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Young black women's narratives of "room-sharing" in university residences, Wits University

MACC Research Report

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Supervisor: Prof. Malose Langa

Declaration

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

Date: 14 December 2022

Student: Tshiamo Sibanyoni

Signature: Tshiamo Sibanyoni

ABSTRACT

In recent years, there has been an increase in the number of black students in South Africa who can now afford to attend university. As encouraging as this has been, there has been one great challenge in that there is now a significant need for accommodation, more than was needed during the apartheid era. Some universities, including the University of the Witwatersrand (popularly known as Wits University), attempted to resolve this by having first-year students share rooms and building and acquiring off-campus student accommodation. This study explored young black female students' experiences of sharing a residence room at Wits University and how these experiences affect them daily. The results suggested that a positive relationship with one's roommate made the transition to university and room-sharing much easier. The positive relationship further elicited a sense of belonging in the residence, whereas a negative relationship fostered a sense of exclusion. There were also links between a positive relationship with one's roommate and benefits in academic performance. Class, different personalities (introversion versus extroversion), safety in residences, space negotiation and how management can improve were also explored. Key recommendations include equal allocation of resources and security for on-campus and off-campus residences, as well as an allowance to change one's roommate in the face of unresolved and untenable conflict.

Keywords: residence, cultural capital, habitus, room-sharing, roommate friendships, studies, class, sense of belonging, sense of exclusion.

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1 INTRODUCTION

1.1 Background

In recent years, there has been an increase in the number of black students in South African universities who can now afford to attend University (Akoojee & Nkomo, 2007; Le Grange, 2009; Deacon et al., 2009). During apartheid, most black students had no access to higher education. As a result of this inequality, there has been a concerted effort to rectify this injustice post-apartheid (Deacon et al., 2009; Le Grange, 2009; Nkabinde, 1997). As encouraging as this has been, there has been one great challenge: there is now a significant need for accommodation, more than was needed during apartheid (Teferra & Altbachl, 2004). Some universities have been faced with the challenge of accommodating these large numbers of students and are struggling to do so. The University of the Witwatersrand (Wits University) has not been immune to this challenge (Nkabinde, 1997; Le Grange, 2009). Increasing student numbers meant changing residence needs, resulting in Wits University extending its residences beyond campus. Therefore, some students reside on campus and some off campus, and in these two types of residences, some students share rooms.

This study explored black female students' narratives of "room-sharing" in residences at Wits University. Oftentimes, first-year students have to share rooms (University of the Witwatersrand [Wits University], n.d.). This study explored their experiences of room-sharing, which can equally be challenging and beneficial. Issues of classism, how they negotiate space, different university lifestyles, different personalities, sense of belonging or exclusion, and dynamics of roommate relationships were also explored. There was also a discussion to determine how these experiences have affected their academic performance. This study is important because it adds to the theory and academic literature relating to black female students and university life with respect to residences and room-sharing. Secondly, Wits University management could benefit from this research by incorporating the findings to improve residence life and student's experiences.

1.2 Rationale

This study focused on female roommates as opposed to both male and female. This is because there are numerous studies on men but not enough studies on women, particularly black women and black female students (Mama, 1995). Mama (1995) reports that mostly men were studied in the past due to the patriarchal nature of our society. Even when women were studied, they were often misrepresented and reported on from a patriarchal stance and viewpoint, and more focus was on white women than black women (Mama, 1995). Black women's opinion was seldom important (Mama, 1995). Studies show how black women would be discouraged from being successful to not threaten men. They faced multiple challenges on many fronts (Patterson et al., 2016). There has been a significant attempt to improve on what has been recorded and portray women in a more truthful way, focusing on their experiences and realities and not necessarily in relation to men (Patterson et al., 2016).

Female students' experiences at university have not been any different. A South African study measuring stress levels at university, conducted by Bojuwoye (2002), reported that women on campus experienced higher levels of stress than men. The fact that the university setting is patriarchal means that male students have a better university experience overall (Bojuwoye, 2002; Gqola, 2021). Female students reported facing more challenges than their male counterparts, which caused them more stress and anxiety. This proves that even at South African universities, female students' experiences tend to be more negative than male students' experiences (Bojuwoye, 2002). Gqola (2021) argued that these challenges are because of the 'female fear factory' (Gqola, 2021, p. 62), a type of fear manufactured by institutions to support patriarchy and perpetuate the effects of patriarchy. This, in turn, ensures that women live in fear of men and their surroundings, with the university environment being no exception. Gqola (2021) stated that 'patriarchy terrorises women' (Gqola, 2021, p. 54) and that this is why there needs to be a fear created to ensure that patriarchy stays in control. Gqola further explains the notion of female fear factory:

> '…prolonged exposure to direct teaching about the dangers that await if women behave in certain ways or are seen to "step out of line", the repetition of ideas about proper gender in symbolic sites, school, family, religious sites lead to the "collective emotional orientation" to fear. These sites inculcate fluency and reinforce the Female Fear Factory by producing and reproducing it until fear becomes the collective experience of women in many societies.' (Gqola, 2021, p. 61 & 62)

Female students not only have to deal with this fear instilled by institutions and their environment but also have to excel academically while grappling with this fear; a fear that often affects their mental health. In the past, universities did not often consider this challenge and how it could impact female students' academic performance (Falkof & van Staden, 2020). Universities have made a concerted effort in recent years to rectify this by making counselling services widely available (Falkof & van Staden, 2020).

Gender inequality is another challenge that women on campus have to grapple with. This gender inequality is prevalent in the whole education system (Pandor, 2005; Gqola, 2021). Many female students at universities often experience this inequality and other challenges due to the fact that the system is very patriarchal (Teferra & Altbachl, 2004; Gqola, 2021). The biggest challenge that South African female students face on campus is sexual harassment (Pandor, 2005; Gqola, 2021). Unfortunately, this gender inequality means that the sexual harassment reported by women is seldom dealt with efficiently (Gqola, 2007).

> 'Data available shows that rape reported to the police (240 incidents of rape and attempted rape per 100,000 women each year) represents the tip of an iceberg of sexual coercion. Representative community-based surveys have found, for example, that in the 17–48 age group there are 2070 such incidents per 100,000 women per year.' (Jewkes & Abrahams, 2002, p. 1231)

Statistics inform us that one in every two women will be sexually harassed at least once in their lifetime (Gqola, 2007; Fitzgerald, 1993). Men often feel entitled to women's bodies, and as such, women's bodies are not their own; this is partly why

gender-based violence statistics are very high, because, according to patriarchy, women's lives are disposable (Gqola, 2021). Half of the women interviewed in the Fitzgerald (1993) study reported that they had experienced sexual harassment at university. Women do not feel safe in their environments due to high statistics of rape (Gqola, 2002). Sexual harassment, rape and gender-based violence are prevalent in our society and more needs to be done to reduce the high incidence.

