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The Influence of Available Bursaries on Career Choices of Students from Scarce-Resourced Backgrounds: A Case Study of Social Work and Education Students



A report on a study project presented to

The Department of Social Work

School of Human and Community Development

Faculty of Humanities

University of the Witwatersrand

In partial fulfilment of the requirements for the Master's Degree in Social Work

By

Magdeline Ramutla

(September, 2020)

DECLARATION

I, Magdeline Shela Ramutla, declare that the research report is my own work in design and execution and it has never been submitted by me or any other person at this or any other university. I am aware of the implications of plagiarism as academic dishonesty, and confirm that all sources of reference used have been duly acknowledged.

M.S Ramutla _____ 07 / 09 / 2020

SIGNATURE DATE

(Miss MS Ramutla)

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ABSTRACT

Globally, the lack of funding for higher education has been identified as a major obstacle confronting young people in developed and developing countries. Post 1994, the South African government established a number of funding support programmes such as the Funza Lushaka for teaching qualification and Department of Social Development bursary for social work qualification to address the shortage of skills in specific fields such as public education and social welfare services. Higher education plays a vital role in the lives of the population that was historically disadvantaged in South Africa. The role that higher education plays assists as part of the means of getting a better life, equipping one with different skills to secure a job or start own business as a way of working towards escaping poverty. Access to higher education institutions ensures employment opportunities, social equality and justice, and economic progress. The general scarcity of higher education funding led to a phenomenon where young people chose fields of study based on the availability of bursary support programmes. This study was a qualitative study in nature and aimed to explore the limited funding for higher education and the influence of available bursaries on career choices of students from resource-scarce backgrounds who are the recipients of the Department of Social Development and Funza Lushaka bursaries. The case study design was used in the study and interviews were used as the method for data collection. The data was collected from 14 participants who were sampled using the quota sampling and analysed by using the thematic data analysis method which assisted to present the data in an organized manner as well as present the similarities and differences found from the data based on the student's experiences with regards to the influence of available bursaries on their career choices. It is anticipated that the findings may contribute to more funding being made available for students to fund for their higher education. This study aims to assist in encouraging the bursars and the government to introduce more bursaries for higher education that assist not only in funding for students tuition but also transport, books, food and accommodation where necessary as well as bursaries that are not career specific allowing students to pursue the career of their choice.

Key words: Bursaries, Career Choices, Disadvantaged background, Higher education funding

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CHAPTER ONE

1. INTRODUCTION

1.1. Introduction

The legacy of apartheid has left many South Africans striving to overcome the social, economic and political devastation caused by the separated development and its psychological impact (Davids, 2009). Lack of power, income and resources to make choices and take advantage of opportunities are what Davids (2009) described as what forms part of the realities of people living in poverty. These conditions of poverty lead to students who are from poor backgrounds to struggle with some basic needs including their education. These basic needs also include families not affording to pay for fees and required resources such as prescribed textbooks. Students from privileged backgrounds are more likely to be academically successful due to their upbringing experience of having more easily accessible forms of higher education unlike students who need not only physical access to higher education, but financial assistance as well (Mngomezulu, Dhunpath & Munro, 2017). These are the types of realities that this study seeks to address. This chapter provides an overview of the study. It looks at the problem statement and the rationale for the study, research question and aims and objectives of the study. An overview of the research design and methodology is stated. Key concepts that are mostly used in the study are defined. The chapter concludes by providing an overview structure of the chapters in the research report.

1.2. Problem statement and rationale for the study

The lives of poor people are characterised by ill-health, illiteracy, hunger and other forms of deprivation (Midgely, 2014). Through this statement by Midgely (2014) we get to understand how forms of poverty deprive people of opportunities to change their situations or of those around them due to not having resources, not being educated or not having good health. These are the realities from the separate development that came with apartheid years in South Africa. Poverty caused the people to live in conditions of not having adequate resources and struggle to meet their basic needs which lead to them being excluded from the benefits and opportunities of those who are more privileged with more access. These types of conditions in general lead to social exclusion of those who are from the marginalised groups characterised by similar experiences of social discrimination, stigmatisation and stereotypes. This can be seen as an

explanation to the difficulties of students who come from such disadvantaged backgrounds- students who are not able to afford funding for their higher education.

The National Party government previously put in place legal constraints to prevent institutions designated for the use of one racial group from enrolling students from another racial group. This meant that for an institution to enrol a person from a different race that person had to have a permit and make sure that the same program of study is not available elsewhere (Cloete, Fehnel, Maassen, Moja, Perold & Gibbon, 2002). In the new South Africa, the government has put in place different funding measures to ensure universal access to higher education. This includes NSFAS and other funding programmes such as Funza Lushaka and the Department of Social Development bursaries which are specific on careers students must follow. This shows the value of education in development because these measures of trying to provide access to education can help minimize poverty and racial imbalances which is good for the economy of South Africa.

Funding for higher education is a contested issue in post-apartheid South Africa. This contestation led to the #FeesMustFall campaign where a majority of Black students were calling for the doors of institutions of higher learning to be open to all (Chutel, 2017). This call was deeply rooted in the reality of millions of Black students who could not afford higher education. Similarly, in 2013, students in Brazil protested against inequalities with regards to education and social struggles that came with it, such as the funding for higher education (Snider, 2017). This shows how the issue of funding for higher education and other social struggles related to it are not limited to South Africa but also other parts of the world. This also shows the importance of students being educated through higher education and being equipped with the necessary knowledge and skills to either find work or open businesses of their own. Education benefits a society as it promotes equality, reduces poverty and assists with unemployment. In the context of limited resources and desire to access higher education, students resort to any funding made available to assist in furthering their studies. Many previously disadvantaged Black students have only been able to access tertiary education through bursaries and financial aid (Seabi, Seedat, Khoza-Shangase & Sullivan, 2014). Career specific funding is made available and this study focuses on Funza Lushaka bursary and the Department of Social Development bursary as career specific bursaries that assist with funding for higher education in the disciplines of Teaching and Social work.

Studies have revealed the high realities of racial inequalities in the higher education sector (Matsolo, Ningpuanyeh & Susuman, 2018). The racial inequalities tend to affect the equal distribution of resources. This affects many Black people who have little or no access to any opportunities as they are a race that is historically disadvantaged. Firfirey and Carolissen (2010) conducted a study on poverty in South African higher education and the findings indicate that students from poor backgrounds are affected in many ways such as not affording the transport to service-learning sites, submitting assignments late and not affording the prescribed readings. This helps us to understand the ways in which the students from poor backgrounds experience student life differently than other students even with regards to getting the necessary books that they need to assist with their learning. This can also be the explanation why some students do not perform well.

The study by Seabi, et al., (2014) on the experiences of university students regarding transformation in South Africa indicates that there is a close relationship between family background and one's later career choice. Students from disadvantaged backgrounds are mostly from families with high levels of unemployment and poverty sometimes resulting in very little access to resources. It was also discovered by Seabi, et al. (2014) that proper social, financial and linguistic support is not only necessary for academic excellence for those from disadvantaged backgrounds, it is also necessary for the advancements in their respective fields of career.

Furthermore, the students who wish to further their studies become deprived of the opportunity because their families are not able to afford fees for higher education. Students therefore resort to any available funding like career specific bursaries. This takes away their freedom to choose to study a course that is in line with the career of their choice and makes them resort to courses that are available. This is very problematic as it leads to students studying courses that they are not passionate about only because there is funding made available. A study done in Tanzania on the influence of family background on career choice among undergraduate students revealed that students with a low socio-economic status failed to finance their education and were therefore forced to choose one of the national priority programmes so that they could secure a loan from the government (Amani & Mkumbo, 2018). This continues to show that it is not only a problem prevalent in South Africa but also other parts of the world.

The same study revealed that there were students who were not very poor but also not rich enough to afford fees. The funding available was meant to assist individuals who could not

afford to be in higher institutions of learning. Those assisted would have to work back for the government and contribute to the country's economy and assist to reduce the high levels of unemployment. Moloi, Makgoba and Murika (2017) state that more and more students would have to work part-time or full time while studying to assist with extra funding needed in a higher institution of learning or to assist at home. This shows the efforts and extent to which students from disadvantaged backgrounds go to assist with funding for their higher education as well as surviving in a higher institution of learning. The emotional being of students who only choose the careers that have funding available may be highly affected because when the student becomes qualified it becomes problematic as he/she would spend 3 to 4 years studying for a career that is not of their choice. This leads to being employed in jobs they are not fully interested in. This prevents them from pursuing careers they are not passionate about which impacts their ability to make a difference in the society. Many studies reviewed cover different aspects of students from resource-scarce backgrounds and lack of funding in South African Higher education. However, they do not look thoroughly into how career choices of students from resource-scarce backgrounds are influenced by the available career specific bursaries. This study therefore anticipated that the findings may contribute to the knowledge base of all professionals and students about the experiences of students who are not able to pursue the careers of their choice due to lack of funding. This study may assist in encouraging the bursars to introduce more funding for higher education that is not career specific allowing students to study the career of their choice.

1.3. Purpose of the study

The purpose of this study was to explore the influence of available bursaries on career choices of social work and education students from resource-scarce backgrounds.

1.4. Research question

The research question for this research study was:

How do available career specific bursaries affect the career choices of social work and education students from resource-scarce backgrounds?

1.5. Aim and Objectives of the study

The primary aim of this study was to explore the influence of available bursaries on career choices of social work and education students from disadvantaged backgrounds looking at Funza Lushaka and Department of Social Development bursary recipients.

The objectives of the study were:

1. To explore how students from resource-scarce backgrounds are affected by lack of funding for higher education
2. To identify ways in which the lack of funding influences the choices of students from resource-scarce backgrounds
3. To determine how students navigate the university in the career field that was chosen mainly because of availability of funding for the specific career
4. To establish if the career specific course has an impact on the future career plans of participants

1.6. Definition of key concepts

Career: "A career is not simply a job; it is about the acceptance of ideas of planned structured advancement that lead to career development" (Shumba & Naang, 2013, p.1022).

Education: Education can be understood as national innovative systems put in place to assist with the forever changing economic and social developments (Chernova, Akhobadze, Malova & Salton, 2017).

Disadvantaged background: Coming from a history of unfavourable conditions that deprive people of financial or social opportunities (Midgely, 2014).

1.7. Overview of the structure of the research report

Chapter one has focused on the rationale and statement of the problem, aims and objectives, and the research question that this study sought to answer. Chapter two looks at the literature review of the study. The literature review explores the lack of funding for higher education and the influence of available bursaries on career choices of students from resource-scarce. Career

specific funding in South Africa as well as the debates on higher education funding are looked at. The literature review also explores the #FeesMustFall Movement to provide understanding on the struggles that student go through to make sure that higher education is made affordable. The chapter also discusses the theoretical framework that was used in this study. Chapter three discusses the methods that were used in collecting and analysing data in the study. The chapter also looks at ethical considerations. Chapter four focuses on the findings and discussions. Chapter five gives an overall discussion, conclusions and recommendations

CHAPTER TWO

2. LITERATURE REVIEW AND THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

2.1. Introduction

In South Africa, the realities of apartheid consisted of white privilege existing alongside black poverty and deprivation in which access to amenities, good health care systems, good education and welfare services were determined along racial lines (Davids, 2009). This means that students from the disadvantaged backgrounds would not be able to experience life in ways that the privileged students do. Students from underprivileged backgrounds are usually socially excluded from living normal student lives. Such students end up making career choices under unfavourable life circumstances. Student alienation comes with some highlights of having to navigate unfamiliar and sometimes hostile university environments while simultaneously negotiating additional costs associated with the university life (Bourdieu, 2011). This shows that funding is not the only struggle that students face in University; it forms part of the struggles. This chapter explores the lack of funding for higher education, career specific funding in South Africa, influence of available bursaries on career choices of students from resource-scarce backgrounds as well as the debates on higher education funding. It also explores the #FeesMustFall Movement and the current funding model in South Africa. This chapter lastly looks at social exclusion as the theoretical framework for the study.

