the xenophobia plight, there was a void as to how they could collaborate with other relevant stakeholders to eradicate xenophobia attitudes in Johannesburg.

Because the women had discovered that xenophobia pushed them to the margins of society, they found value in participating effectively in the workshops to liberate themselves from socio-economic hardships in Johannesburg. Using Appreciative Inquiry and Forum Theatre to circumvent the fear and challenges of the margins, the participants sought to build stronger bridges that would help them to crossover to the tolerance threshold. Thus, working on their negative perspectives about the locals to a culmination of everyone tolerating each other.

Boal's other important goal of Forum Theatre was to liberate spectators from their socio-economic struggles from a Marxist material perspective. Karl Marx ideologies are centred on challenging a pervasive sense of othering due to material circumstances particularly by the economically elite towards the poor. Boal saw this as a form of oppression that needed the function of theatre to thwart it. The study has shown that the participants were not only smarting over being discriminated against ethnically or culturally, but xenophobia also caused their economic exclusion. One of the greatest causes, of xenophobia, identified by the participants was the scramble for material resources between locals and foreigners in Johannesburg. Deco expressed that Johannesburg draws people from all over the world because of its promise of wealth and economic freedom and success. He decried the fact that even Zimbabweans are also trapped into this promise and that is the reason they do not go to other regions but Johannesburg. Of all the evils of xenophobia, socio-economic exclusion was seen to be the greatest push towards marginality among the women.

This push was seen to not only affect the women's economic standing, it also affected them mentally and socially. Amka in Cohen-Cruz and Schutzman (2006) explains that sometimes economic repression transcends to other realms of oppression such as the cultural, mental, social psychic poverty. He believes that theatre should be a forum to

organise communities to participate in challenging or decolonising (in the sense of challenging neo-colonial discourses of economic inequality) discriminatory economic tendencies. He is of the opinion that if power, necessitates the ability to act then oppression suggests the opposite. This means that the oppressed people are structurally disadvantaged. They do not have the capacity to enact any form of citizenship except the one that subjectifies them to poverty. In this light, the women's lack of capacity to enact significant economic citizenship in Johannesburg was a push factor towards marginality.

The combining of Forum Theatre and Appreciative Inquiry provided a platform for the women to explore how they could move from the margins to the centre. The rehearsal rooms also afforded that platform. Whether during the Forum event or workshops, the participants rehearsed this movement. Through interaction, dialogue, questioning, acting and spect-acting, the participants strategized on how this journey of material decoloniality could be manoeuvred. The bringing in of the men into the research project also helped in that the women were given the autonomy to demonstrate their personal capabilities to move away from the margins within the presence of men.

With reference to bell hook's (2015) assertions on gender derogatively determining women's fate to be on the margins, Forum Theatre and Appreciative Inquiry offered an unrelenting dialectical critique that frees any oppressed being (man or woman). The study showed that social and material ideologies were contributing factors to women's marginality. bell hooks (2015) argues that the systems of social and economic oppression determine the fate of all women. And that women nowadays have choices - they just have to radically fight against economic and social injustices within their feminine prowess and intuition.

Moving from the margins to the centre is governed by the strategic intent of transformation. The violent and derogatory acts perpetrated by the law enforcers and documentation officials, in Johannesburg, would not work to the detrimental force of transformational intent among the women. The women's determination to move away from the coldness of the margins was a force to reckon with. The fact that the women felt scandalised by the claim that their behaviour constitutes that of outlaws, they were determined to re-establish their dignity. Sindie stated that "Kanti licala ukufuna amaphepha aright. Ngeke phela sibizwe abantu abangamahlongandlebe, thina abafazi be Zimbabwe saziwa njengabantu abalomthetho"³⁰

This notion of being outlaws also perpetuated a parasitic viewpoint about them. Hence, xenophobia was used as an excuse to promote an inexplicable inclination to get them to be pushed away from the lucrative centre. Gray (2004) avers that although the socially and economically ostracised are thought of as renegades, this position does not bar them from social awareness, nor do they turn into political dullards. The frustration and alienation they experience makes them become defiant to being pushed to the margins. Gray stresses that in such an instance they desire to alter their circumstances. With Appreciative Inquiry, their physical, intellectual and moral obligations combine to produce motion/activity characterised by vigour and energy (Stavros and Torres, 2005). They explain that the participants are encouraged to move towards an imagined and promising world where their actions will be governed by positive transformational intent. This means that the women had to embrace the idea of a life that gave them hope for tolerance and open-mindedness in the eventual process of moving towards the centre.