Another study conducted at the University of Kwazulu-Natal revealed that female students live in fear while on campus (Gordon & Collins, 2013). They similarly reported feeling that they had no support from university management. They felt that the lack of management in dealing with reported cases of harassment and abuse had discouraged them from coming forward (Gordon & Collins, 2013). Some of the reasons these female students felt unsafe were because they were often blamed for the assault and made to feel as though they were responsible for the assault and rape they had endured. They were so fearful that they avoided walking at night by themselves (Gordon & Collins, 2013).

Gqola (2021) theorises that patriarchy operates on fear. She further discusses how girls are raised differently from boys and that certain 'scripts' get handed down through generations to 'keep girl children safe'; however, she argues that these scripts are patriarchy's way of ensuring that women stay fearful, perpetuating the female fear factory, but also ensuring that women police themselves in following these scripts and rules (Gqola, 2021, p.113).

Gqola (2021) discusses four scripts but admits that there are potentially more. The first script is: 'Dress like a good, respectable girl so that you can be chosen as a proper wife and earn respect by association…so you do not look like a despicable woman who enjoys sex…' (Gqola, 2021, p. 117). Women have often been blamed for seducing men by dressing provocatively, and as such, women would often be advised not to wear short dresses at the taxi rank or in public spaces (Tsatsi, 2020b), and yet men would not be held equally responsible for their actions, which is problematic. The second script is: 'Do not head out after dark and, if you do, ask men you know to walk with you…' (Gqola, 2021, p. 120). This is particularly relevant in

Johannesburg, where one is advised not to walk in certain parts/streets alone, especially at night (Gevisser, 2014). However, even walking with men you know does not guarantee safety, as it has often been reported that some sexual perpetrators are men known and sometimes close to the victims (Gqola, 2021).

The third script that Gqola (2021) discusses is: 'Stay in school so that you are not dependant on a man. When he starts to act in ways that make you uncomfortable, unsafe, or he outright abuses you, leave.' (Gqola, 2021, p. 123). This rule also does not guarantee safety, as women who are victims of abuse often struggle to leave their abusive partner, regardless of their academic qualifications (Gqola, 2021). The last script is: 'Learn to fight so that you know both how to defend yourself effectively and how to inflict the most harm on a man's body…report violence and get protection orders. Go to the police for help.' (Gqola, 2021, p. 124); yet, many women have been turned away by the police and told to work on their issues with their boyfriends/husbands. If they are not turned away, they must produce irrefutable proof of the abuse. As such, many women do not trust the police to protect them or take them seriously when they cry out for help (Gqola, 2021).

These scripts and the others not mentioned here are meant to ensure women's safety; and yet even with most women following these scripts to the letter, they still get harassed in the street, abused by men they do not know and men they know, and they still suffer death at the hands of their loved ones. The scripts are also problematic as they hold the woman responsible for their safety while seldom holding the man accountable for his actions (Gqola, 2021).

There have not been many studies conducted relating to room-sharing, and those that have been conducted often focus on comparing interracial room-sharing to same race room-sharing and are often conducted abroad (Shook & Fazio, 2008a; Shook & Fazio, 2008b). There is, therefore, a gap in the theory relating to the experiences of South African black female students, and this study will fill that gap by recording the experiences of young black female students in South Africa.

This study makes recommendations to university managements across South Africa and Africa to improve first-time students' experiences at university and in residences, particularly those who are either in the minority or are from disadvantaged backgrounds. This will ensure that residences are a "home away from home" for all students.

Two different types of room-sharing are discussed in this report. Some roommates have separate bedrooms but share a living space (dining area, kitchen and bathroom). Then there are roommates who share a room that has two beds (University of Witwatersrand, n.d.). For this study, participants from both types of room-sharing were interviewed to explore how they experience room-sharing and how vastly different or similar these experiences might be. Secondly, to note how roommates from both types of room-sharing negotiate their space and how different or similar this negotiating might be.

Whether a student resides on or off campus can significantly affect their university experience. Khozaei et al. (2010) conducted a study at the University of Malaysia and reported several factors that affected students' university experiences; for example, how far the residence is from the university, the living conditions of that particular residence and mechanisms put in place to ensure the students' lives are comfortable; this was further confirmed by a study conducted by Graham et al. (2018) at Indiana University. According to Khozaei et al. (2010) and Graham et al. (2018), a student's experience could be drastically different depending on where the residence is situated. Both studies found that students who resided on campus were happier than students who resided off campus because students on campus were central and had easier access to all other venues and facilities that they needed (for example, the library and computer laboratory), whereas students off campus did not have these same benefits. This is partly why the current study focused on female students who reside on campus and those who reside off campus to report their different living experiences.

A study conducted by Wilcox et al. (2005) reported that the two biggest reasons students left university without completing their studies were their inability to make

friends and difficult living arrangements. Often, people believe that academic failure and the stress associated with it are the only reasons students leave university. Importantly, the current study shows that this is not necessarily the case, further proving the importance of this study. If difficult living conditions could be the reason why some students do not complete their studies, university managements would do well to create interventions to improve students' living conditions.

1.3 Research Aims and Questions

The central questions of the study were:

1. What are the young black female students' experiences with having a roommate?
2. How do these experiences (positive or negative) affect young black female students daily?

The central research aims were:

1. To explore young black female students' experiences of sharing a residence room at Wits University.
2. To explore how these experiences (positive or negative) affect these young black female students daily.

This included consideration of the following secondary questions:

- How do young female black students negotiate their space given how similar or different roommates might be from each other?
- How do young female black students experience this residential community – do they feel a sense of belonging or a sense of exclusion?
- How have these experiences affected their day-to-day living and/or academic performance?

2 LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1 First-Time University Students

2.1.1 Entering university for the first time

Entering university for the first time can be quite a stressful experience (Wilcox et al., 2005; Friedlander et al., 2007). It is often a significant transition, as moving away from home for the first time can be challenging for most young adults. Students often need to adjust to a new environment, and studies show that most students often struggle with this adjustment (Wilcox et al., 2005; Bazana & Mogotsi, 2017). Some students have been known to leave university without completing their studies due to this struggle (Wilcox et al., 2005; Bazana & Mogotsi, 2017).