The Funza Lushaka Bursary programme is a funding scheme which is specific to the career of teaching while the Department of Social development bursary is available for students who wish to pursue the career of social work. Since the Funza Lushaka funding programme started, it has funded over 70 000 students (Mkhize, 2015). This shows that it does not only provide funding for the students, but it is also a way through which students can secure their future because the career specific bursaries provide jobs upon completion of studies by the beneficiaries. As there are less funding opportunities for student's higher education, students end up resorting to these career specific bursaries to be able to fund for their education even if it may be career specific bursaries that are not in line with their choice of career. Poverty also limits career choices of students who are from poor backgrounds because they do not have the money to afford funding for their careers of choice. They therefore resort to the Department of Social Development and Funza Lushaka bursaries that are career specific. This takes away the

freedom of students to fully choose their career of choice and careers that they may be passionate about.

South Africa, by many measures, is referred to as the most unequal society in the world (Baloyi & Isaacs, 2015). This is because 26 years after apartheid there are still inequalities where one can find a society having some people who can afford everything including very expensive houses and cars while there are people who cannot afford much and still live in extremely poor conditions and depending on only one person to take care of the whole family. This shows that some have access and opportunities while others do not. Lack of funding for higher education mirrors these inequalities whereby many black South Africans are mostly the ones who do not afford to pay for their education. This is the legacy of apartheid which has left the country to inherit vast inequalities in education, health, and basic infrastructure, such as access to safe water, sanitation, and housing (Hoogeveen & Özler, 2005).

After South Africa's first democratic election in 1994, Higher education was confronted with social, political and economic demands arising from both the local and global environments; a kind not encountered during the apartheid era (Cloete, et. al 2002). These demands also included increases in fees for higher education making it limited only to those who can afford. This shows how the inequality in education based on race (where the White people had more access than any other racial groups) set a foundation of inequality in the educational system in the years that followed.

Education, as defined by Chernova, Akhobadze, Malova and Salton (2017) is a key resource of economic and social development in today's world. Chernova, et al. (2017) continue to state that the reason behind this is that part of the national innovation systems is what the education systems is made up of, primarily those of universities. This shows that the more people are educated the more they can work towards contributing to the economy as well as bettering their lives closing the gap of inequality and unemployment which has always been a problem in South Africa.

Lack of funding for higher education creates inequalities which exposes the realities of many black South Africans as they are mostly the ones who do not afford to pay for their education. Segregated and unequal educational opportunities were conceived as part of a common sense understanding of the natural order of a society divided by race, ethnicity and class with the differential political inclusion (Banks & Banks, 2004). This alienates many of those who are

part of the lower class and deprived of many opportunities in general. With the history of apartheid in South Africa, the black people got the worst treatment compared to other racial groups meaning they were paid less wages and lived in poor living conditions. In a study conducted by Baloyi and Isaacs (2015), it was found that poverty, inequality and race in South Africa go hand-in-hand and 60% of black African workers earned below the poverty line. Thus, despite educational opportunities being made available, black students would be automatically left out due to not being able to afford to fund for their higher education.

2.2. Career Specific Funding in South Africa

Problems relating to funding for higher education have been prevalent for many tertiary students. Each year as fees rise, more and more students and families have to find means to afford their tertiary fees. A study done by Jansen (2018) shows that apart from tuition (fees), accommodation, textbooks and other learning materials, transportation to and from campus (for non-residential students), food and even basic living expenses are now part of the needs for many students This shows the demand that comes with being in a higher institution of learning because it comes with having to pay for other expenses too. Bursary schemes such as the Department of Social Development bursary and Funza Lushaka bursary play a role in assisting many tertiary students by paying for their fees, accommodation and food as well as offering a stipend for books and other necessary essentials. Funza Lushaka is a career specific bursary scheme established by the government to help assist with funding for higher education in the career of teaching. This career specific bursary is a multi-year programme that promotes teaching in public schools (Department of Basic Education, 2015). The Department of Social Development bursary is a bursary made available to students who wish to pursue a career in social work which was well known as a scarce skill in the country (Bursaries South Africa, 2019). As part of the obligations of some bursaries, Bursaries South Africa (2019) states that once students have complete their studies; they are required to undertake the contractual obligation of the bursary. These bursaries assist to close the gap of having many students suffering from lack of funding for their higher education. As a result of students' continuous struggle for funding for higher education, government introduced these funding schemes to assist with the problems.

The value of each bursary varies. Reed and Hurd (2016) show that it ranges from once-off payments intended as a contribution to educational costs, to larger rewards intended for students relocating from rural areas covering the costs of accommodation in purpose-built in

student accommodation on the university campus. It is important that students familiarize themselves with the information to be able to utilize what is being made available for them. National Student Financial Aid Scheme (NSFAS) is a funding programme by the government available to illegible students in higher education. As part of the government policy of charging tuition fees for higher education, NSFAS was introduced in South Africa in 1994 to assist students who could not afford higher education tuition fees (Zaleza & Olukoshi, 2004). The problem with lack of funding is so common with the government putting in measures to assist students to make higher education accessible to students for disadvantaged students. NSFAS helps to ensure that there is continued access to higher education. It also addresses equity issues for those who cannot afford the rising costs of higher education.

Affordability remains a major obstacle to many students despite the loan scheme as shown in a study by Zaleza and Olukoshi (2004). The study also helps to show that lack of funding remains a problem to many students in higher education. When some students have no other funding options, they may resort to funded programs even though these programs are not the career of their choice. Career choice is complex decision for students since it determines the kind of profession that they intend to pursue in life. Most students who are in secondary schools do not have accurate information about occupational opportunities to help them make appropriate career choices (Edwards & Quinter, 2011). This can be a barrier for students to follow the career of their choice and to find funding available for their career choice. Proper education has the potential to increase the employability or income generating capacity of South Africa's majority being the poor thereby enabling them to be employed or be entrepreneurs in their own right despite the high inequality levels in South Africa (Dirks, 2013). Therefore, with funding made available, it can enable students to be able to get good education that can enable them to find employment or start their own businesses and contribute well to their families and communities.

2.3. Influence of available bursaries on career choices of students from resource-scarce backgrounds

A study done by Jansen (2018) on the future prospects of South African universities, it was found that the youth now entering university are poor and have weak academic backgrounds. This shows that finances form a very important part of student's higher education and lack of money deprives the students an opportunity to further their studies in higher education. This is supported by a study done on the factors affecting the enrolment rate of students in higher

education institutions in Gauteng province by Matsolo, Ningpaunyeh and Susuman (2018). The study states that households are not financially able/empowered and their children end up amongst the annual percentage of the unnecessary drop outs because of the higher education in South Africa being expensive. Some bursaries are career specific while some are not and at times such information about bursaries is not clear. This is supported by a study by Harrison, Davies, Harris and Waller (2018, p.683) which state that "pre-application knowledge about bursaries is generally found to be limited and largely confined to awareness that bursaries exist for lower income students alongside the national student finance package." This causes confusion when it comes to which bursaries are available and who qualifies for which one. Bursaries are awarded to students who meet the eligible criteria (Harrison, et al., 2018). This means that bursaries are not just available to anyone who applies but students must meet the certain requirements set by the bursars for them to get the bursary. This is where students are expected to expose themselves to show why they are eligible for the bursaries such as stating they are from child headed households, orphaned or raised by single parents or foster parents.

Factors such as gender; socioeconomic status; parent's occupation and education levels as well as personal aptitudes influence career aspirations while other people choose to follow their passions, regardless of how much or how little money this will make for them (Shumba & Naang, 2013). Amongst other factors that influence the type of career students choose to follow, the background from which they come contributes to choices on career paths. Taking into consideration the money that will be needed to assist to pay for the tuition fees for the type of career choice the student would want to follow. According to a study conducted by Shumba and Naang (2013, p.1030) on the influence of family income on student's choice at universities of technology, it was found that "less than 20 per cent of the respondents' studies were funded by their parents or family members, while most of these respondents (80.1%) were funded by external parties." It shows how the dependence of many students on external parties to fund their higher education in the career of their choice might be a contributing factor to students resorting to available bursaries even if they are career specific. This can be what contributes to people having jobs that they do not like because of the careers that they followed which were not of their choice but circumstance driven. This can also be the reason why there might be people who are not productive at work because it is not what they are passionate about.

Getting education assists students in changing the situation in their families. Blanden and MacMillan (2014) state that students from low socio-economic status families seek (higher)

education as a mechanism to disrupt blockages to intergenerational mobility and progression. This contributes to students wanting to get educated especially if they are the first in their families to be presented with an opportunity to be educated. Mngomezulu, et al., (2017) also found that to help to alleviate the family's living conditions, some students receiving bursaries for their studies were sometimes expected to redirect part of the funding they receive to their families. This urge to want to change the material circumstances in their families can lead to students seeking funding for higher education even if the funding provided is not in line with the career of their choice. According to a study conducted by Shumba and Naang (2013) on the influence of family income on student's choice at universities of technology, it was found that most of the respondents would have studied something else if they had the funds and were not dependent on external funding. This shows that some students might not have given their studies all of their effort and performed better at school due to the fact that they enrolled to study something because there was funding available for it and not studying something they were passionate about.

Funding for higher education plays a very important role especially to students who are from disadvantaged backgrounds who cannot afford education despite needing it the most. It also allows them to decide how to work towards how they can change the situations in their homes based on what they learn at Universities. This is stated by Reed and Hurd (2016, p.1241) who assessed the impact of equity scholarships from access to success, where a number of respondents stated that the "extra free time the scholarship had provided allowed them to meet friends and join clubs, which in turn helped to support their studies and enhance their overall experience of university." A number of students from the same study also reported that getting funding increased their sense of security, alleviated stress and anxiety and allowed them to invest more time and emotional energy into their studies or planning for their future. This shows how the bursaries assist students in adapting to university life and live lives like other students; lives which do not expose their scarce-resourced backgrounds. Here the influence of available bursaries on career choices of students from resource-scarce backgrounds is shown as students shift their worries of getting funding and concentrate on their studies to assist to change the situations in their homes.

2.4. Debates on higher education funding

The funding opportunities made available allow students to have access to higher education as it is a constitutional right to education which is something some students did not have access to in the past. In the 1970s, 80% of higher education in Africa experienced a severe decline in capacity and resources that amounted to crisis. This can contribute a lot to the country because higher education will assist to equip students with necessary skills for employment at the end of their studies. These skills can be used towards making a change to uplift the lives of the people in their communities. This is because the students who receive the funding for higher education may become doctors, nurses, social workers and entrepreneurs assisting the government that funded them to provide adequate services.

Higher education funding assists to give opportunities to those who cannot afford to receive higher education due to lack of funds. Zaleza and Olukoshi (2004) found that access to student loan schemes was to be assured to financially needy students so that tertiary education does not become an exclusive sanctuary of the elite and this was found as one of the major problems with privatized higher education. This allows students from disadvantaged backgrounds to have access to higher education and be able to make a change in their families and communities. By allowing access it can also be seen to be addressing the problems of inequalities that are there in the society. In this manner, higher education will not only be restricted to those who can afford but equal opportunities will be made available to those who cannot afford too.

Policies for funding higher education have not always been accompanied by growth in budget allocations (Zaleza & Olukoshi, 2004). Having accurate budget allocations can assist to make sure that the budget set is used for what it is supposed to and not misused in any manner. Proper budget allocation can also assist to monitor the progress of funds being made available for funding higher education. Through accurate monitoring and evaluation of the policies, it will be clear of the strengths of the policies as well as address what the policies are failing to address. This will help to show government's effectiveness of the measures put in place to address inequalities and funding for higher education.