³⁰ Loosely translated: Is it a crime to ask for the right documentation. We can't be called prostitutes. Zimbabwean women are law abiding citizens.

Guided by the Joker, the women's participation accelerated to greater consciousness and a joint vision of dealing with xenophobia was realised. The Joker played an important role in propelling the research project forward and getting the women to deal with the issue of xenophobia. However, the study demonstrates that this role was met with its own challenges and merits. The Joker was also tasked with the relentless opening of dialogue and communication to facilitate the deconstruction of the dynamics of oppression and oppressor/oppressed relationships.

The practice-based approach was instrumental in generating the fluidity of the Joker function. In practice-based research, the researcher does not only acquire an investigator's role, but inevitably becomes the facilitator of the investigation processes. This co-current role has also found its new nomenclature in research domains in the academy such as practitioner-researcher, researcher-facilitator and Joker-researcher. This is although Baxter (2013) contends that in South Africa the Practice as Research method has not been fully accepted in the academy because the country is still in its transition. I would argue that the arts including dramatic studies have found leverage in the academy because of the use of this method.

Bager-Charleson (2014) posits that it is because the academy often neglects the power of self-awareness in research. She argues that reflexive awareness often encompasses an intentional attempt to position the practitioner-researcher in a theoretical, cultural and personal context with potential biases and blind spots. It was through my systematic function as the Joker that the personal and cultural were woven in and that meant I had to be as reflexive as possible. This reflexivity aided in the theorising of xenophobia as a cultural concept that could be explicated even in 'scientific' theorisation of traditional research. Practitioner research is profoundly situated and accepts that although there are standards of practice in research, there are also adaptations to it (Vaughan 2017). Vaughan explains that this is because the research is done in real time within everyday spheres of influence.

In view of Baxter's assertions, practice-based research brings in the transforming knowledge in the academy whereby knowledge is not just for 'scientific' undertaking, but a means of creating voice among the disenfranchised and marginalised in society. She argues that, in its respect, it raises the notion of purpose which is not only limited to textbook knowledge but also empowerment. This definitely means that the situated nature of practice-based enquiry will deepen implicit and explicit, conscious and unconscious knowledge from real life experiences (Bager-Charleson 2014). This buttresses the role of the Joker as inquirer and interventionist.

In this regard, the relationship between researcher and research participants should be put into consideration. In Forum Theatre enquiry, the Joker does not only establish an empowering role for his/her participants, but also creates an enquiry relationship that is engendered in opening up spaces for mutual interpretation and analysis of issues of oppression. The Joker situates the research workshops as sites of discovery to articulate the exploration of oppression as its intentions and outcomes thereof. Bager-Charleson stresses the importance of practitioner and participants relationships as typically close in practice-based research. The Joker's aim was to use her reflexive awareness in strong relationship with her participants to access underlying meanings of the study as Bager-Charleson suggests with practice-based research. In the Appreciative Inquiry language, practice-based research inculcated the co-construction of new knowledge by both the Joker and the participants.

Driven by the Simultaneity principle of Appreciative Inquiry, the Joker played a special function in the transformation of the deficit approach of Forum Theatre and the transformation of the understanding of xenophobia among the

women. This was achieved through the Joker's tactics of questioning. The Simultaneity principle positions the questioning as the ultimate inquiry into our systems of living. In intervention work, the questions that facilitators ask shape how participants think about their future. When the Joker asks questions that posit the struggle against oppression, he/she influences the participants to envision change. Questioning becomes simultaneous with change. Fry *et al* (2002) point out that the questions that we ask give credence to what we want to find out and discover. Hence, questions become the substance out of which the future is conceived and created. The point here is that the Simultaneity principle substantiated the Joker's function as an inquirer to drive change/transformation forward.