Studies report, however, that some factors might make the transition to university slightly more bearable. Finding supportive friends during stressful situations seemed to make first-year students adjust more easily (Wilcox et al., 2005; Friedlander et al., 2007; Bojuwoye, 2002). This also positively affected their first-year experience, with most students reporting that they felt a sense of belonging (Friedlander et al., 2007). Female students seemed to appreciate the friendship support more, with most reporting this is how they survived their first year at university (Friedlander et al., 2007). Leaving home can be stressful; therefore, positive living arrangements also help students cope better by reducing the negative impact of leaving home for the first time (Wilcox, 2005).

Disadvantaged black students seem to struggle the most in their first year at university (Bojuwoye, 2002; Pillay & Ngcobo, 2010; Walker & Mathebula, 2019; Bazana & Mogotsi, 2017). Akoojee and Nkomo (2007) conducted a study at the University of Pretoria and reported that black students struggled to adjust as most of their schooling experience in high school was below par compared to university expectations. Most of them also did not have access to technology, with some coming into contact with it for the first time at university (Walker & Mathebula, 2019; Bazana & Mogotsi, 2017), which would be challenging as computers are utilised for most things at university, including submission of assignments and for

research (Brown & Czerniewicz, 2008). This often resulted in high failure and dropout rates in the first year (Pillay & Ngcobo, 2010; Walker & Mathebula, 2019; Bazana & Mogotsi, 2017). Black students reported that a fear of failure and accommodation challenges significantly affected their first-year experience (Pillay & Ngcobo, 2010).

The difficulty that disadvantaged black students experience at university highlights the debate between meeting the university admissions criteria versus being ready for university life (Wilson-Strydom, 2010). Wilson-Strydom (2010) argues that just because a student has passed well and is accepted at university does not mean that that student is ready and understands what is required to succeed at university. Wilson-Strydom (2010) discusses four concepts that need to be considered for students to be ready and successful at university:

> '1. Key cognitive strategies – which include problem solving, formulation, reasoning and argumentation.
>
> 2. Key content – which includes key structures, concepts and knowledge.
>
> 3. Academic behaviour such as study skills and time management.
>
> 4. Contextual skills – which includes awareness and understanding how the University system works and its culture' (Wilson-Strydom, 2010, p. 4).

However, Bazana and Mogotsi (2017) argue that most disadvantaged students stuggle at university due to the fact that these students have to forgo their black identity and take on the social identity of their university, which is most often "white" in nature, which would be foreign to most rural students. Most of these universities did not accept black students during apartheid and as such had a particular identity, but this identity did not change to accommodate black students post-apartheid (Bazana & Mogotsi, 2017). Bazana and Mogotsi (2017) further argue that most black students end up giving up their culture, heritage, language and traditions in order to fit in at university.

In a study conducted by Walker and Mathebula (2019) at the University of Free State, disadvantaged black students reported that one of the other reasons they struggled with the transition from their rural home to university was that they could not afford necessities such as toiletries, food and textbooks. Having to worry about where their next meal will come from, as well as not having money for transport and sometimes not being able to pay rent for accommodation, affected their ability to focus on their studies (Walker & Mathebula, 2019).

Another stress affecting students is that some are first-generation students, meaning they are the first to attend university in their families, implying there is added pressure to perform well academically, with some needing to support their families when they finish university, further adding to the pressure (Mangoma & Wilson-Prangley, 2018). The transition from high school to university is often challenging, more so for disadvantaged black students who also have to process personal difficulties that might affect their ability to focus on their studies (Walker & Mathebula, 2019) and university readiness (Wilson-Strydom, 2010). These students need more support from university management to succeed at university (Wilson-Strydom, 2010).

2.1.2 Entering Johannesburg for the first time

Every year, multitudes flock to Johannesburg for the first time seeking jobs or studying opportunities (Gevisser, 2014; Walker & Mathebula, 2019; Cabrita & Mlangeni, 2020; Mosselson, 2020). The adjustment for these students can be more difficult as not only are they entering university for the first time, but they also have to get used to a new province and city; with some of them experiencing a city for the first time as they grew up in a rural area (Gevisser, 2014; Walker & Mathebula, 2019; Bazana & Mogotsi, 2017).

Gauteng, meaning the place of gold, was initially a mining town, and this is how the name came about (Gevisser, 2014). Gauteng initially represented a place of toil and hardship for black people, as most men had to leave their wives behind in the rural areas to make a living to support their families (Msimang, 2020). The women who

came to Gauteng as domestic workers would also leave their families behind, including small children, to earn a living and support their families back home (Gevisser, 2014; Cabrita & Mlangeni, 2020).

Gauteng is also known for its deep racial divide and inequality (Gevisser, 2014). Often, comparisons are made between Sandton and Alexandra, which are only separated by a bridge (Gevisser, 2014; Hook, 2020). Even though they are neighbours, these two areas represent some of the wealthiest in Gauteng (Sandton) and some of the poorest (Alexandra), further illuminating this inequality. Johannesburg, a city of Gauteng, is known for high crime rates, affecting the poor and rich alike (Falkof & van Staden, 2020; Mosselson, 2020). These high crime rates have resulted in heightened anxiety in the occupants of the City (Falkof & van Staden, 2020).

University students are not immune to this anxiety, which worsens because they not only have to worry about their safety but also have to perform well academically to pass. Falkof and van Staden (2020) reported that the Counselling and Careers Development Unit at Wits University had been stretched to capacity due to students dealing with depression and anxiety as a result of the pressure emanating from academic performance, the danger of physical harm, unaffordable fees and house/residence challenges. This danger of physical harm is twice as high for female students, as they face the fear of gender-based violence daily (Gqola, 2021). Wits University female students can be assaulted anywhere; on the university campus, while walking in the streets of Braamfontein surrounding the campus, or while waiting for a taxi at the Bree or Noord Street Taxi Ranks (Masango, 2020; Tsatsi, 2020b; Gqola, 2021). It is, therefore, no surprise that these female students deal with anxiety daily.