According to the minister of Science and Technology Naledi Pandor, students who get assistance with higher funding cannot leave the country right after graduation because they have to stick to the loan agreement and pay back the loans (Xala, 2018). These bursary schemes

made available to students must be paid back by the recipients in a form of work or monthly instalments once the recipient has completed their education. This helps these funding schemes to be able to make more money to fund more students. These types of funding schemes play a major role in helping many students to further their education but also become a hold on their lives as they have to work on the bursary demands. The graduates miss any other opportunities presented to them right after they are done with the qualification. Even though bursaries come with demands which may be restraining to some students, these bursaries assist a lot especially for students coming from disadvantaged backgrounds where the student is the first child in the family to go to university and through the bursary they can be employed immediately at the completion of their studies and be able to assist to bring about change to the situations in their homes.

Tuition fee increments cause a heavy burden both on students and on these institutions. Society is not able to meet large increases in their tuition fees and cost of living expenses (Cloete, 2002). This becomes a barrier to student's access to higher education as well as following their career choice. Higher Education is about educating and socializing students and preparing them for the world of work and training students to become entrepreneurs and also create job opportunities (Cloete et al., 2002). Lack of funding remains a problem which has led to movements to challenge the constant tuition fee increments such as the #FeesMustFall movement. This was an ongoing protest by tertiary students which was later joined by concerned citizens of South Africa whom were concerned about the high tuition fee increments which led many students to be excluded from tertiary institutions due to lack of funding. Booysen (2016, p.295) found that the protesters were largely seeking the following: to make education more affordable (perhaps free);

"to make decent student accommodation more affordable; to pay cleaning, security and other staff a living wage; to have the curriculum imparted with more African sources and perspectives; to create mechanisms by which management would engage with students and workers directly, and generally to reduce the amount of 'black pain' that is a foreseeable consequence of financial hardship and alienation from institutional culture."

This movement exposed the joint struggles that students face at institutions of higher learning with the hope for change to help minimize the inequalities and exclusions even in the future.

2.5. #FeesMustFall Movement

The Fees Must Fall movement is a movement which began in 2015 where the students took to the streets to march for free higher education (Xala, 2018). This movement shows how the constant increases in tuition fees affect the students as they collectively decided to protest against them. The students made use of social media to reach others at different universities and to share information quickly and to mobilize particular actions (Hodes, 2016). Baloyi and Isaacs (2015) state that the protesters' and students' demands were not only about access to higher education but also about the nature of higher education itself. The demands also included the issues of race and challenges that came with access to higher education.

State funding and university scholarships do exist, but for many families university fees that cost upwards of R40 000 make higher education an unattainable dream (Baloyi & Isaacs, 2015). This unattainable dream through families not being able to afford the fees becomes a barrier for many students. The increases in tuition fees exclude many students from their constitutional right to get educated and be able to change their lives while those who can afford continue to further their studies. Despite the collapse of apartheid more than 20 years ago, many students claim that they still feel the effects of apartheid and urge the government to rectify the situation (Moloi, et al, 2017, p.212).

The #FeesMustFall movement conveyed popular, collective frustration with these arising costs and students' anger was directed not solely at the government. By Late 2016, whether seeking to participate actively and sympathetically or not, all students and staff in the South African academia were part of #FeesMust-Fall movement in the sense that all had been affected by it. The responses by institutions affected many students' studies and some employees (Hodes, 2016). This shows how the movement did not only affect students directly, but also those who were around them. This movement influenced the changes in higher education funding and contributed to the government working towards a different funding model that is considerate of students who are from disadvantaged backgrounds who cannot afford funding for higher education.

2.6. The current funding model

The National Student Financial Aid Scheme (NSFAS) is a fully subsidised government bursary offered to qualifying students or to support poor and working-class students which replaces

previous loans and partial bursary schemes (Xala, 2018). This model is in the form of a loan to students used to assist with the challenges that come with lack of funding for higher education and the bursary requires the students to pay back at the end of their course. Muller (2017) states that the funding model used in South Africa to loan students funding for higher education requiring that they repay the loan is a problematic model as it constitutes a worsening of equity.

The frequent raising of tuition fees, which is one of the main strategies public universities have resorted to mitigate declining state funding, is not without controversy (Wangenge-Ouma & Cloete, 2008). Government subsidy funding to universities throughout the years has been declining. This led to student tuition fees increasing and this was seen by most institutions as the easiest way to overcome the problems caused by the funding cuts imposed by the government (Cloete et al., 2002).

In the recent years, South Africa has emphasized the importance of social investment and the way they enhance the functioning of individuals, families and communities (Midgely, 2014). Funding for higher education can be seen as a social investment as it assists to eliminate poverty, inequality and unemployment. Social investments have a positive impact on the economy and wider society (Midgely, 2014). This is because social investments done in the education sector assist in equipping students with the relevant skills for them to work to improve the economy and society as a whole. Full bursaries are few and could not possibly address the current or projected needs, and poverty and unemployment are substantial problems facing the SA Government (Zaleza & Olukoshi, 2004). Students in South Africa have limited options for funding their studies (Zaleza and Olukoshi, 2004) and students resort to available options which include loans from commercial banks, part time employment, bursaries and or assistance from family and friends. Social investments from the government contribute a lot to assisting students with funding for their higher education. Looking at other parts of the world, "funding for higher education in Russia is primarily funded by the state and in most European countries public grants constitute the major part of university funding" (Chernova, et al., 2017, p.41). This shows that there are differences in funding for higher education in the world depending on what works for them.

2.7. Theoretical framework

This study uses social exclusion as the theoretical framework. Sociocultural norms, beliefs and practices linked with social exclusion limit people's choices and access to opportunities (Patel, 2015). In relation to this study, Social exclusion helps us to understand how the majority of young people struggling with access to higher education end up choosing courses that are not of their choice. Social exclusion is when a group remains excluded from the mainstream benefits of the society and is prevented in some way from fully enjoying life despite welfare and general wealth (Davids, 2009). People from disadvantaged backgrounds end up being socially excluded from the norms and ways of doing things. This also means when it comes to access to quality health and education such people end up with what they can only afford.

People coming from a disadvantaged background cannot afford the luxuries of life as compared to people who can afford to keep up with the demands of life. They end up finding different means to try to escape the cycle of poverty that they are in which includes a cycle of illiteracy, ill health and hunger. They resort to what is available for them and what they know can help them to escape their situations. This leads to a majority of young people struggling with access to higher education and they end up choosing courses that they are not interested in; courses that have funding available.

Education can be seen as very good in the development process as those who are educated contribute well in the society, they become more creative and contribute to ensure a good and sustainable future. It forms a very important aspect in individuals' lives as well as the social development of the society as whole. Development comes with opportunities being made available to people but at times it comes with systematic exclusions of a minority group. Students from a disadvantaged background who do not afford higher education fees would be left out of many opportunities due to not being able to afford to be part of them leading them to be socially excluded. The social exclusion would lead the students to not be involved in many activities they are meant to be part of. Nel, Troskie-de Bruin and Bitzer (2009) state that social participation, especially on a campus where the majority of students are from relatively privileged backgrounds, seems difficult for students who cannot afford to participate in activities that cost money.

Availability of funding for higher education allows students to choose a career they would like to study for. The career that they choose may be influenced by many aspects considering that

they may easily get employed to change their lives or situations in their families. Most people are heavily influenced either by professions that their parent's favour, or the ones that their educational achievements have opened for them (Hewit, 2010). Other individuals are influenced by careers that offer prospects of higher benefits including salary, allowances and holidays. Most students lack adequate information regarding various careers hence the choices they make are embedded in their perception of the ideal job and the subjects they study in secondary school (Hewit, 2010).

Choosing a career under limited resources is not easy as some students do not afford to pay for the career of their choice leading them to careers that are not of their choice. This means that they end up in careers that are not of their choice which might make them to not be interested in such careers or to not perform well. Ahmed, Sharif and Ahmad (2017) state that the right career choice for students entering into tertiary education is critical because it has an impact on their professional life and future achievement. Therefore, it is very important that funding received for higher education allows students to study for what they are passionate about as they will also be able to provide good and adequate services in the community once they are employed.

Choosing the right career is important in ensuring that individuals lead rewarding lives and are motivated at their jobs so that they can achieve remarkable productivity, thus setting the stage for organizational success and sustainability. Regarding the importance of making the right career choice, it is imperative that individuals are aware of the focus that influence such weighty decisions and do so from a point of knowledge (Nyamwange, 2016). The significance of career choice can be understood by the influence careers have on an individual's income, standard of living, status in society, social contacts, as well as emotional health and feelings of self-worth (Nyamwange, 2016). These influences play a vital role to how the individual will be within the career path that they are following. Hewitt (2010) also states that most people are influenced by careers that their parents favour, others follow the careers that their educational choices have opened for them, some choose to follow their passion regardless of how much money they will receive as salary while others choose the careers that give high income.

2.8. Conclusion

This chapter has looked at the literature regarding lack of funding for higher education, career specific funding in South Africa, influence of available bursaries on career choices of students from resource-scarce backgrounds as well as the debates on higher education funding. It also explored the #FeesMustFall Movement and the current funding model in South Africa. This chapter has also looked at social exclusion as the theoretical framework that is relevant for the study.

CHAPTER THREE

3. METHODOLOGY

3.1. Introduction

This chapter explores the methodology used in this study. This is done by exploring the research approach and design that was used for the study, the population sample and sampling procedures, research instrumentation, pre-testing of the research tool, the methods of data collection as well as the methods of data analysis. The chapter is concluded by looking at the trustworthiness of the study, ethical considerations and the limitations of the research strategy, design and methodology.

3.2. Research approach and design

Qualitative research was the approach that was used for this study. Creswell (2009, p. 4) states that "Qualitative research is a means for exploring and understanding the meaning individuals or groups ascribe to a social or human problem". This type of approach assisted to explore in depth the extent to which a problem affects people. In this study it also assisted to explore the extent to which the problem of lack of funding for higher education affects students who cannot afford the fees for higher education. This has helped to provide understanding of the experiences of the recipients of the career specific bursaries as well as the effect it has on their career choices. This contributes to providing holistic knowledge of the limited funding for higher education and the influence of available bursaries on career choices of students from resource-scarce backgrounds. It also assisted in producing a study that is rich and factual from the data that was gathered. This was through open-ended questions that were asked to the participants allowing them to answer fully. It has helped to get more information from Funza Lushaka and Department of Social Development recipients on how the career specific bursaries influenced their career choices. Qualitative studies are useful in assisting with gathering rich and factual information. This allows the participants to be free to express themselves while providing information that outsiders can use to fully understand the experiences of the participants. This study used the case study approach as its design. Creswell (2009, p.13) states that "a case study is where the researcher explores in depth a programme, event, activity, process, or one or more individuals." Case studies involve in-depth data collection from multiple sources and this may be through observations, interviews or documents (Creswell &

Poth, 2017). This design was suitable for this study because it helped to organize the information of the different experiences from the Funza Lushaka and Social Development bursary recipients showing the commonness from their experiences.

3.3. Population, sample and sampling procedures

Participants for the study were recipients of the Department of Social Development and Funza Lushaka bursaries from the University of the Witwatersrand. A population according to Strydom and Venter (2002) is referred to as individuals in the universe who possess specific characteristics or a set of entities that represent all the measurements of interest to the researcher. A sample of 14 participants where 7 of the participants were recipients of the Funza Lushaka Bursary and 7 other participants were recipients of the Social Development bursary was used and they were approached to participate in the study after the study was thoroughly explained to them. The 14 participants were approached and they agreed to be interviewed. Selection criteria was based on (i) individuals who were recipients of the Social Development and Funza Lushaka Bursary scheme; (ii) who were from a resource-scarce backgrounds and were studying towards a qualification mainly because of the availability of funding for that qualification.