It is not only the Simultaneity principle that pushed the Joker's agenda and success in transformation, the other four principles were guiding factors into how the Joker functioned in the research project. In conjunction with the principle of change, the choice of our vocabulary and language propels the shaping of our discourse. It would not be easy for the oppressed to alter their circumstances if they stick to a language that derails their motivation for a shifted discourse around the xenophobia narratives. That was configured in the Poetic and Constructionist principles which stipulate the choice of positive vocabulary as the impetus for positive dialogue. Positive dialogue can alter deficit discourses of difference. With such sensations and energies in the workshops, the participants' actions were channelled towards visions of a future of hope, tolerance and belonging. This is engrained in the Positive and Anticipatory principles. These principles emphasise the demonstration of constructive current actions and behaviour as shaping people's visions of a successful future. With such arsenal at her disposal, the Joker managed to run the research workshops with some level and extent of ease.

Be that as it may, the Joker's dilemma in this cannot be disregarded. Even though the Joker's function was of methodological importance to this study, conceptually and functionally, it proved to be challenging. The role took me out of my (as the researcher) comfort zone because the role brought a lot of responsibilities. In an intervention set up, it is easy to drive the workshop forward because the goal is to be an activist of change and empowering the participants. In a research setting, the interventionist role can be detrimental in collecting data from a researcher's standpoint. Although Baxter and Bager-Charleson and others may argue for the flourishing coining of the practitioner-researcher designation, its impression and relevance in research is complicated and compromising. Collecting data as a Joker-researcher can be stretchy in that personal and activist functions can generate prejudiced biases especially with issues such as xenophobia. This extends to where even the analysis becomes opiated. The incident at Emakhaya theatre highlighted some predispositions of my role as a migrant Zimbabwean woman that affected the way I sought to report on what transpired in the spect-acting.

Sometimes supposed power hierarchies between participants and researchers can adversely affect the function of the Joker. When I arrived at Hillbrow Theatre and was recruiting the participants, I was already perceived as an elite scholar from Wits University and an outsider. Even though I spoke the same language as the participants and shared some of their views about women discrimination and xenophobia in Johannesburg, my disposition was already compromised. There were moments where in my jokering I would sense antagonism because there was a predisposition that as the Joker, I was not in the service of the oppressed. Miramonti explains that "...the Jokers use their power to guarantee that the process does not get dominated by those who benefit from existing power relations from the community..." My supposed elitist role shrouded all this. This gradually eased with the research participants, but was somehow apparent among the spect-actors from Hillbrow theatre. The Emakhaya theatre audience saw me as

an academic and therefore sought to impress me with their knowledge of Forum Theatre or purposefully challenged my thoughts and ideas in a pretentious manner.

One thing about Practice as Research is that it allows for the researcher to explore personal and facilitator roles and positions in the research process. These roles gave me a chameleon status. This status was by chance, coincidence and default. I got into the study with the researcher colour, but the choice of the themes (xenophobia and migrancy) could not allow me to be solely academic in my approach. The researcher part of the chameleon was an academic colour. I was driven towards the theorisation of the participation of the participants and I leaned on the literature guiding the concepts and themes of this study. This position sometimes clouded how I perceived and conceived the beautiful raw data that was given by the participants. Whenever something eureka was discovered, the academic researcher almost messed up the data. Then the Joker/facilitator role somehow helped to bring the research process to the tacit and humanity standing that it deserved.

What makes PaR stand apart from traditional research is its focus on an individualised and connected subjective world. It gives insight on how complicated the world is and the need to reflect on it. Freire has helped to argue on how the praxis of teaching and facilitation is embedded on men and women reflecting and acting upon their world. Praxis was the colour of my Joker role - that in spite of the academic colour in research, I had to get the participants and I to reflect on our world. As a Zimbabwean immigrant woman who has experienced the misgivings of xenophobia, the Joker role was the feat that I needed for the survival of this research study. Although the Joker role was challenging especially at Emakhaya Theatre, I had the gratification of the creative and reflexive nexus. The dancing between Joker, researcher and participant roles offered attentive thrusts to knowledge generation and the integrity of investigating the merging of Appreciative Inquiry and Forum Theatre.

7.2 Conclusive Remarks

This study has highlighted that there is need for a paradigm shift in the general outlook of research and artistic intervention methods. These are intervention and research methods that posit change as the lifeline for any community or organisation of people. The argument has been that Forum Theatre, in its deficit-based focus, can be enhanced with the asset base of Appreciative Inquiry - a required move for the 21st century theatrical interventions. For change to be embraced, it should be pedestalled upon what the people desire for their development. Mostly, they desire to move in the direction of success (AI orientation). The world has been caught up in a web where fixing problems (FT orientation) for change has been a norm. Fixing problems has been engendered in the cause and analysis of problems. Problem-solving has taken the centre stage in the discourse of change. Stagnation has been realised in all this to the extent that the finding and analysis of solutions have been embedded in fault finding missions rather than constructive resolution. In the first and third chapters of this thesis, I highlighted how the problem-posing approach of Forum Theatre works and how it requires possibilities of transformation for it to achieve best practice effect.