2.2 History

2.2.1 History of Wits University residences

Wits University was initially a school of mines and officially became a university in 1922 (Murray, 1982). Sunnyside Residence was the first residence built in 1920,

followed by College and Dalrymple Houses. Sunnyside was reserved for female students, while College and Dalrymple Houses housed male students (Murray, 1982). When black students started attending Wits University, they stayed at Wolhunter Native Hostel in Sophiatown, as blacks and whites were not allowed to share space as per the apartheid rules (Christie & Collins, 1982; Murray, 1982). At the time, Wits University and the University of Cape Town were the only universities that accepted black students (Bazana & Mogotsi, 2017).

A black students' residence was later built, called The Douglas Smith House for Africans, on the university's West Campus and was the first residence that included both male and female students (Murray, 1982). Knockando Halls of Residence (for males) and Medhurst Halls of Residence (for females) were built off campus as more students came from outside Johannesburg and required accommodation (Murray, 1982). Jubilee Hall Residence for female students was built in 1972 and named after the university's 50th jubilee (Munro, n.d.).

Sunnyside Residence was initially called Isabel Dalrymple House and was named after the Council Chairman's, Sir William Dalrymple's wife. The name was later changed to Sunnyside Residence in 1983, named after Lord Milner's private residence in Parktown (Munro, n.d.). The residence was also known to host feminist meetings, where policies were drawn and presented to the university management to better the lives of female staff and female students alike. The values of Sunnyside Residence as a supportive community for female students have been passed down through generations of female students (Munro, n.d.).

Currently, Wits University has catering residences and self-catering residences, divided into six clusters. 'In catering residences, meals are provided as part of the residence package. In self-catering accommodation, no meals are provided, but the residence provides catering facilities, including stoves, microwaves and fridges.' (University of the Witwatersrand, n.d., p. 1).

The East Campus Cluster residences are located on campus and include Sunnyside and Jubilee Hall Residences, which are female-only residences; Men's Halls of

Residence, a male-only residence; and International House, a mixed residence housing international and postgraduate students. The West Campus Cluster residences are mixed-gender, on-campus residences and include Barnato Hall, David Webster Hall and West Campus Village, which is for postgraduate students (University of the Witwatersrand, n.d.). The Braamfontein Cluster residences are located in Braamfontein, within walking distance from the university, and are mixed-gender, self-catering residences. The residences in this cluster include Braamfontein Centre on Jorissen Street; Noswal Hall on Stiemens Street opposite the School of the Arts; Rennie House Apartments, on Hoofd Street and opposite the Joburg Theatre; and Yale Village, which is on Empire Street and close to the Yale Road north university entrance (University of the Witwatersrand, n.d.).

The Highfield Cluster is on the Wits University Education Campus in Parktown, close to the Medical School. The residences included in this cluster are Girton, Medhurst and Reith Halls of Residence, which are female-only, catered residences. The Parktown Cluster is also in Parktown and includes the male-only Knockando Halls of Residence, close to the Donald Gordon Medical Centre, and the Ernest Oppenheimer Halls of Residence. The Wits Junction Cluster is on Junction Avenue and houses postgraduate students, postdoctoral fellows and visiting academics (University of the Witwatersrand, n.d.). Over the years, Wits University management has made a concerted effort to accommodate more students; however, many students still do not get space in the residences and have to find accommodation in private lodgings in and around Johannesburg.

2.2.2 History of protests and the #FeesMustFall movement

Education has always been a contentious issue in South Africa, even during apartheid (Christie & Collins, 1982; Davies, 1996; Healy-Clancy, 2017). Missionaries initially came to South Africa to build schools for black people; however, at the height of apartheid (the 1950s), some of these schools were closed down to make way for Bantu Education schools, which focused on training black students to be nurses, teachers or work with their hands (Christie & Collins, 1982; Healy-Clancy, 2017). Most mothers were not happy with Bantu Education, as they preferred the

Mission schools, which taught Christian values and provided more opportunities for their children; as a result, they staged a protest, which was one of the first educational protests of the time. The apartheid government ignored their concerns, resulting in the mothers sending their children back to school as they had no choice, albeit unhappy (Healy-Clancy, 2017).

The second significant protest in the history of black education took place in Soweto on the 16th of June 1976, when black students took to the streets to protest the introduction of Afrikaans in their schools (Davies, 1996; Healy-Clancy, 2017). This quickly spread throughout the country with various students protesting; however, these were not as widely covered by the media as the Soweto uprising, particularly with the shooting of Hector Peterson, who became the face of the brutality of the apartheid government on black youth (Healy-Clancy, 2017).

Protesting for quality education did not end when the apartheid government was overthrown in the 1990s (Healy-Clancy, 2017) but continued with students protesting for equal access to education for everyone (Healy-Clancy, 2017; Hlatshwayo & Fomunyam, 2019). This eventually led to the now-famous #FeesMustFall movement (Healy-Clancy, 2017). Protests started in 2016 and gained momentum (Langa, 2017). The two main reasons for the #FeesMustFall movement were to protest the exorbitant university fees unaffordable for most poor black students and the decolonising of education – inclusion of African scholars and an African-centred curriculum (Langa 2017; Healy-Clancy, 2017; Malabela, 2017; Hlatshwayo & Fomunyam, 2019).

Similar to the Soweto uprising, the media mainly covered the protests at Wits University and the University of Cape Town, with less coverage from other universities, with the public criticising this as they lamented that all students matter and not just those in the “elite” universities (Langa, 2017). Yet again, similarly to the Soweto uprising, what started as peaceful protests soon escalated to violence and the burning of university infrastructure when most university managements called the police instead of engaging with the students (Langa, 2017; Malabela, 2017).

The fight for equal access to education is not a new phenomenon. It started during apartheid when black students protested Bantu Education and the inequality between white schools and black schools (Davies, 1996; Langa, 2017; Healy-Clancy, 2017). It has evolved over the years with various protests for different reasons, culminating in the recent #FeesMustFall and #DecolonizingEducation movements (Langa, 2017; Healy-Clancy, 2017; Malabela, 2017).

2.3 Roommate Relationships and Academic Performance

Transitioning from high school to university can be a challenging and sometimes traumatic experience; having someone to share these experiences with can help one adjust to university life (Erb et al., 2014; Wahl, 2014; Akoojee & Nkomo, 2007). Tinto and Cullen (1973) theorised that students being fully involved in their academic life, as well as building relationships on campus contributed immensely to those students completing their university journey and not dropping out. A combination of these two factors were likely to see students become successful in their university journey (Davidson & Wilson, 2013).