The type of sampling procedure selected for this study was the quota sampling. This sampling procedure ensures that a certain characteristic of a population sample will be represented to the exact extent that the investigator desires (Acharya, Prakash, Saxena, Nigam, 2013). This means that from the population, the researcher has selected those that are relevant for the study based on their specific characteristics. Therefore, the sample for this study was chosen from the population of the University of the Witwatersrand students and the sample was the recipients of the Department of Social Development and Fundza Lushaka bursary. The procedure included approaching the University of the Witwatersrand to request for permission to conduct research in the university. Permission was then asked to interview the Department of Social Development and Fundza Lushaka bursary recipients. The participants were given the participant information sheet (see Appendix A) to read and ask questions where necessary. Arrangements for interviews were made with those who agreed to be part of the study and a consent form was signed by the participants (see appendix B). Once the participants agreed to participate, arrangements were made to have the interviews in one of the tutorial rooms of the University in each of the campus sites.

3.4. Research instrumentation

Semi-structured interview schedule was used as a research instrument for this study. The questions for the interviews were prepared before-hand and structured in a manner that allowed the participants to be asked the relevant questions for the study and to answer fully. The semi-structured interview schedule was good for conducting this study as it assisted to guide the whole interview process.

3.5. Pre-testing of the research tool

The research tool was pre-tested before the actual interviews to check whether the questions asked are applicable to the study and whether they were able to provide relevant information for the study. Interviews were administered to 2 participants (one from education and one from social work) as part of pre-testing. Pre-testing the research tool was also important for the data collection process as it helped the researcher to be prepared for the procedure of collecting the data especially since the questions were personal and might evoke emotions of some of the participants. This tool also assisted with preparation for follow up questions on some of the participant's answers.

3.6. Methods of data collection

Data was collected using face to face interviews with the participants. A meeting was set up with each of the participants to have face to face interviews that took between 45 minutes to 1 hour. The face to face interviews helped in bringing clarity on what the participants were saying as well as to ask any follow up questions where necessary. Royse (2010) states that answers received to a question might lead to an entirely different set of questions often unanticipated as the researcher attempt to learn about a particular individual's life. The participants were given a consent audio recording form to sign which asked for their permission to record the interview that will be conducted (see Appendix D). The audio recording ensured that responses from the participants were presented accurately.

3.7. Methods of data analysis

The thematic method of analysis was used in this study to help with analysing the collected data. One of the benefits of thematic method is its flexibility, as it provides useful research that comes with rich and detailed, yet complex account of data (Braun & Clarke, 2006). The data

is organized into themes. Bryman (2012, p. 580) states that “A theme is a category identified by an analyst through his/her data” and “it provides the researcher with the basis for a theoretical understanding of his or her data can make a theoretical contribution to the literature relating to the research focus. The themes are organized in a manner that follow the six steps by Braun and Cloete (2006) that include familiarizing oneself with the data, generating initial codes from the data to find interesting ideas from the data, searching for themes, reviewing the themes to refine the themes, defining and naming the theme, organizing the themes and producing the report from the themes to produce data that is understandable. This method of analysis assisted with organizing the data that was collected to be presented in a manner that is presentable and easy to understand.

3.8. Trustworthiness of the study

Trustworthiness of a study is measured through looking at the study’s validity and reliability. Validating and considering the reliability of a study is very essential. Validity should include “the degree to which the interpretations and concepts used have mutual meaning for both the participant and the researcher” (Maree, 2007, p. 38). Blanche, Durrheim and Painter (2006, p. 147) state that “to establish measurement validity, the researcher must determine whether the instrument provides a good operational definition of the construct and whether the instrument is suited to the purposes for which it will be used.” The validity of this study was maintained by ensuring that the interviewee is comfortable and remains well informed. The information was to be kept in a safe manner where it cannot be tempered with. The interviews and recordings were kept safe in a password protected laptop. According to Blanche, Durrheim and Painter (2006, p.152) “reliability refers to the dependability of a measurement instrument, that is, the extent to which the instrument yields the same results on repeated trials.” In this study this was done by using and comparing the results from the pre-test to assist to know what to look out for when conducting the study. Bias was looked out for and the information that was collected was transcribed and made available to the participants for them to validate it which the participants were happy to do. In this manner, trustworthiness was ensured.

3.8.1. Credibility

Shenton (2004, p.64) describes credibility as "Internal validity which seeks to ensure that the study measures or tests what is actually intended." This was ensured in the study by having social work and education students who were the actual recipients of the Funza Lushaka and

Department of Social Development bursaries to assist with providing factual information for the study. This ensured that the study tested what it intended to

3.8.2. Transferability

According to Shenton (2004, p.69), transferability is "external validity that is concerned with the extent to which the findings of one study can be applied to other situations." In this study, transferability was visible through the findings of the study as it has assisted to give information on how career specific bursaries affect students from scarce-resourced backgrounds and their career choices. The study made use of social work and education students who were recipients of career specific bursaries helped in getting an understanding of the experiences of other students who also might be using career specific bursaries.

3.8.3. Dependability

Dependability addresses reliability in which "the same techniques, methods and same participants are likely to produce the same results" (Shenton, 2004, p.71). This study used simple and relevant questions which were likely to produce results that are accurate and express the participant's experiences. This is what will assist to produce similar results when using the same methods to repeat the study as the results will show how the recipients share their experiences of using career specific bursaries and how they have influenced their career choices.

3.8.4. Confirmability

Shenton (2004, p. 72) states that "confirmability includes the steps taken to ensure that the findings are the results of the experiences and ideas of the informants rather than the characteristics and preferences of the researcher." This type of validity addresses the biasness of the study to help ensure that the researcher does not direct the participants into the desired answers relevant to the study. This was ensured by the researcher allowing the participants to answer in any way that they wanted to and not ask follow up questions that direct the participants to answer in a desired manner.

3.9. Ethical Considerations

Ethics should be considered when conducting a study. This ensures that things are done in the right manner and that no harm is done to the researcher or to the participants. Ethical considerations influence and relate to many aspects of research process and help researchers to decide whether a field of study is ethically acceptable (Behi & Nolan, 1995).

- Consent: Participation in the study was through the consent of the participants. All of the information with regards to the study was given to the participants through a participation information sheet (see appendix A) and a consent form where the participants were allowed to state whether they would like to participate in the study or not (see appendix B).

- Confidentiality: The researcher intended to maintain confidentiality by making sure that the participant's personal information is not exposed. The researcher ensured this through the consent of the participants by their protecting their identity. This was also ensured by not using the participant's original names but to refer to the Participants as Participant A, B, C etc.

- Doing no harm: Researchers need to protect their research participants and guard against any misconduct (Creswell & Creswell, 2017). The participants were protected by making sure that confidentiality is maintained, they are respected, the place where the interviews will take place is fully secured and convenient and they were not harmed in anyway during the interaction with them.

3.10. Limitations of the research strategy, design and methodology

- Interviewer bias is one of the major limitations that the interviewer may come across. This was dealt with by the researcher through focusing asking direct research questions and avoiding influencing the research in a manner that would influence the participant's responses.

- Participants were encouraged to give their honest answers.

3.11. Conclusion

This chapter has looked at the methodology that was used for this study. This was done by stating the research approach and design that was used for the study. Population, sample and sampling procedures, research instruments, pre-testing of the research tool, the methods of data collection as well as the methods of data analysis were explored. The chapter was concluded by looking at the trustworthiness of the study, ethical considerations and the limitations of the research strategy, design and methodology.

CHAPTER FOUR

4. PRESENTATION OF FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

4.1. Introduction

This section looks at the results of this study. The study sought to investigate how career specific bursaries available to Social Work and Teaching students from resource-scarce backgrounds influence their career choices. Thematic analysis was used to analyse the data into themes and sub-themes. This chapter starts by presenting the demographic information of the participants. The findings are then presented through themes and sub-themes that emerged in the analysis. These main themes that emerged are:

- Importance of furthering one's studies in higher education;
- Influence of family background on the funding for higher education;
- Successes of receiving funding for higher education;
- Challenges faced in terms of funding for higher education;
- The major highlights/experiences of being a student in a higher institution of learning;
- Understanding of the Social Development and Funza Lushaka Bursary;
- How the Funza Lushaka and Social Development bursary assists with funding for higher education;
- What influences choice of careers as well as how the limited of funding affects career choice.

4.2. Demographic information

Table 1: Demographic profile of participants (N=14).

Demographic factor	**Sub-category**	**No.**
1. Gender	Male	7
	Female	7
2. Race	Black	14
3. Year of study	Undergraduate	7
	Postgraduate	7

4. Place of stay during academic year	University residence	4
	University accredited private accommodation	9
	Home	1
5. Funza Lushaka/Social Department bursary recipient	Funza Lushaka	7
	Social Development	7
6. How many years have you used the bursary?	1 year	2
	2 years	1
	3 years	9
	4 years	2
7. First in the family to further their studies in higher education	Yes, the first in the family to further their studies in higher education	8
	No, not the first in the family to further their studies in higher education	6

The table above shows the number of participants who were part of the study. Participants were approached, and of fourteen were available and agreed to be part of the study while two were interested in the study but not available to be interviewed. Of the fourteen participants, seven were female and seven were male, all from the black race. Half were postgraduate students while the other seven were undergraduates. There were equal number of students who used the Funza Lushaka and Department of Social Development Bursary. Most of the participants used the bursaries for 3 years while two used it for 1 year and two for 4 years and only one used it for 2 years.

4.3. Themes and sub-themes emerging from the research study

4.3.1. Importance of furthering one's studies in higher education

Many people choose to further their studies in higher education for various reasons. Many of whom would need to consider the costs linked to higher education such as tuition, accommodation and prescribed textbooks amongst other costs. People choose to further their studies in higher education to increase their chances of employment when opportunities are

made available and to use the knowledge that they receive to assist to alleviate poverty in their families (Mngomezulu, Dhunpath & Munro, 2017). All of the participants in the study shared their views on the importance of furthering studies in higher education. Most of the participants agreed that it is important to further studies in higher education as they believe that it assists to make a difference in their lives.