An alternative framework is positioning itself. This is a framework that seeks to replace the deficit or problem-solving paradigm. This framework uncovers what is working or what is best in a community rather than what is problematic/broken/not working. It seeks to leverage people's thinking on asset and positive thoughts. It is predicated on exploring what is best through its processes of discovery, dreaming, designing and reaching a destiny platformed on hope and success. Artistically, Forum Theatre has managed to do so over the years, but there have been noticeable

deficits in its approach. Appreciative Inquiry has been proposed as intensifying Forum Theatre in order to mitigate its problem focussed character.

This study was an exploration of how Appreciative Inquiry, in its asset-based framework; could enhance Forum Theatre in its deficit-based framework. This was not just done to ascertain if the two methods could be combined, but to test the efficacy of Appreciative Inquiry in enhancing Forum Theatre to help the Zimbabwean immigrant women to address and deal with xenophobia. This chapter gives a final interrogation and summary of combining the two methods in the study of discourses, narratives and trends of xenophobia. It also gives suggestions for further investigation and theorising of this combining. The summary and all concluding remarks are embedded in the findings of the research project and study and the various themes that emerged from the thematic analysis.

Theatre is a forum for organising groups and communities into negotiating participatory actions for their own development. Forum Theatre brings together people with similar characteristics of oppression to identify, analyse and alter their situations. The goal is that the people develop their capacity to be active in the process of liberating themselves from the binaries created by an unjust world. However, because of its deficit lingo and approach, it has limited people from constructively achieving their full potential. Appreciative Inquiry, on the other hand, has proposed a framework that helps people move through a shared vision by engaging each other in strategic inventiveness and innovation. In their differing approaches, the two methods have also found a symbiotic relationship that has influenced the reshaping of the narratives and dynamics of xenophobia among the Zimbabwean women participants in this research study.

One thing that I have learnt about doing things differently, in this research, is that space is made for varied kinds of emergent knowledge. It is about practising a different kind of systematic relation to knowledge. My aim in combining a theatre method with a corporate method was to rethink ways of doing community engagement work that is not only engendered in artistic intervention, but also brings an approach that focuses on aspects of living systems at community, organisational and societal level. When things were done differently, creativity in this research became regenerative and renewed the possibilities of interdisciplinary approaches in Theatre of the Oppressed work. To understand and explain xenophobia, the combining of the two methods helped to redefine its complexities outside of the TO boundaries. Employing the AI approach to FT was done in the pursuit of improving problem-solving techniques that have been in the norm and tradition of Theatre of the Oppressed interventions. To that end, what was gained were diverse forms of knowledge which can be defined as cross-border research. This study, therefore, begs to coin a term or name for this ultimate combination: Asset Enhanced Forum Theatre for Liberation.

Moving towards liberation is a gradual process because it calls for doing away with old oppressive habits. The research process encouraged the women to move towards an appreciative paradigm with a cautious understanding that stories are told differently at different paces by different people. Amkpa (2006) affirms that stories are illustrated with differing latitudes. Some people have the ability to tell good stories with fluency and detail while others do it with brevity. The story of xenophobia was told in both latitudes, but the process drove the combination of the two methods to an illustrious latitude.

7.3 Further Research and Recommendation

As I have explained earlier on in this chapter, Practice as Research is receiving credence in South African academia. The subsequent shift in research paradigms demonstrates a need for review in the academy and an indication for emergent methodologies and theories of research. The study has shown how practice-based research attracts the experimentation of various approaches in research. When Vaughan (2017) points out that even though practitioner-based research accepts the norms of research practice and yet is open to many variations, she realises that prospect of steering this emergent research paradigm to suit its emergence is conceivable. As I proposed the merging of Forum Theatre and Appreciative Inquiry as tools or methods to explore xenophobia among women, I knew that questions would be raised for what purpose? This was not just to bring about new knowledge, but to also open up research platforms on Applied Drama methods. This could be used to investigate that which the methods purport to do - to raise awareness and examine social issues in communities. There should be further research on how these Applied Drama and Theatre methods fit in and find their place in practice-based research. This should include their usefulness in promoting research that has its goal in producing knowledge that formulates difference to practice. The practice of research should not be limited to orthodox rules that have limited the exploration of vital experiential research. Experiential research has enriched more understanding of people's reality through its lens that allow for an in-depth investigation of their behaviours.