Erb et al. (2014) conducted a study at George Mason University in Virginia, USA; it is worth noting that the university has more white students than black students. In this study, it was discovered that university roommate relationships could positively affect one's well-being and help one to adjust to university life. This is particularly important when there has been an increase in students struggling emotionally, which has sometimes led to even dire consequences such as attempted suicide (Falkof & van Staden, 2020; Makhubela, 2021).

Falkof and van Staden (2020) report that there has been an increase in anxiety and depression amongst university students due to a fear of crime and bodily harm, exorbitant university fees and residence challenges. This anxiety and depression are especially heightened in black female students as they also have to worry about gender-based violence, sexual assault and rape (Gqola, 2021; Tsatsi, 2020). According to Erb et al. (2014) and Davidson and Wilson (2013), sound, healthy

university relationships and immersing oneself in their academic studies could be a protective factor for struggling students.

Students who had good relationships with their roommates were also more likely to perform well academically (Waldo, 1984; Freeman et al., 2007; Wahl, 2014). This was because the students had someone to share their stresses and daily activities with, which positively contributed to them performing better academically. Students were also more likely to be encouraged to study when seeing their roommates studying. This is particularly important given that disadvantaged black students seem to struggle the most in their first year and, as such, make up the most of those who drop out of university before completing their degrees (Pillay & Ngcobo, 2010; Akoojee & Nkomo, 2007). These studies prove that having a roommate can be beneficial in the early years of university life.

A positive university and residence experience has good friendships and relationships combined with excellent academic invovement and performance (Tinto & Cullen, 1973; Chickering & Reisser, 1993). This implies that to have a positive university experience, one must not only focus on academic performance but must equally invest in university friendships and relationships. A few years later, Wahl (2014) wrote an article that corroborated what Chickering and Reisser (1993) had claimed. He found that a healthy combination of academic performance and one's social interactions were directly correlated to a positive university experience. He concluded that the leadership managements across African universities must take this into account when planning their curricular and residence activities (Wahl, 2014).

2.4 Class Struggles and Students in Residences

'Class is in everything about the person, from location of home, to the dress, their body, their accent' (Lucey et al., 2003, p. 39).

Classism often refers to the hierarchy in society, where those from advantaged backgrounds look down upon those from disadvantaged backgrounds and often want to remain separate from them (Grillo, 2018; Akgun, 2020). Class is often

associated with economic capital, which is one's material possessions and wealth (Bourdieu, 1986). According to Bourdieu (1986), economic capital is also linked to social capital. Social capital often determines group membership and boundaries of who can join or cannot join the group. Therefore class, which is often contributed to by economic capital, also contributes to one's social capital. This dominant group aim to maintain the dominant class and ensure that those who do not meet the criteria are excluded (Akgun, 2020; Bech, 2021). Bourdieu (1984; 1987) theorised that the social hierarchy is often inscribed in people's minds, either based on their family background or educational qualifications. Whereas, Akgun (2020) linked class to habitus, as he discussed that certain class behaviours would have been learnt and embodied from a young age. Therefore, there are boundaries '(nobility, title and family)' (Lin, 1999, p.34) put in place to ensure that those from a lower class do not contaminate the group (Lin, 1999).

Classism is a recent concept among black South Africans; during apartheid, black people were mostly united and focused their energies on fighting the injustice, inequality and oppression that faced them (Motsemme, 2003). More unified them than divided them, which was the sense across South Africa. However, post-apartheid, there seems to be a level of hierarchy that exists amongst black people based on social standing and wealth (Southall, 2014; Mattes, 2015). Since the first democratic elections, the gap between the wealthy and the poor has widened further (Southall, 2013). This is also because there have been more black-owned businesses since apartheid (Southall, 2004; Mattes, 2015).

Classism in higher learning institutions is very common (Langhout et al., 2007). Students are ranked based on their social class and the type of families they come from. Poorer students are often marginalised and looked down upon (Langhout et al., 2007). This is further exacerbated in residences where one is judged based on their possessions, their clothes and how wealthy they are. This, in turn, causes the poorer, marginalised students to withdraw and often feel isolated (Langhout et al., 2007). A higher class often means better studying opportunities, which means better jobs (Southall, 2014).

Black students are no longer a homogenous group; they come from different family backgrounds (Motsemme, 2003; Bazana & Mogotsu, 2017). Some come from very wealthy families, while others are from poor families (Southall, 2013), and yet others come from what is termed the missing middle (Cloete, 2016). Southall (2014) described the class hierarchy as follows:

> '…informal and casual workers alongside an impoverished and grant dependent underclass at the bottom; semi-professionals such as teachers and nurses alongside white collar workers and formally employed workers in the middle; through to the better off, composed largely of managers, professionals and the independently rich at the top' (Southall, 2014, p. 650).

Southall (2016) describes the middle class as 'a category of people who are in the middle range of hierarchies of income, wealth, property ownership, occupation or whatever' (Southall, 2016, p. 1). Whereas Resnick (2015) described them as a group of working people. Southall (2013) further states that the middle class can be divided into the upper middle-class and the lower middle-class. The upper middle-class comprises people who earn slightly more and are in higher positions, whereas the lower middle-class does not earn as much; however, cannot be classified as poor. This lower middle-class was, therefore, termed the missing middle during student protests that demanded free higher education (Cloete, 2016). The protesters argued that the rich are comfortable and can afford university fees, and the poor can access higher education through government funding, but most missing middle students can't afford either as they are not rich enough to afford the fees nor poor enough to qualify for government funding, therefore struggling to access higher education (Cloete, 2016).

One particular study reported that students from poorer backgrounds often could not identify with those from wealthier backgrounds (Beagan, 2005). They often experienced bitterness towards wealthier students for not having these students' material possessions. When asked why this was the case, they responded that material possessions made wealthy students' lives easier while poorer students

struggled to make ends meet (Beagan, 2005). Unlike the wealthier students, poorer students struggle to fit in at university, adding to their feelings of exclusion.

2.4.1 Taste of fashion

Blumer (1969) theorised that there is more to fashion than just wearing clothes. It is one aspect of differentiation between class divisions. This has proven true over the years, as we have seen that fashion plays multiple roles in society, and one of these roles relates to classism (Motsemme, 2003). Clothes can be used as a communication tool (Mitchell et al., 2012). Amongst the messages that could be communicated are one's social, educational and class background (Motsemme, 2003; Nutall, 2004). Bourdieu (1984) theorised that a particular class of people would develop a particular taste for cultural goods to communicate that they are better than the perceived lower class. Without saying a word, the clothes and possessions one owns can inform observers of this person's particular upbringing, and their social and financial standing (Motsemme, 2003). An example of this type of communication occurred at Noord Street Taxi Rank, where taxi drivers harassed a woman for wearing a mini skirt (Lewis, 2012). After this incident, women wearing miniskirts came out in their numbers to protest; they were communicating that they own their bodies and will not allow men or patriarchy to dictate what they should wear or where they should wear their clothes (Lewis, 2012).