4.3.1.1. Gaining knowledge, skills and employment from furthering studies in higher education.

Participants highlighted the importance of furthering their studies in institutions of higher learning to gaining knowledge, skills and employment. Higher education assists to equip students with knowledge that they need for employment and to make a difference in their lives as well as contributing to society. There was an association of higher education and employment opportunity as participants felt that there were more chances and opportunities of being employed when one has a qualification from an institution of higher learning. This view can be linked to the context of South Africa, which is characterised by lack of access to opportunities amongst young people in general and black African youth in particular. This is demonstrated by Chernova, et al., (2017) who state that education in South Africa is part of the national innovation systems. This means that as there is a continuous economic and social development, being educated to understand these systems would make people to be able to adjust to the demands of the world. Therefore, when furthering studies in higher education, people can get the necessary skills needed which also assists when employment opportunities are made available. Since unemployment is a huge social issue in South Africa due to slim employment opportunities or opportunities being made with restrictions of wanting certain qualifications, being educated can give people opportunities to be selected for employment or choose to use their qualifications to start their own business. Being qualified with a degree after furthering studies in higher education also assists people with changing the situations in their families and society as well especially those who were previously disadvantaged and not affording basic needs. Participant I had this to say with regards to gaining knowledge, skills and employment:

> *"I think it is important to further studies in higher education because in most of the places we would want do work they need a qualification so if you do not enter into higher education you might stay unemployed unless you want to get into your own business. I also feel that even for opening your own business you might need to acquire*

certain skills". [Interview, Participant I, Undergraduate student and Social Development Bursary recipient]

Participant K, a post graduate student and Social Development Bursary recipient also stated that:

> *"I think it is very important to further your studies for skills development. Things are changing so we need more people who have the knowledge, resources, qualified with the relevant skills to help make a better change in the society".*

This shows how furthering studies in higher education addresses inequality and social exclusion. From the above it is clear that it is important to further studies in higher education as it also gives opportunities to people to gain enough knowledge to become entrepreneurs. Furthering studies in higher education also assists graduates to gain employment when job opportunities are made available. Participant E's response considered the high unemployment rate:

> "*Yes, it is very important because if you look at our country as a whole, there is a shortage of work opportunities and a lot of unemployed youth. There are many people who are not employed who have qualifications but they are at a better chance of getting employment when job opportunities are made available"* [Interview, Participant E, Final year student, Funza Lushaka bursary recipient]

Participant D, a final year student, Funza Lushaka recipient also stated that:

> *"Looking at job vacancies these days, it is not easy to get a job without a qualification in higher education".*

Participant L an under graduate student, Funza Lushaka recipient supported that furthering studies in higher education assists with chances of getting employment by stating that:

> *"Yes, it is important because when looking at South Africa now, the statistics for unemployed people is very high so if I am to be unemployed with a degree, I am at a better chance to get a job unlike someone with no degree at all."*

The discussions above have also been observed by Dirks (2013) who states that proper education has the potential to increase the employability or income generating capacity of

South Africa's majority poor thereby enabling them to be employed or to be entrepreneurs in their own right thus mitigating the high inequality levels in South Africa.

4.3.1.2. Personal growth in Life.

Personal growth in life emerged as one of the consequential factors for participants with regards to furthering studies in higher learning institutions. While some of the participants emphasized the importance of acquiring skills considering the unemployment rate and lack of job opportunities, some of the participants considered furthering studies as a way to grow in life in terms of knowledge, seeing things differently and being better equipped to change life and the lives of others. Institutions of higher learning do not only provide students with education but opportunities to grow and make more informed decisions from the new experiences. This would be different from environments which some students would be coming from, which are environments where decisions are guided by circumstances at home and decisions are being made on behalf of the students by their parents or communities which they live in. In higher institutions of learning there are different people from all over the world who come with a variety of experiences. The university is therefore an environment where students are awarded the opportunity to learn from their daily encounters as they get to experience different things and make decisions that help them to grow.

Personal growth in life can be linked with experiencing change in life by moving from seeing and doing same things every day to moving towards seeing things differently. A change in environment leads to seeing new ways of doing things and learning from the new people that one meet. From these new experiences they get to grow and understand the world in a different manner. Participant B, an undergraduate student, Department of Social Development bursary recipient stated that:

> "*I think that we all need knowledge to understand where we are in the world, to be able to interpret the world and understand ourselves. With the knowledge that we get from higher education we are able to help others and to help our communities to develop."*

The same was echoed by Participant G, an undergraduate student, Department of Social Development bursary recipient who opined that:

"Your world view is different, the way you think and see things becomes different."

The participants did not only consider furthering studies in higher education as growth in life that can only benefit the student but also those around them. This is shown by Participant F, an undergraduate student, Department of Social Development bursary recipient stated that:

> *"Personally, for me it was important for me to further my studies so that I can have a better life not only for myself but also for my family."*

Participant K, a post graduate student, Department of Social Development bursary recipient also supported this by stating that:

> *"I think it is very important to further your studies for skills development. Things are changing so we need more people who have the knowledge, resources, qualified with the relevant skills to help make a better change in the society."*

In terms of furthering studies in higher education, Participant H, an undergraduate student, Department of Social Development bursary recipient stated that:

> *"I would not really say that it is important but it goes with the person's decision because some students get to discover only in university that it is actually not for them."*

The above discussions on the growth in students that come from furthering their studies in higher education is echoed by Jansen (2018) who states that the primary engine for the production of high-level skill and talent for economic growth, technological innovation and societal leadership is in universities where students further their studies. This helps to provide understanding that the importance of higher education assists not only with equipping students with knowledge but also with equipping them with the ability to better their lives.

4.3.2. Influence of family background on the funding for higher education

Students are from different backgrounds in terms of resources. The history of apartheid in South Africa which classified people into different racial groups has left a legacy where some people still have access to opportunities while others do not. This means that how the students afford university education differs based on the backgrounds that they are from. Family background forms a huge part of one's life as it influences the decisions one makes and determines the directions one take. It also determines the opportunities open to an individual. This section explores how family background influences university funding for students

4.3.2.1. Resource-scarce family background.

Coming from a background where the little funds that are available are directed to basic needs has an impact on an individual's access to higher education. This also means that as some families spend years struggling to afford the basic needs, they are more likely to not even afford to pay for their children's fees so that they further their studies in higher education especially if the parents themselves have not had the opportunity to do so. This would be the reason why students from resource strained backgrounds would not be able to have enough or no funding to further their studies in higher institution of learning. Lack of funding limits many people from doing what they would like to do. It takes away the power to make decisions and afford some things as compared to people who would have the resources.

Lack of power, income and resources to make choices and take advantage of opportunities are what Davids (2009) describes as what forms part of the realities of people living in poverty. The backgrounds of the participants in this study differed and some highlighted how their family backgrounds were resource strained. The participants shared their backgrounds and expressed how it affected their funding for higher education.

Participant B, an undergraduate student, Department of Social Development Bursary recipient mentioned that:

> *"I am from a poor family background. I was raised by my grandparents and I did not have someone to look up to. We did not have money to pay for higher education."*

Participant L, an undergraduate student, Funza Lushaka bursary recipient shared that:

> *"My family background in terms of finances, I am from a very poor background and my mother is unemployed and I do not have a father. It affected my funding in first year because in my first year I was so lost as I did not have registration money."*

Participant N, a final year student, Funza Lushaka bursary recipient also stated that

> "M*y brother was helping out with funding for my accommodation and everything that I needed for the first three months and could not pay for everything on his own for the rest of the year."*

> *"I think we are okay at home and can afford most of the things. My mom is a single parent as I lost my dad when I was very young. We do have some challenges because we are 3 at home and my mom is the only one who works. I do not think that we were going to afford to pay for my tuition fees if it was not for the Department of Social Development bursary"* [Interview, Participant I, an undergraduate student, Department of Social Development bursary recipient]

These participants expressed how their backgrounds affected their funding for higher education especially at the beginning of the year. The money that was needed the most i.e. for registration as well as accommodation, was not available for the above participants. Dynamics such as being raised by single parents or foster parents as well as the financial status of the family in general contributed to the challenge of the family not affording to pay for the students tuition fees. Such dynamics expose the different hardships in South Africa such as single headed households where only one parent has to work towards making sure that their children are taken care of which might be difficult because of having more than one child to take care of alone. This shows how the resource scarce family backgrounds of the participants contributed to the students' access to higher education.

4.3.2.2. Dependence on external financial support.

Being from a family background where the family cannot afford funding for higher education can lead to students resorting to other options that would assist them to fund their higher education for them to be able to change their lives and the circumstances they grew up in. Participants highlighted their dependence on external financial support due to poor family background. Not affording funding for higher education creates students who are desperate to further their studies in higher education therefore resorting to any external financial support that is available. This would mean that the students seek external support and become fully dependent on the financial support to fund for their higher education throughout the years they are in a higher institution of learning.

Due to the participants' poor backgrounds, some of the participants shared that they had to resort to and depended on external financial support to fund for their higher education. This shows the importance of external support in assisting students especially those who are from resource-scarce backgrounds. This is also highlighted in a study conducted by Shumba and Naang (2013) which found that less than 20 per cent of the respondents' studies were funded

by their parents or family members, while most of these respondents in the study (80.1%) were funded by external parties. NSFAS as well as Funza Lushaka and Social Development bursaries played a huge and important role in funding student's fees for higher education.

Participant A, a post graduate student, Funza Lushaka bursary recipient stated that:

> *"Before Funza Lushaka approved my bursary application, I had started using NSFAS. They paid for my tuition, gave me a stipend and paid for my accommodation. I feel that because of my background, I was eligible for any funding so that is how I also received the Funza Lushaka bursary."*

Similarly, Participant K, a post graduate student, Department of Social Development bursary recipient felt that background of potential beneficiaries is considered when getting funding:

> *"It is between middle and poor class so because of it I was able to get NSFAS and Social Development bursary because they check the background."*

These participants from poor backgrounds show how external funding support assisted them. Applying for the funding was not easy for all of the participants and not all of the participants were lucky in terms of getting financial support immediately when they applied and keeping the funding that they received.

In light of the above, Participant H, an undergraduate student, Department of Social Development bursary recipient stated that:

> *"I applied for NSFAS and did not get it but luckily I managed to get the Social Development bursary which also pressured me to work harder."*

As a result of poor backgrounds, students were forced to be dependent on external financial support or resorted to work to be able to fund for their higher education as well as to assist with needs at home. This is seen through participant E, a final year student, Funza Lushaka bursary recipient who had to work to be able to fund for their higher education:

> *"The challenge I faced was when I failed one module and when you repeat a year Funza Lushaka stops funding you. So, for a year I was without funding so I looked for a job and started working and at home they assisted with my funding that year".*

Participant E, a final year student, Funza Lushaka bursary recipient continued to state that *"I was working as a student assistant at the ICT and this helped because I could pay for some of my fees and some of my accommodation with the money I received."*

Similarly, participant M, final year student, Funza Lushaka bursary recipient stated that:

"I also had to work when I had Funza. The situation at home had also affected my thinking. I had to work so that in December I would buy whatever they needed at home."

Funding for higher education can get expensive such that some students who are from resource-scarce backgrounds cannot afford it. This then shows how the family background influences students' funding for higher education which makes them to be dependent on external financial support for assistance as shown by the participants above. It is also seen from the participants that sometimes the money that students receive from external financial support is not enough they also have to assist at home. This is echoed by Mngomezulu, et al. (2017) who found that students receiving bursaries for their studies are sometimes expected to redirect part of the funding they receive to their families so as to alleviate the family's poor living conditions. This shows that from depending on external financial support, the students also find ways to try to also make a difference in their families. This might have been a very tough situation for both the family and the students as they would be trying to make ends meet.

4.3.3. Successes of receiving funding for higher education

This section looks at the successes resulting from receiving funding for higher education. The successes that students face in terms of funding for higher education vary. Some of the successes come after experiencing some challenges while others come with no challenges at all. Most of the participants stated that getting the funding itself was a success in terms of funding for their higher education. Finances for higher education can be stressful to students and cause them discomfort as they increasingly worry about their financial situations. Therefore, this might be the reason why getting finances for higher education becomes a relief to a student's life as it makes them to worry less about finances and to put more of their effort on their academic work.

4.3.3.1. Financial relief.

Being successful when getting funding for higher education especially for students who have been through many struggles trying to get funding can be seen as a huge financial breakthrough

especially with the limited funding opportunities in South Africa. This is because the success would make a huge difference in students' lives and their families' especially if the student is the first in the family to further their studies in higher education. Success in funding for higher education brings financial relief to the student and the family as they would worry less about being constantly reminded about their financial constraints. The family becomes financially relived in a manner that they can concentrate on providing other forms of support to the student. As part of the successes with regard to getting funding for higher education, Participant C, a final year student, Funza Lushaka bursary recipient stated that:

> *"The successes were that I could be able to study without worrying without finances which is a relief."*

Participant J, an undergraduate student, Department of Social Development bursary recipient also stated that:

> *"The fact that I got funding is a success in itself for me."*

Funding for higher education brings very positive results and students believed that getting funding for higher education is a huge success because it brings about change. This can be seen from Participant A, a post graduate student, Funza Lushaka recipient who stated that:

> *"Everything changed for the better honestly."*

Due to the various struggles that students go through applying for funding for higher education, it is visible from the participants in this study that for many students getting assistance with funding for higher education is a success. This also shows that through receiving the funding, the students are able to shift their focus back to it being more on school work and not worry about funding for their higher education. This success of getting funding for higher education also enables families the freedom to redirect the little income that they have to cater for other needs that the family may have.