Doing such research has strength in that it responds to the prominence of the 21st century outcry of technological advancement overriding, and overtaking humanity needs. Arguably, the study also finds its rationale in challenging how 21st century globalisation (which includes migration) has a technological facet to it. It is currently easy for Zimbabwean women to cross borders to come to South Africa for better wealth prospects that are entrenched in technological advancement. Further research would constitute how the scramble for this advancement affects the social growth of Zimbabwean women in Johannesburg. Although globalisation may be bringing people together, there are irregularities in migration policies that promote discriminatory nationalistic tendencies and discourses that divide people economically, politically, socially and culturally. These need to be addressed if globalisation truly is to be commended.

By observing how the research did not offer some of the solutions to the problem of xenophobia among the women, it would suffice to see how the merging of Forum Theatre and Appreciative Inquiry could be taken to the Theatre as Discourse level of the Theatre of the Oppressed. This would be about merging Forum theatre and Appreciative Inquiry in legislative domains so that the women propose and debate bills and policies previously suggested in the Forum Theatre workshops. This would be done to find recommendations with the bona fide legislature. It would also entail finding out if Appreciative Inquiry had a positive effect on the women. Apart from the need to study the merging of the two methods, it would broaden the capacity of enhancing as a lucrative method of research in practice-based research.

Of interest, in the study, was the language of inquiry in Forum Theatre and Appreciative Inquiry. I think further study on this would generate great interest on how language shapes the two methods to promote dialogue that is efficacious to constructive development in community intervention. The research would focus on how the Constructionist and Simultaneity principles of Appreciative Inquiry shape a better engagement of women participants in issues of xenophobia versus the deficit language inherent in Forum Theatre. I found it interesting that the workshops had an

interplay of how the language framed the actions of participation among the women. Whitney and Trosten-Bloom (2003:53) emphasise the role of language places "...human communication and language at the centre of human organizing and change. It posits that meaning is made in conversation, reality is created in communication, and knowledge is generated through social interaction."

One strong recommendation is on the write up of the report. The way the report is written, is also part of the research. I noticed that because this research had three strands, FT and AI as data collection methods, and methods under study, xenophobia and the experiences of the women, I was inclined more towards the conceptualisation of xenophobia, FT and AI through the lens of the practice theories of AI and FT. Vear (2021) points out that when reporting on practice research, researchers should take into consideration that it is about articulating actions, ideas, beliefs or methods into the writing as opposed to investigating theories relating to them. However, I managed to draw on the experiences of the women to drive the point of practice home. As stated in chapter 1, it is also important to relate the specific inquiry to broader debate through theories that support it (Nelson (2013), but the balance should be struck in tipping the scale more on the side of experience and practice.

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Appendix 1

1.The Forum Theatre Play: Office 0027

Scene One

Scene is set in a Home Affairs Office

Sthabile enters the stage and goes towards the audience and pretends to be asking for office 0027 where she needs to see an official who she has been coming to see for her papers issue. On stage, the home affairs official (HA) who is dressed in a way that depicts a female, male and a system is sipping tea and talking to an imagined friend in the audience who is presumably another colleague of hers.

Home Affairs (HA) Official: Eh tshomi, liweather izosibulala. Mina ngingcono because I bought that blanket at Mr. Price. And uyazi lendaba yokusebenza namaforeigner iyangicasula mnxm (This thing of working with foreigners makes me sick). *(Then continues to type whatever she is typing and sipping her tea)*

Sthabile enters and moves towards the audience and pretends to ask for the office that deals with permits and passports for foreigners.

Sthabile (S): Sawubona bhudi wami bengucela ukubuza ukuthi u office 0027 ukuphi. Oh ok left, then 2 stairs up. And I should see Disetsang. Ah ngiyabonga.

Then enters.

S: Hello, I'm looking for Disetsang.

HA: Kina ubatla ing.