The youth also use fashion for communication purposes (Mitchell et al., 2012). There were mixed reactions when Stoned Cherrie, a clothing brand, printed the face of anti-apartheid activist Steve Biko on their t-shirts, as well as a picture of the magazine Drum (Vincent, 2007). Some people felt that this is not what Steve Biko stood for and died for; whereas others felt that this was how the youth identified with the struggle icon, bringing together their love of fashion and a worthy cause (Vincent, 2007). Loxion Kulca created masculine clothes that combined township culture with urban culture to showcase where the youth come from and where they currently find themselves (Bogatsu, 2002). The notion behind this was to communicate that the youth know their history and where they come from but have also evolved (Bogatsu, 2002). This is similar to the Ama Kip Kip brand, a youth label

that communicates that the youth is black and knows their history but has also evolved (Musangi, 2009). These youth clothing brands showcase that young black people use fashion to communicate that although they might do things differently from their parents, their history is equally important to them (Nuttall, 2004).

Memela (2017) conducted a study where she interviewed and observed a group of young men called Izikhothane, who are identified with their brightly coloured designer clothes and dancing (Memela, 2017). Izikhothane has been misunderstood and judged in the past, with some calling them wasteful. This stance is understandable as they have been known to burn designer clothes and pour out expensive alcohol to showcase their wealth and class to their rivals (Memela, 2017). However, the young group of men explained that it is more than just expressing their wealth and class to their rivals; it is also a way to communicate who they are, what they stand for and being a part of this community (Memela, 2017).

Students from poorer backgrounds often feel marginalised and judged based on their sense of style and possessions (McDermott & Pettijohn, 2011). This creates pressure on students from poorer backgrounds to dress and look a particular way to avoid being judged and discriminated against (Masango, 2020). Unfortunately, clothes and one's sense of fashion often cause discord and division in residences and universities (Motsemme, 2003).

One would think that there would be solidarity amongst young black female students given the injustices and inequality they have faced in the past, yet this is often not the case (Motsemme, 2003). There are often instances when black female students do not support each other and would rather compete with each other. Fashion and sense of style are instances when this happens often (Motsemme, 2003; Mitchell et al., 2012). Those who can afford luxury items will often look down on those who cannot afford them; this normally results in female students from disadvantaged backgrounds feeling like they do not quite belong in the spaces they find themselves in, purely because of their lack of luxury items (Motsemme, 2003; Masango, 2020).

However, it is worth noting that it is not as simple as one making decisions about what to buy or wear. Bourdieu (1984; 1987) theorised that from a young age, it is inscribed in people's minds where they belong in the social order, and this directly informs what they are also exposed to. Grillo (2018) further discussed how people's behaviour is often based on what they were taught and experienced while growing up. Therefore as they get older, they know what materials to buy to fit into certain circles, as well as having the financial means to afford these goods. Akgun (2020) added that it is not just upbringing that contributes to this knowledge of what to buy, but formal education as well. However, even as those from disadvantaged backgrounds acquire the means to afford luxury items; there is a sense of keeping one's place and knowing where one belongs in the hierarchy to maintain the status quo, as one would have been conditioned to while growing up (Grillo, 2018; Mosselson, 2020).

Pula (2020) criticised Bourdieu on the notion that a person cannot or is unable to evolve from their original class. Pula (2020) argued that Bourdieu (1984; 1987) implied that there is no personal agency or means for the individual to find ways to do better for themselves and move up the class hierarchy if that is what they wish to do (Pula, 2020).

2.4.2 Black, Young & Free

'South Africa's races originated in political experiences as well as cultural similarities, that the white supremacist state made communities of "whites" and "blacks"…' (Macdonald, 2006, p. 3)

'…whilst the use of apartheid's definition of Black/African is problematic, it continues to hold value in the country, especially in the context of social redress' (Bhana, 2014, p. 357)

Colonialism and apartheid separated white and black people resulting in racial segregation and labels (Bazana & Mogotsi, 2017). The different races, including the black race, have their origin in politics (Macdonald, 2006; Bhana, 2014; Bazana & Mogotsi, 2017); and depending on the political party in power at the time, may hold

different meanings (Walker, 2005). For instance, black people were treated harshly and discriminated against during apartheid, and they found meaning in fighting against the injustices of the time (Hook, 2020). Whereas the current party in government (the ANC) has done a lot to bring pride in being black and bring about redress regarding the past crimes committed against black people, albeit some might criticise them in how they have gone about it (Southall, 2013).

Studies have shown that race is not an easy concept but that it can be very complicated with many layers (Walker, 2005; Bhana, 2014; Bazana & Mogotsi, 2017). The meaning ascribed to race has evolved and continues to evolve over the years, for example, being black during the apartheid era would be very different to being black post apartheid (Walker, 2005; Bhana, 2014). During apartheid, black people had to carry identification with them at all times, had a curfey and were hugely discriminated against and made to feel inferior in comparison to their white counterparts, therefore part of being black meant being united with fellow blacks and fighting the racial injustice (Gevisser, 2014; Bazana & Mogotsi, 2017). Things look very different currently, with black people afforded more opportunities and the current government having done much to bring about some equality between all the races, although there is still a long way to go, especially economically, as many black people still live in poverty (Southall, 2014; Bhana, 2014; Bazana & Mogotsi, 2017). However, what remains the same is that race, regardless of the era, continues to shape generations (Walker, 2005).

Walker (2005) conducted a study at a previously Afrikaans University that has since accepted black students post apartheid. Interviews were done with black and white students inquiring about their experiences at the university post apartheid. Although there were white students who welcomed the change and “new” South Africa, there were some white students who felt that “black people” need to get over apartheid and stop punishing white people for something that happened “a long time ago” (Walker, 2005). Similarly, there were black students who had intergrated well at the university and had made friends with students from different races; however there were those who felt that the “rainbow nation” was just a façade and that racial segregation was alive and well on campus (Walker, 2005).