4.3.3.2. Job security.

As part of looking at the successes of funding for higher education, the participants considered the success of receiving a bursary as a way of job security. The participants spoke of success in terms of employment after getting their qualification. With the high unemployment rate in South Africa, a lot of employment opportunities are mostly open for those who are qualified.

Some of the bursaries are career specific and they offer the students employment when they become qualified. This is a success looking at the high unemployment rate in South Africa and many of the students who qualify for such bursaries want to be employed and be able to assist at their homes. When the young person who is from a resource-scarce background gets employed, it becomes a breakthrough as the person will be able to relieve the family of the stresses of needing to make a plan for their child's funding for higher education. With the skills and knowledge the student then becomes equipped and has the freedom to also become an entrepreneur and even create employment. Participants highlighted that getting funding for higher education does not only help to bring about change but also comes with opportunities such as being employed after the student graduates.

Participant C, a final year student, Funza Lushaka bursary recipient stated that:

"It secures you with a job when you are done."

Participant N, a final year student, Funza Lushaka bursary recipient stated that:

> *"So, as I have been funded for four years, it means that I have to work for them for the four years."*

Participant M, a final year student, Funza Lushaka bursary recipient considered the future as well in the success of getting funding for higher education and stated that:

> *"With the remaining you can invest it for the next year or buy something nice for your family."*

From the participants' responses above, it can be seen that getting funding for higher education makes a differences in the lives of students including job security. This is positive especially considering the inequalities of the past with regards to poverty and unemployment. Through the participants getting employment immediately after they are done with their studies it assists them to achieve more than they would if they were unemployed. They are able to be included in the ever changing development and systems of South Africa. They are able to gain experience in the work environment without having to wait months or years to be employed. This experience ensures them to be well equipped with the necessary skills to also have the freedom to become an entrepreneur and create employment one day if they would like to start a business.

4.3.4. Challenges faced in terms of funding for higher education

Challenges that come with not having funding for higher education cause distress for many students. This section discusses how the challenges faced in terms of funding for higher education become a burden to the family during their time of not affording things including the basic needs. Challenges with funding for their higher education shifts parents' focus from what they should be focusing on to worrying about their financial crisis. This creates students who are constantly worried and anxious for a miracle of financial assistance.

While some students succeed in terms of their funding for higher education, some just experience a great period of challenges before. The challenges differ based on the backgrounds of the participants are from. Being from a resource scarce background becomes the first challenge in itself. The different challenges that the participants encountered are:

> *"The only challenge I faced was not having the chance to stay at a school residence which made it not easy as I was travelling.*" [Interview, Participant D, a final year student, Funza Lushaka bursary recipient]

> *"I feel like the first few weeks when university opens every student faces challenges. Having to assure that you have funding was one of the challenges but I feel like my background helped me to get the bursary"* [Interview, Participant G, an undergraduate student, Funza Lushaka bursary recipient]

Participant A, post graduate student, Funza Lushaka bursary recipient also stated that:

> *"To a certain extent I felt humiliated by the whole process of being taken back and forth but I never gave up. I just felt that I needed to explain and prove to them how poor I am before they could fund me."*

Being a student in an institution of higher learning includes having to consider additional costs to make it easier to navigate the student life. This includes working towards having all or the necessary needs of a student. For a student who is from a resource scarce background it may not be that easy to afford all that a student needs. This includes them having to travel long distance to get to university or not affording certain gadgets or books to assist them to learn better. They would also face difficulties of having to expose their background in order to be able to qualify for funding which may be emotionally challenging for some of the students to

go through especially in their first year of study in an environment they are not familiar with, even though for some, exposing the background that they are from assisted that they qualify for the bursary. As there are regular increases in tuition fees, financial difficulties would mean that the student is not only able to afford tuition but accommodation, meals and prescribed books as well. This also exposes students from disadvantaged background as they become socially excluded as they would not be able access to some areas or be like other students. We are able to then see the huge impact that the assistance from the bursaries provide by allowing that students receive allowance for accommodation, prescribed books as well as allowance for food.

4.3.4.1. Delay.

The participants faced a variety of challenges such as delays with regard to the funders responding and paying on time which caused stress to the participants. As students from resource scarce backgrounds already face challenges of not having access to certain resources, delay of funding for their higher education may cause more disruption in their academic life which might have an influence on how they also perform academically. Delays related to funding mean that there would be a delay for the student to register, find accommodation or have access to the prescribed books on time or examination results. This challenge also makes the student vulnerable and desperate.

With regards to this, Participant H, an undergraduate student, Department of Social Development bursary recipient shared that:

> *"The challenge I had was when I applied for the funding that funds for students who come from backgrounds like mine which is NSFAS where I applied and appealed and received no response at all. I applied at Social Development and still did not receive a response."*

Similarly, Participant D, a final year student, Funza Lushaka bursary recipient stated that:

> *"NSFAS did not pay for my fees on time which is why my results were delayed."*

The funding did not only come with delays of not paying on time or not getting responses on time but also conditions linked to the funding such as if a student fails, they will lose the

funding or no additional costs will be covered by the bursaries. This is shown by Participants E and J who state that:

> *"The only challenge I faced was when I failed one module and when you repeat a year Funza Lushaka stops funding you. So, for a year I was without funding so I looked for a job and started working and at home they also assisted with my funding for that year."* [Interview, Participant E, a final year student, Funza Lushaka bursary recipient]

> *"Most of the challenges I faced was after I received the funding. This is with regards to top ups and Social Development does not pay for extra fees because my accommodation is expensive than the money that they give us so we often have to top up from our own pockets."* [Interview, Participant J, an undergraduate student, Department of Social Development bursary recipient]

Delays in funding for higher education causes more stress and discomfort to the family and the students because the student's access to higher education at that time would not be certain. This would serve as a reminder to the family of their financial circumstances of not being able to pay for their child's higher education especially in times where the family will have to make a plan to top up where the financial assistance is not enough.

4.3.5. The major highlights/experiences of being a student in a higher institution of learning

This section looks at the major highlights/experiences of being a student in a higher institution of learning. Being a student in higher education means one having different experiences and highlights especially for students who do not have to worry about funding for higher education. This is observed by Reed and Hurd (2016) who found that the extra free time the scholarship provided allowed them to meet friends and join clubs, which in turn helped to support their studies and enhance their overall experience of university. There were similarities where the students stated how higher institution assists one to learn more, meet new people and see things differently.

4.3.5.1. Meeting new people and seeing things differently.

As students experience higher education in different ways, the fact that they get to meet new people and see things differently would mean that they get to experience university life differently. An institution of higher learning is a very large space that allows people to meet

new people, form relationships and learn every day. Different kinds of people in the world meet in the higher institution of learning and get to share experiences and learn from each other. Meeting new people means that getting out of the comfort zone, engaging with new people and exploring new opportunities. Students start to see things differently and start to learn more about themselves in the new space. The student becomes exposed to freedom of speech and movement with the opportunity to learn something new each and every day. Seeing things differently in a new environment assists students to respect differences, think in different ways and move from looking at things the same way all of the time.

Participant F, an undergraduate student, Department of Social Development bursary recipient stated during the interview that:

> *"I think that once you get to higher institution of learning you see things differently. The way of thinking is so different from people who are just sitting at home. The environment as a whole allows you to spend time with other students from different backgrounds and makes you understand the world in a different way rather than being at home and with people who think of things in the same way every day."*

> *"Coming to university makes you meet a lot of new people and experience different things. I have experienced things that I never thought I would experience like having a social life and going out."* [Interview, Participant J, an undergraduate student, Department of Social Development bursary recipient]

Participant D, a final year student, Funza Lushaka bursary recipient's major highlight was that:

> *"To be a student helps a lot with socializing, getting to know a lot of people, helps in terms of getting experience and it also helped me with my self-esteem."*

With regards to seeing things differently, Participant B, an undergraduate student, Department of Social Development bursary recipient stated that:

> *"I am coming from a community where I was doing things in a certain way but when I came this side I was introduced to diversity and seeing life in a different perspective. Even now I am still learning this new way of looking at things differently."*

With regards to meeting new people and seeing things differently, Participant C, a final year student, Funza Lushaka bursary recipient stated:

"Firstly, it's meeting people who are like minded and those who help you to reach your goals. Secondly it helps you to see a different perspective of life."

From the responses, the participants shared that the university setting assists many students to see things differently as they meet different people and are involved in different activities each and every day. The institution of higher learning is normally where there are diverse number of students from different parts of the world coming together for the purpose of acquiring knowledge and skills. Students also get the opportunity to form groups and learn from each other and also learn new things assisting them to be able to see life differently.

4.3.5.2. Focus on academic work.

Academics form a very important aspect in each and every student's life. They provide a platform for the student to learn and grow. A higher learning institution provides students with different forms of learning. Some students choose to focus on their academics and make their whole higher institution of learning experience to be about that. This for some students would be because of their backgrounds. The students make sure that they perform well in their studies to become top of the class. It can also be linked to wanting to finish the qualification on time so that progress in their lives would not be delayed. Finishing on time would mean being employable and being able to change the situation in their families. Such students choose to not engage in student's social life such as going to parties or focusing on anything else besides school work. For students who have no funding or who struggled to get funding, the focus would be on academics to make sure that they perform well and not lose their funding. The students reckon that loss of funding would lead them back to distress and delay their time of making a change in the family lives. Therefore, such students would value their academics as a way of finally getting the opportunity to make a change in their lives.

Participant M, a final year student, Funza Lushaka bursary recipient shows how academics are the important highlight of being in a higher learning institution because:

"One must be responsible because there are no parents at the University. Time matters as well, especially if you are a person of academia, spend your time doing that than focus on other things which will lead you to losing your bursary."

Similarly, Participant H, an undergraduate student, Department of Social Development bursary recipient also stated that:

"I even had to learn how to write academic essays and not just the basic essays that I was writing in my English class in high school. I had to learn all of that alone and it has been quite a difficult journey but I never want to give up because I have made it this far and also having funding pushes me to not give up. I think that having a funding that covers my books, accommodation and other aspects help me a lot to not give up."

According to Participant N, a final year student, Funza Lushaka bursary recipient:

"Varsity is Awesome! I knew about other careers but at this point I cannot be a career advisor but I am more expose to a lot of things. Now I also know what I want to do after my degree. I also got to learn why some people drop out of courses or change courses in their first year and it is because in University you see more courses and learn more about them. You become exposed a lot despite the fact that there is also partying and going out a lot."

The responses above show that higher education experiences are different for all students. While for some it is just mainly about academics, for some it is more about meeting new people and seeing things differently.

4.3.6. Understanding of the Social development and Funza Lushaka Bursaries

The participants showed clear understanding of the Social development and Funza Lushaka Bursaries. What was common amongst the participants is that they stated that the bursaries are career specific are there because of the shortage of teachers and social workers and the bursaries are used to make sure that there is no more a shortage as they offer jobs after the students qualify. With regards to the Funza Lushaka bursary, it was found from the participants that the bursary mostly funds students who study subjects like physical science, accounting, mathematics and languages.