S: Ngicela usizo, I have a problem with my permit. I lost my passport and I want to apply for a new one, but my permit is still valid till 2020.

HA: Is this your first time here. *(Sizing her up)*

S: No, its my 4th time.

HA: Who did you see the last time?

S: I saw uMpho.

HA: Mpho is on leave and she is coming in November so you will have to come back and see her.

S: But I was advised to come to this office and see you for my problem.

HA: Sisi ungazongidina, if Mpho had started dealing with your problem wait for her till November.

S: But, I am going to lose my job and I need to fix my permit and passport so that I stay legally in South Africa.

HA: Mina ngingenakuphi ngomsebenzi, *(turning to the audience and speaking to the imaginary friend)* . But seriously tshomie what has her job got to do with me. Please tell her that Mpho is on leave.

S: Please just look at these papers and see what Mpho had done.

HA: *(Angrily and snapping at the papers)* Bring and let's see. Haa! You see, this means that your passport has already expired.

S: Yes, BUT....

HA: Then why are you wasting my time.

S: Like, I said, my contract... As we speak the Grade 12s at St Bernards have missed many classes because I have to come here all the time ...Please I'm counting on you.

HA: Wee sisi, the system does not allow me to help you when your passport has expired.

S: I know, but I'm in the process of applying for a new one and I thought the system could help relocate my permit because it's still valid.

HA: Sometimes, I wonder what is wrong with the South African system when it keeps harbouring you Zimbabweans when you give us so many problems. So your losing your passport has become my problem, please learn to be careful...

S: Please bangibamba inkuzi and I lost all my particulars in the handbag.

HA: Ehe, isn't it it's your people that steal from you.

S: Are you going to help me or not.

HA: OH, getting cheeky with me. The South African system is to blame for all this. It should just depot all of you and you go back and change your government.

S: If you were in my shoes, what would you go back for? When you talk of government change wasn't it one of your former presidents who said things are politically and economically fine in my country... But anyway I'm not here for that. Please help me with my permit.

HA: (*Really angry*) Hahaha there you go, one wonders how such an educated bunch of you people are failing to change things in your country. (*looking at Sthabile's papers again with contempt*) And I see Sthabile, you are a degreed teacher, interesting. ..Listen here sisi, your problem is just too complicated and I'm behind time with all this stack of work for your people. Please wait for Mpho, she will help you.

Ignoring Sthabile and talking to her imaginary friend at the audience. And hands her back her papers.

Tshomah, I have got to shayisa early today and prepare for that Diepsloot NGO job for disabled people who lost their IDs and their payment. Please if anyone calls me and cannot and they ask for my cell number, tell them not to dare call me especially that Obatunde Jibenga what what (*then giggles getting off stage with her handbag and leaves with the chair to put it almost on centre stage*) whilst Sthabile turns to the audience with plea in her eyes and walks off stage too

Scene 2: Diepsloot

HA walks to stage carrying a file and sits on the chair. Then enters Sophia also carrying another file.

Sophia (A worker at the NGO): Disetsang, what the hell is this? How come some people have not been paid out and others have been. And from the look of things those who have not been paid are foreigners. Bheka (*reads a few names*) Chenjerai Chatikobo, Natasha Sibanda, Sibongile Tshuma, Lucia Oshegun.

HA: It's not me it's the system because they don't have South African IDs their details cannot be logged on to the system. And some of them have these funny asylum papers that are just not compatible with computers.

Sophia: But this NGO is trying to help everyone equally. And in any case why did you by pass me with all this. I am your boss here you should pass all these with me before they go to head office.

HA: (*Stands up to level with Sophia*) Sophia, Sophia, Now that is a problem. You cannot as a foreigner come and boss me around in my own country. We fought for this country so that we enjoy the fruits everywhere.

S: But, Disetsang, why do you treat me like this. I only asked why, as the Project Manager of this NGO, you bypass me most of the times and then when things go wrong, the Head Office sits on me. I have seen that you treat me differently from other colleagues even publicly in meetings or wherever.

HA: Seriously, Sophia tell me, would you treat your neighbor's child better than your own blood sister.

S: Of course, you wouldn't, but you would respect her. All I am asking is that you treat me like a person.

HA: You know what my uncle told me that you Zimbabweans eat people (*giggles and looks at the audiences*). Seriously, he said he does not understand your culture, you people have funny tendencies so don't blame me.