Another study conducted by Bhana (2014) at the University of KwaZulu Natal revealed that not only is race complicated, but it also has links with class and language capital. The black students interviewed expressed that although there are many black students on campus, their experience of being black is not the same (Bhana, 2014); they further said that class and the ability to "speak English with a good accent" sets them apart as black people, and therefore their experiences of being black is very different from each other (Bhana, 2014). This was further confirmed by Bazana and Mogotsi (2017).

Bazana and Mogotsi (2017) have further argued that in most instances, black students are expected to forgo their identity and adopt a "white" identity if they want to succeed at university, suggesting that most universities are not accepting of black identities. They also alluded that being black at university is often associated with shame, poverty and struggle; and that although there is a sense of pride in that black people survived apartheid, there is still much to overcome when one looks at current poverty levels for most black people (Bazana & Mogotsi, 2017).

The above studies and discussion prove that race is very complicated and has many layers. It also shows that race continues to evolve and that being black during apartheid would be very different to being black in post-apartheid South Africa, although there are some arguments that racial segregation still exists. It further showed how class and language capital makes the experience of being black different for black people in the present day.

2.5 Personality (Introvert versus Extrovert)

> 'Carl Jung postulates that each individual can be characterised as either primarily outwardly or inwardly oriented. Extroversion and introversion, respectively, are his terms for these attitudes towards stimulation (or the world). Clearly it is rare for an individual to be only extroverted or only introverted. However, individuals may tend towards one or other habitual attitude.' (Watts et al., 2002, p. 249)

Carl Jung theorised the concepts of extroversion and introversion. Personality has many nuances and is often on a spectrum – people tend to gravitate to one or the

other while not being wholly introverted or extroverted (Watts et al., 2002). Extroverts thrive among people, whereas introverts prefer their own company (Watts et al., 2002). Furthermore, according to Watts et al. (2002, p. 250), extroverted people are often described as having 'qualities of sociability and confidence, an inability or dislike for being alone, and a tendency to find self-reflection morbid…'. Whereas introverted people have 'independent judgement and values, a preference for reflection rather than activity and a lack of confidence in relation to others…' (Watts et al., 2002, p. 250).

According to Kahnweiler (2016), extroverts tend to 'speak before thinking, are poor listeners and also self-centred', whereas introverts tend to be 'unemotional, dismissive, and slow to respond' (Kahnweiler, 2016, p. 3). Laney and Laney (2007, p. 6) theorised that when faced with a crisis, extroverts tend to 'act first and think later and are also intrusive, loud and demanding' whereas introverts often 'pause first and think before acting and are also slow, withholding and mysterious' (Laney & Laney, 2007, p. 6). Of course, there are variations to these descriptors, and no one person will be completely introverted or extroverted; however, this is a good guide to understanding different personalities; particularly when the two personalities have to interact, whether it be at work or sharing a space – as with roommates, or in an instance where an introvert is in a relationship or married to an extrovert.

There have been arguments that those with similar personalities fare better relationally, and perhaps this should be the approach when pairing partners (Decuyper et al., 2012), whether it be for work or room-sharing. The basis of this approach is that there is potentially more understanding when people are similar; there is a similar approach to challenges and less need to explain oneself (Decuyper et al., 2012). Based on this approach, the focus could be on pairing those with similar personalities instead of forcing different personalities to work together and the challenges associated with that. This approach might be because often, people who consider themselves as either introverted or extroverted often focus on the negative attributes of those they consider to be the opposite personality type (Laney & Laney, 2007); which could be the reason people find it easier co-existing with those similar to themselves.

However, Laney and Laney (2007) suggest that even though the opposite personalities may see the world differently, the differences between the two personalities could work to everyone's benefit. Instead of focusing on the negative attributes of someone who has a different personality, Laney and Laney (2007) postulated that "opposites do indeed attract" and that the coming together of both personalities could be mutually beneficial, where the two personalities could complement each other and learn from each other; however, they have to intentionally work at it as initially, it might be challenging (van der Merwe, 2009).

2.6 Negotiating Spaces

2.6.1 Home away from home

University residences are meant to be a "home away from home" for students (Jagessar & Msibi, 2015), yet this is not the case for many of them. Jagessar and Msibi (2015) conducted a study at the University of Kwazulu Natal in South Africa and found that residences are often a shared space that has to be negotiated by their inhabitants (Msibi & Jagessar, 2015). However, there are often power dynamics at play where the dominant parties find it easy to negotiate these spaces, whereas those in the minority often find it challenging (Msibi & Jagessar, 2015). This implies that residences might not be the purported home and safe space for everyone. In another South African University study, Munyuki and Vincent (2017) found that residences are meant to be a space where students experience 'comfort, security, privacy, acceptance, companionship, recognition and community' (Munyuki & Vincent, 2017, p. 14) while they are away from home. However, as we have seen in the previously described studies, this is not the case for some students, particularly those who find themselves in the minority or do not quite fit the mould found in these residences.

When speaking about the idea of a "home away from home", one would expect authenticity, where there is no need to pretend to be someone else (Munyuki & Vincent, 2017). One also expects freedom. Most students come from homes with rules where they could not just do as they pleased. However, when they arrive at

university, there is freedom (Munyuki & Vincent, 2017) (within university rules, which are often less rigid than those they would have been subjected to at home). Yet if there is no full acceptance, this freedom can be stifled, and it might feel like one is in prison.

Lastly, "home away from home" is a place where one is part of a community and expects to receive support when needed. However, when one feels alienated and not entirely accepted for who they are, it is difficult to feel as though they are part of a community or supported (Cabrita & Mlangeni, 2020). Negotiating spaces for those in the minority can be quite a challenge, particularly when one looks at fellow students thriving in the same space and being accepted for who they are.

Students coming to Johannesburg for the first time also have to negotiate their space in the City, particularly because Johannesburg is a city full of contradictions (Gevisser, 2014). The initial excitement of arriving in the City of Gold, full of opportunities, is often dampened by the fear and stark reality of crime (Mosselson, 2020). It is a place full of hope, as well as hopelessness; full of possibilities and unrealised dreams; a place promising freedom, the freedom that sometimes comes at a very high cost to one's mental health (Gevisser, 2014; Falkof & van Staden, 2020). It can bring immense joy when dreams are realised but can equally cause profound sadness when those dreams are shattered (Falkof & van Staden, 2020); particularly given the stark contrast between the rich and the poor, as Johannesburg has some of the wealthiest people in the country, but equally has extreme poverty (Falkof & van Staden, 2020). Negotiating Johannesburg as a new home while also negotiating residence as a new home can be overwhelming given all the contradictions to be negotiated and considered.