4.3.6.1. Background check.

The issue of background checks emerged from the participants with regards to the Social development and Funza Lushaka Bursaries. Financial circumstances of the students are considered when bursaries are being awarded to students. This also means that each bursary has a criterion which students have to meet in order to be considered eligible for certain bursaries. Background checks allow the funders to check if they are funding the specific people that they are aiming to fund. Therefore, the background checks allow them not to offer funding

to students who do not need the funding. Some bursaries would be to address the issue of lack of funding for higher education directed at students from scarce resourced backgrounds not having funding for higher education. In this case it would mean that they fund specifically for the certain number of students who are from resource-scarce backgrounds.

With regards to the preceding Participant B, an undergraduate student, Department of Social Development bursary recipient also stated that:

> *"I think it is there to help kids especially those who are like me coming from poor backgrounds where we do not even have enough money to buy food at the end of the month or even to buy clothes. I feel like is there to help people like us."*

Participant C, a postgraduate student, Funza Lushaka bursary recipient mentioned that:

> *"Secondly it tries to help the students who are from poor backgrounds as it focuses more on them to give them access to higher education."*

According to Participant H, an undergraduate student, Department of Social Development bursary recipient:

> *"Social development bursary is there to assist kids who cannot afford fees, it is more of a society welfare of giving back, to limit unemployment amongst youth and also to boast the country's economy. I think it is more focused on welfare and putting people first which is their motto."*

4.3.7. How the Funza Lushaka and Social Development bursaries assist with funding for higher education

According to Jansen (2018), a growing number of students need not only tuition (fees) but also accommodation, textbooks and other learning materials, transportation to and from campus (for students not living in university residences), food and even basic living expenses. The participants shared how the bursaries assist them with their funding for higher education with not just tuition. The participants mentioned that both bursaries are similar as they assist with paying the following: registration, tuition, allowance**,** accommodation**,** books and food.

4.3.7.1. Financial assistance to the family.

The participants stated how the Funza Lushaka and Social Development bursaries assists with funding for their higher education linking it to how it provides financial assistance to their

families because their families would be relieved from the financial burden of paying for the fees. This would be because the family in which the students are from may not afford to fund their studies. This would also mean that the pressure of funding the student's education is offloaded by the bursary. A student is a full responsibility of the family which they come from. Coming from a family background where the family struggles financially is often not easy for them to fully support their child who is a student especially with the high expenses of a higher institution of learning. Therefore, bursaries provide financial assistance to the family when they really need it the most especially as the bursary also gives stipends to students to buy food and some that would be left over they would use it to assist at home. This makes a complete difference to many families. Participant N, a final year student, Funza Lushaka bursary recipient shared how the bursary provided assistance to the family by stating that:

> *"It is nice because it is less stress for my parents and everyone else."*

Participant M who is also a final year student using the Funza Lushaka bursary similarly stated that:

> *"It helped me to be a Deputy parent at home and buy my siblings what they needed. It played an important and significant role in my family because we were able to have all that we needed."*

4.3.8. What influences choice of career

There are many different things that would influence the choices of career such as passion, family background and career specific funding. Career aspirations are influenced by many factors and Shumba and Naang (2013) name a few which include gender, socioeconomic status, parent's occupation and education levels, personal aptitudes and passion, regardless of how much or how little money this will make for them.

4.3.8.1. Passion

Passion came up during the interviews as having influence in choosing a career. This would mean that what influenced the choice of career of some of the participants was that they were already passionate and interested in that career. This also means that the participants are well informed and had interest in the career knowing that they would contribute a lot in society. Proper research of careers assists students to be able to choose the type of career they would like to follow. Being able to be aware of the different careers assists one to be able to

familiarise themselves with the career for it to one day be qualified in that career and perform really well. Having more people who follow career choices of their choice means having good service in all parts of the world as passionate service providers would be giving their all. This encourages good, effective and quick service delivery that we can all benefit from unlike being in a career one is less passionate about. A career one would be less passionate about would sometimes leads to slow and poor service. Unfortunately, it is not the same for everyone. Passion for some career choices comes from encounters and every day experiences. Participant C, a final year student, Funza Lushaka bursary participant stated that:

> *"I struggled in University especially in my first year. It intrigued me to want to understand how come in Matric I passed well but struggled in my first year. So, I started being curious of ways we can teach learners to better prepare them for the subjects they are going to choose in University. So that passion grew and made me want to pursue education and the fact that I already had background of Mathematics was an advantage to help me know what I need to assist learners to help them to do well."*

Similarly, participant K, a post graduate student, Department of Social Development bursary recipient stated that:

> *"I feel like I have always been a social worker at heart. Social work is a career that is normally undermined and did not take serious but I knew that I wanted to be a social worker anyway because I know the impact social workers have on individuals and the community and in the world as a whole."*

Participant M, a final year student, Funza Lushaka bursary recipient mentioned that they did not love the career but were born for that career by stating that:

> *"I do not love teaching; I just like teaching"*

> *"Social work was my last option. I always knew that I want to work with people".* [Interview, Participant I, an undergraduate student, Department of Social Development bursary recipient]

Some of the participants of this study shared the passion that they had for the career that they chose. The bursary that they got formed as great assistance for them to be able to follow their

dreams. For some of the participants, even though it might have not been their first choice of career, they grew to like the career choice.

4.3.8.2. Family background.

The background one comes from may influence choice of career in different ways. Experiences that one go through assist to direct them towards a certain career. For example, a child who grew up in a foster home with constant visits and assistance from a social worker may develop love for the career. Also, learners who normally assist other learners to understand better in class may end up enjoying teaching and end up taking teaching as their career. Some of the backgrounds include financially constrained families. This directs students to look for careers that have employment as well as funding. This means that even if the career they go for is not of their choice but has funding and guarantees them employment they would go for it. It would be to be able to work towards changing the circumstances that they are from. This shows how the family background directly and indirectly influences career choices. Regarding background, Participant D, a final year student using the Funza Lushaka bursary said:

> *"My career choice was honestly influence by my background because I did not want to be a teacher. After realizing I was out of school for two years, I decided to do a degree that will not really take time so that I can get a job that is when I decided to study teaching."*

Participant B, an undergraduate student using the Department of Social Development bursary shared what influenced their career choice by stating that:

> *"The main thing that influenced my choice of career is the poverty that I am coming from, the environment in which I grew up in. I grew up in a poor family and poor community so I just wanted to be a social worker to be able to assist my family and the community I am coming from."*

Participant J, an undergraduate student, Department of Social Development bursary also stated that:

> *"I would say that the experience that I had in high school where we would go to orphanages made me feel privileged and see that there are people who are really struggling and need assistance. I applied for social work because I really wanted to be that person that helps and empowers people."*

The significance of career choice can be understood by the influence careers have on an individual's income, standard of living, status in society, social contacts, as well as emotional health and feelings of self-worth (Nyamwange, 2016). This was proven by the participants views as their career choices were centred around passion and background.

4.3.9. How limited funding affects career choice

There is a reality of lack of funding opportunities in South Africa. This can be seen through #FeesMustFall movements that happened where students protested for access to free education for all. Limited funding affects career choice as many students would choose careers that would have career specific funding just for them to be able to further their studies in a higher institution of learning.

4.3.9.1. Being aware of limited funding for higher education.

Participants were aware of the lack of funding for higher education is a reality in South Africa. This means better preparedness when they enter the higher institution of learning as they find different ways of being funded. This would mean that such students start early to look for funding for their higher education as compared to students who are not aware of the limited funding for higher education. Being aware of the limited funding for higher education also means that one is involved in realities that happen in South Africa. Some of the participants were affected as they had to go with a career that is not of their choice because of limited funding. This is because the participants were not aware of the lack of funding which then made them to change their choice of career to a career that has career specific funding. Some of the participants expressed that they were aware of the limited funding for higher education.

> *"I was not forced into choosing education but I just thought if there are more chances of getting funding for it then why not go for it."* [Interview, Participant N, a final year student, Funza Lushaka bursary recipient]

Participant M, a final year student, Funza Lushaka bursary recipient stated that:

> *"I think my last resort was going to be to apply for NSFAS and also look for other sources of funding that is what I would like to advice everyone else who would like to further their studies and are in need of funding."*

In terms of the effect of limited funding on career choice another participant stated that:

> *"It affected me in a good way because when applying for higher education as I knew that I do not have funding and I knew that I need to apply for NSFAS."* [Interview, Participant E, a final year student, Funza Lushaka bursary recipient]

For some of the participants, the limited funding led them to choose careers that is not of their choice such as Participants L and D who shared their experiences on limited funding too stated that:

According to Participant L, an undergraduate student, Funza Lushaka bursary recipient:

> *"The limited funding did have an influence on my career choice because I could not choose Engineering knowing that it is expensive and I do not have the funds for it. With regards to teaching, NSFAS was enough to cover all of the necessary fees and even get a stipend".*

Participant D in terms of the influence of limited funding on career choice also stated that:

> *"It influenced it in a way that I did not follow the career choice that I have always wanted from high school as I wanted to become a doctor. I applied at Medunsa but I could not study that year because I did not have funding and I had not applied for NSFAS. This contributed to me taking a gap year."* [Interview, Participant D, Final year student, Lushaka bursary recipient]

From the participants views we are able to see that limited funding for higher education affects students' choice of career in different ways. Sometimes the students may be aware of the limited funding for higher education and decide to change their choice of career but at times some of the students have to change their choice of career because of not being able to get funding for their career of choice.

4.4. Conclusion

This section has looked at the results that show the influence of available bursaries on the career choices of students from resource-scarce backgrounds looking at views from the Social Work and Education students. Thematic analysis was used to analyse the data into themes and sub-themes. The chapter started by looking at the demographic information of the participants being presented and discussed. There were nine main themes and they were the following: Importance of furthering one's studies in higher education, influence of family background on

the funding for higher education, successes faced in terms of funding for higher education, challenges faced in terms of funding for higher education, the major highlights/experiences of being a student in a higher institution of learning, understanding of the Social development and Funza Lushaka Bursaries, how the Funza Lushaka and Social Development bursaries assists with funding for higher education, and what influences choice of careers. The chapter ended with looking at how the limited of funding affects career choice.

CHAPTER FIVE

5. MAIN FINDINGS, CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

5.1. Introduction

Themes and subthemes emerged through conducting the study on the influence of available bursaries on career choices of students from resource-scarce backgrounds. These themes were the importance of furthering one's studies in higher education, influence of family background on the funding for higher education, successes of receiving funding for higher education, challenges faced in terms of funding for higher education, the major highlights/experiences of being a student being in a higher institution of learning, understanding of the Social development and Funza Lushaka Bursaries, how the Funza Lushaka and Social Development bursaries assists with funding for higher education, what influences choice of careers and looking how the limited of funding affects career choice. These themes were discussed in the previous chapter and helped us to understand the influences of available bursaries on career choices of students from resource-scarce backgrounds. This chapter summarizes the results and draws conclusions from the results and suggests recommendations.

5.2. Main findings of the study in relation to the aim and objectives of the study

The purpose of this study was to explore the influence of available bursaries on career choices of students from resource-scarce backgrounds through a case study of social work and education students at Wits University. The research question of the study was on the influence of available career specific bursaries and how they affect the career choices of students from resource-scarce backgrounds.

Objective one: To explore how students from resource-scarce backgrounds are affected by lack of funding for higher education

This objective was addressed when the participants shared how their backgrounds contributed and were affected by lack of funding for higher education.

Sub-themes that emerged from the results with regards to this objective were that:

1. The **background** in which the participants are from affected their ability to afford higher education especially the money most needed for tuition and accommodation. This is because of the participants were from resource-scarce backgrounds which do not allow them to afford to fund for their higher education.

2. **Dependence on external financial support** was another subtheme that emerged from the participants sharing how they were affected by the lack of funding for higher education. The lack of funding for higher education caused students to be partially or fully dependent on external financial support as they had to work towards meeting the selection criteria as well as having to follow and abide by the rules of the external funders.