S: What do you know about my culture?

HA: Look at this again, here you are my boss, but your boss money is peanuts and you accept it because you are desperate. And that is also affecting my salary.

S: But, Home Affairs entrusted you with this job to help everyone and for you is almost like some extra cash.

HA: Uyahlanya, I'm also talking on behalf of other South Africans in this NGO who have settled for less because of you and I wonder why it's not a South African that is not managing this NGO because they are also capable.

S: Work aside, why do you treat me like I'm not a human being.

HA: When you ask for peanuts are you a human being. Vele abantu bantu base South Africa and the rest of you in Africa, I don't know what you are.

S: What do you mean by that?

HA: Sometimes, I thought you were better than other Zimbabweans. Phela wena your mannerisms are better than ezabanye, you can speak NDEBELE/ZULU and Sotho.

S: Disetsang what will it take you to realize that I, too, am human?

HA: You going back to your country, and stop taking our jobs. And stop all this nonsense that you people are doing in Joburg: Thieving, murdering and prostitution especially you Zimbabwean girls. Nigerians know that you give KFC to a Zimbabwean woman she gives you a body. No wonder you accept peanuts at work, it's because you know that you have an extra job by the corner corners. As it is AIDS is spreading because of you desperate Zimbabwean women. Crime is escalating because of you. And you live in Hillbrow,,mmmh Hillbrow is filthy man.

S: That is not fair.

HA: If you want fairness dear, leave us and get it from MUGABE not here. (And she shoos Sophia away)
Sophia obliges and leaves the stage.

Enter Dumisani (*in a wheel chair*) and Tendai *as they pass Sophia*

Scene 3 The NGO is called SHIFT for WOMEN JUSTICE

HA: (*Talking to Dumisani and Tendai as they enter the stage*). Sometimes I have a good mind letting this Kwerekwe... (*She stops realizing that are people entering*) Yebo ngingalinceda ngani.

Dum: Yebo, I am here in with Tendai, she is my neighbour.

HA: And where are you from?

Dum: Khona lana eDiepsloot.

HA: I mean uphumaphi (pointing at Tendai), your nationality.

Dum: Oh, Zimbabwe.

HA: (*Looks at the audience*) Bheka bakuyoyonke indawo, they are everywhere, naseDiepsloot.

(*Looking at Dumisani*) How can I help you.

Dum: Ah yes, Tendai is my neighbour. (*Looks at the audience*) As you see her she was affected by the xenophobic attacks of 2008. There are men who came into her shack when she was sleeping with her husband and child night: they stabbed her husband to death and raped her daughter and beat her up and left her to be like this. She used to work at a restaurant and had work permit, but that was burnt in her shack with everything she had. Her former bosses bought her this wheel chair, but they could only help her up to a certain time till 2016. She has no-one to help her, she can't speak, I can't locate her relatives...

HA: (*interjects and also speaks to the audiences in a funny way*) Akabuyele ekhaya.

S: That is why I have come to this organization so that you could help her. Into engizwisa ubuhlungu yikuthi the men who killed her husband were not jailed and she has struggled about that because she has been failing to sort out her papers. And her condition is making it worse. But I have got some papers; certified photocopies that I was given by her former employers that she had a passport and permit number. (*Hands them over to HA*).

HA: OK, These? Do you think they will prove anything? Do you have any papers of the late husband?

S: I doubt if the husband had any papers.

HA: Manje bhudi wami asazi...

S: But we in Diepsloot know who the culprits are, they are walking freely.

HA: My brother, then we are working on thin air so you think the government will waste its resources on a ghost story. And at least some ghost stories have characters, this one doesn't have. Have you been to the police?

Dum: Yes we have been and nothing is moving.

HA: Exactly, my brother there is nothing we can do.

Dum: Eish, but the child who was raped is not a ghost. All these years she has been living with this trauma. Please can you facilitate this that this woman and her child who is 15 this year can also benefit from this organization.

HA: Bhudi wami, I told you that if the police can't help you nathi we can't.

Dum: But with the right papers and with the grant (from your organization) maybe we can engage lawyers to help her. We need justice here.

HA: Yesterday, one of your people was blaming our former president for her problems so I think you can also go and talk to that former president to give you justice for her.

Dum: Ah, but my...

Play ends with a song