From the information gathered under this objective it is clear that students from resource-scarce backgrounds often need funding for their higher education. With the limited funding for higher education, the students' background makes their situation worse. This creates a dependence on external funders because of wanting to further their studies in higher education. This also means that one would either have to find work or ask family for funding or sit the year out.

Objective two: To identify ways in which the lack of funding influenced the choices of students from resource-scarce backgrounds

From the data that was collected and presented in chapter four, some of the participants were well aware of the lack of funding which made them to choose a career that has funding. This is because of knowing that there is lack of funding for higher education and as students from scarce-resourced background they know that the background that they are from does not allow them to be able to fund their higher education. This is the way in which the lack of funding influenced the choice of career of students from resource-scarce backgrounds. There were some participants who were not aware of the lack of funding for higher education which made them change their career to something that was not their choice due to not having funds for their choice career while for those who already had the passion for the careers that they chose were helped by the fact that there was a bursary available to fund for their career of choice

Objective three: To determine how students navigate the university in the career field that was chosen mainly because of availability of funding for the specific career

1. Some of the participants mentioned that their experience of being in higher education was fulfilled by the fact that they would **meet new people** which they can learn from and also learn more about themselves. This shows that some participants choose to not make their higher education experience not only about academics but also about meeting new people in the university setting.

2. Some of the participants based their experience in higher education on **academics.** This is because the participants chose to focus on their academics to enjoy their experience in higher education better. This helps us to see that participants choose to navigate their way in university in different ways.

5.3. Conclusion

In conclusion, this study aimed at exploring the influence of available bursaries on career choices of students from disadvantaged backgrounds looking at Funza Lushaka and Department of Social Development bursary recipients. From the qualitative interviews that were conducted the participants were able to express the different influences of the available bursaries on the choices of careers of students from disadvantaged backgrounds. The backgrounds which the students are from as well as the dependence on external financial contribute to the ways in which students from resource-scarce backgrounds are affected by lack of funding for higher education.

Ways in which career choices of students are influenced differs. Lack of funding for higher education affects students' choices of careers differently considering the fact that some students would be well aware of the fact that there is lack of funding for higher education while some students would not be.

From the study it was discovered that it is important to further studies in higher education as it assists with providing knowledge, skills as well as the likelihood of being considered should employment opportunities arise. Experiences and highlights that come with students furthering their studies in higher education allow students to meet new people, learn new things and see this differently. This is why all students should be awarded the opportunity to further their studies in the career of their choice as allows them to work towards changing their lives and the lives around them. This will assist through making sure that students get educated and are not affected by the background that they are from as well as funding to further their education.

5.4. Recommendations

Based on the findings from the study it can be seen that higher education is important whether one would like to further their studies or just to equip themselves with the necessary skills to become entrepreneurs. Access to institutions of higher learning should be made available for all learners who would like to further their studies. It is therefore recommended that there should be more bursaries made available for all students in institutions of higher education that assists not only in funding for students tuition but to cover all of the students fees including transport, prescribed books, food and accommodation where no top ups will be needed. It is also recommended that there should not only be career specific bursaries such as Funza Lushaka, Department of Social Development bursary and NSFAS but funding for students in careers of their choice that cover all of the necessary costs. There should be career days in schools for learners to be educated about the different careers and entrepreneurship. Learners must be made aware of the different funding that is available to fund for their studies in a higher institution of learning. For learners to have more freedom to choose which career to follow, it helps to avoid many students who either change their courses halfway in the year or employed in the career that was not of their choice and end up not making any valuable contribution in the society. These recommendations are important so that we can have a society with more people with the knowledge and skills to contribute positively to the economy.

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SOCIAL WORK
THE SCHOOL OF HUMAN AND COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT (SHCD)

Private Bag 3, Wits, 2050 • Tel: 011 717 4472 • Fax: 011 717 4473 • E-mail: socialwork.SHCD@wits.ac.za

Annexure A: Participant information sheet:

The Influence of Available Bursaries on Career Choices of Students from Scarce-Resourced Backgrounds: A Case Study of Social Work and Education Students

Good day

My name is Magdeline Ramutla and I am currently doing my Master's Degree in Social Development at the University of the Witwatersrand. As part of the requirements for the degree, I am conducting research and my research is on The Influence of Available Bursaries on Career Choices of Students from Disadvantaged Backgrounds. It is anticipated that the findings may contribute to those who wish to pursue their career in social work and teaching and how they can get funding through the Department of Social Development (DSD) Bursary and Funza Lushaka. Furthermore, the study has a potential of helping understand the complexities of the limited recourses and the need for higher education.

As a recipient of the Department of Social Development/Funza Lushaka Bursary scheme with the relevant information for the study, I wish to invite you to participate in my study. If you accept my invitation, your participation would be voluntary and you are free to withdraw at any time without penalty. There are no consequences or personal benefits of participating in this study. If you agree to take part, I would arrange to interview you at a time and place that is suitable for you. The interview will last approximately one hour. If you choose to participate, you may also refuse to answer any questions that you feel uncomfortable with answering. If you decide to participate, I will ask your permission to audio-record the interview. No one other than the researcher and the supervisor will have access to the tapes. The tapes will be kept in a locked computer for two years following any publications or for six years if no publications

emanate from the study. A copy of your interview transcript without any identifying information will be stored permanently in a locked cupboard and may be used for future research.

Please be assured that your name and personal details will be kept confidential and no identifying information will be included in the final research report. The results of the research may also be used for academic purposes (including books, journals and conference proceedings) and a summary of findings will be made available to participants on request. Participants who may be affected psychologically by the questions asked in this study will be referred to the Counselling Careers and Development Unit (CCDU) for emotional support.

Please contact me on 0711907448 or email: magdeline.ramutla2@gmail.com or my supervisor Ms Motlalepule Nathane-Taulela on motlalepule.nathane-taulela@wits.ac.za or on 0117174471 if you have any questions regarding my study. We shall answer them to the best of our ability. If you have any complaints about my study, please contact Human Research Ethics Committee (Non-Medical) Contact details: Chairperson: jasper.knight@wits.ac.za or the administrator: Mrs Shaun Scheepers- Tel 011 717 1408 or shaun.scheepers@wits.ac.za.

Thank you for taking the time to consider participating in the study.

Yours sincerely,

Magdeline Ramutla

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Private Bag 3, Wits, 2050 • Tel: 011 717 4472 • Fax: 011 717 4473 • E-mail: socialwork.SHCD@wits.ac.za

Annexure B: Consent form for participating in the study

The Influence of Available Bursaries on Career Choices of Students from Scarce-Resourced Backgrounds: A Case Study of Social Work and Education Students

I hereby consent to participate in the research study. The purpose and procedures of the study have been explained to me.

I understand that:

- My participation in this study is voluntary and I may withdraw from the study without being disadvantaged in any way.
- I may choose not to answer any specific questions asked if I do not wish to do so.
- There are no foreseeable benefits or particular risks associated with participation in this study.
- My identity will be kept strictly confidential, and any information that may identify me, will be removed from the interview transcript.
- A copy of my interview transcript without any identifying information will be stored permanently in a locked cupboard and may be used for future research.
- I understand that my responses will be sued in the write up of my honours project and may also be presented in conferences, book chapters, journal articles or books.

Name of participant: _____

Date: _____

Signature: _____

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Annexure C: Semi-structured interview guide in the study

The Influence of Available Bursaries on Career Choices of Students from Scarce-Resourced Backgrounds: A Case Study Of Social Work and Education Students

Participants demographical information

Participant number: Race:

Gender: Age:

Year of study:

Place of stay during academic year:

Funza Lushaka/Social Department bursary recipient:

How many years have you used the bursary?:

Are you the first in your family to further their studies in higher education?:

1. Do you think it is important to further your studies in higher education? Why ?
2. How is the family background that you are from and how has it influenced your funding for higher education?
3. May you describe the successes faced in terms of funding for your higher education?
4. What are the challenges faced in terms of funding for your higher education?
5. What are your major highlights/experiences as a student being in a higher institution of learning?
6. Share with me your understanding of the Social development/Funza Lushaka Bursary

7. How has the bursary assisted with funding for your higher education?
8. What influenced your choice of career?
9. How has the limited funding affected your career choice?

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Annexure D: Consent form for audio-taping of the interview

The Influence of Available Bursaries on Career Choices of Students From Scarce-Resourced Backgrounds: A Case Study Of Social Work and Education Students

I hereby consent to audio-recording of the interview.

I understand that:

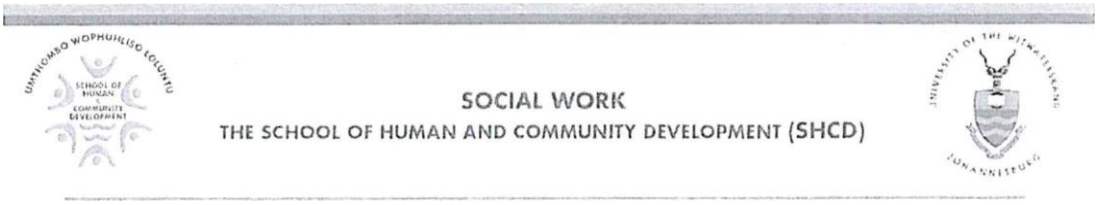
- The recording will be stored in a secure location (a cupboard or password protected computer) with restricted access to the researcher and the research supervisor.
- The recording will be transcribed and any information that could identify me will be removed.
- When the data analysis and write-up of the research study is complete, the audio recording of the interview will be kept for two years following any publications or for six years if no publications emanate from the study.
- The transcript with all identifying information directly linked to me removed, will be stored permanently and may be used for future research.
- Direct quotes from my interview, without any information that could identify me may be cited in the research report or other write-ups of the research.

Name: _____

Date: _____

Signature: _____

Appendix E: Ethics certificate



DEPARTMENTAL HUMAN RESEARCH ETHICS COMMITTEE (SOCIAL WORK) CLEARANCE CERTIFICATE

PROTOCOL NUMBER: SW/19/05/05

PROJECT TITLE: The influence of available bursaries on career choices of students from scarce resourced backgrounds: A case study of social work and education students

RESEARCHER/S: M Ramutla (859684)

SCHOOL/DEPARTMENT: SHCD Social Work

DATE CONSIDERED: 16 May 2019

DECISION OF THE DEPARTMENTAL COMMITTEE: Approved

RATIFIED BY THE WITS HREC (NON-MEDICAL): 21 June 2019

EXPIRY DATE: 31 March 2020

cnctCò

DATE: 25 June 2019 CHAIRPERSON: Dr E Pretorius

Cc: Supervisor: Ms M Nathane-Taulela

DECLARATION OF RESEARCHER(S)

To be completed in DUPLICATE and ONE COPY returned to the Administrative Assistant, Room 8, Department of Social Work, Umthombo Building Basement.

Appendix F: Registrar approval

UNIVERSITY OF
REGISTRAR
WITWATFRSRAND,
JOHANNFSBURG

THEOFFICE OF THE DEPUTY

08 July 2019

Magdeline
Ramutla Student
number 859684
MA Social Development
SHC,D Social Work

TO WHOM IT MAY CONCERN

"The influence of available bursaries on career choices of students from scarce resourced backgrounds: A case study of social work and education students"

This letter serves to confirm that the above project has received permission to be conducted on University premises, and/or involving staff and/or students of the University as research participants. In undertaking this research, you agree to abide by all University regulations for conducting research on campus and to respect participants' rights to withdraw from participation at any time.

If you are conducting research on certain student cohorts, year groups or courses willliitl specific Schools and within Ille leaching lerrn, perrnlsslon must be sought from Heads of School or individual academics.

Ethical clearance has been obtained. (Protocol Number: SW/19/05/05)

Nico een Potgieter