2.7 Belonging

2.7.1 Sense of belonging

A sense of belonging is important when one is a part of a community (Lochner et al., 1999; McMillan & Chavis, 1986). Whether one feels like they belong or not can significantly impact their experience of a particular place and, in this instance, their

residence experience. Based on Beagan's (2005) study, it is evident that classism often affects the students' sense of belonging at university and in their residences. The politics of belonging are affected by how social locations and identities are valued and judged, which is activated through the experiences of exclusion (Yuval-Davis, 2006).

In a South African Study conducted by Walker and Mathebula (2019) at the University of Free State, students reported that their poverty affected their sense of belonging. They reported that struggling to afford basic necessities such as toiletries and food and also not being able to afford luxury items made them feel excluded. When poorer students are excluded and isolated, this affects their sense of belonging in those particular residences, as they feel inadequate, negatively affecting their experience of university life and room-sharing. This, in turn, is more likely to negatively affect their academic performance (Hurtado & Carter, 1997; Gopal & Van Niekerk, 2018).

When a student has a good relationship with their roommate, it tends to positively affect their sense of belonging (Wahl, 2014). A positive sense of belonging means that one does not feel discriminated against and is accepted for who they are; therefore, they can be themselves (Lochner et al., 1999; McMillan & Chavis, 1986). Their room becomes a small community, which means their residence will also feel like a community they belong to (Wahl, 2014). Therefore, whereas classism negatively affects the students' sense of belonging, a good relationship with one's roommate can positively affect and enrich a student's sense of belonging, directly affecting their residence and university experience (Beagan, 2005; Wahl, 2014).

In a study conducted by Hurtado and Carter (1997), third-year Latino students from an American University were interviewed and asked how they survived university until their final year, given the fact that they are minority students. They responded that having friends outside of class to discuss their coursework and challenges significantly helped them. Some also mentioned that being a member of a club on campus or a religious group helped them cope with racial discrimination (Hurtado & Carter, 1997). When further asked how this racial discrimination had affected them,

they responded that it made them feel like they did not belong at that university and that they did not want to complete their studies there, but being with like-minded people further affirmed their status at the university and helped them persevere until the final year (Hurtado & Carter, 1997). This study shows that a sense of exclusion could have adversely affected the Latino students, possibly causing them to leave university without completing their studies, but a sense of belonging gave them meaning and helped them persevere through the negativity and racial discrimination.

2.7.2 Sense of exclusion

The opposite and negative effect when one does not feel like they belong is a sense of exclusion. In the same way that sense of belonging can positively affect one, a sense of exclusion can adversely affect an individual. According to Kim et al. (2010), one can feel excluded when they are rejected by a particular community or do not fit in within the boundaries of a particular group. This would often affect how they view themselves in relation to that particular community, affecting their sense of identity. This would mean that the individual does not have social capital, as theorised by Bourdieu (1986). Human beings are social beings and often place meaning in belonging to particular groups/communities (Bourdieu, 1986; Lin, 1999). When these communities reject them, this often negatively impacts their sense of self (Kim et al., 2010). Gopal and Van Niekerk (2018) also discussed how the use of English as a mode of instruction at universities can also potentially affect students' sense of belonging, particularly for previously disadvantaged students.

A study by Good et al. (2012) further proved the negative impact of a sense of exclusion by communities. Women studying mathematics at an institution of higher learning were interviewed about the challenges of being in a male-dominated field. Most of them felt excluded by the department of mathematics at their university, and when asked how this impacted them, they responded that they were not sure if they wanted to continue in this field (Good et al., 2012). Although there is a sense that some might persevere and endure this sense of exclusion, it is interesting to

note the kind of power that a sense of exclusion holds, given that one might consider changing careers due to being excluded by their communities.

The assumption is that a sense of belonging would be guaranteed based on similarities when one is in a community of similar-minded people, but this is not always the case (Phillipson, 2007). Similarly, the expectation is that there would be a sense of belonging because of similar race and shared experiences when two black female students share a room together; however, this might not always be the case (Bhana, 2014). The other factors presented here may far outweigh the similarities, causing a sense of exclusion instead of a sense of belonging.

2.8 Theoretical Framework

2.8.1 Bourdieu – Cultural capital & habitus

Cultural capital

The notion of capital can be traced to the German philosopher Karl Marx: 'In his conceptualization, capital is part of the surplus value captured by capitalists or the bourgeoisie, who control production means, in the circulations of commodities and monies between the production and consumption processes' (Lin, 1999, p. 28). It is evident from this quote that capital is an economic and financial concept that sociologists and psychologists "borrowed" to form their concept of (various) capital (Lin, 1999).

Bourdieu (1986) argued that capital is not always monetary or financial in nature and theorised that there are three kinds of capital: 'Economic Capital, which is immediately and directly convertible into money; Cultural Capital, with educational qualifications as an example of cultural capital; and lastly, Social Capital, which is about social obligations and connections' (Bourdieu, 1986, p. 16). Cultural capital and social capital are derived from economic capital and, as such, can be converted into economic capital if needs be (Bourdieu, 1986; Hlatshwayo & Fomunyam, 2019). Sullivan further links the different forms of capital with everyday lived experiences:

‘Our social world is comprised of these three forms of capital, each, when added together, comprise our everyday activities and practices’ (Sullivan, 2016, p. 1780).

Social capital relates to being a member of a group with boundaries and rules to exclude those who do not qualify (Bourdieu, 1986; Lin, 1999). The group members benefit from being a part of the group, depending on what is needed at the time, and could get the backing of the group if required (Hlatshwayo & Fomunyam, 2019). Bazana and Mogotsi (2017) argued that this social capital leads to one having social identity. Examples of group membership could be a neighbourhood group that only the residents of that particular neighbourhood can be a part of, or an elite club where certain socio-economic and financial status are required to join the group.

Bourdieu further states that cultural capital has three forms: ‘the embodied form, objectified capital and institutionalised capital’ (Bourdieu, 1986, p. 17). The embodied form relates to how we carry ourselves in our bodies; i.e., who we are, which often has to do with the things we learnt in our childhoods that contributed to how we carry ourselves, including culture. Objectified capital has to do with the ownership of cultural goods; what one can buy or afford, and this is often linked to the embodied form as one would have to know what to buy and what is acceptable to buy (Bourdieu, 1986). Whereas institutionalised capital relates to ‘formal recognition conveyed onto a person from recognised sources’ (Kiguwa, 2015, p. 99), for example, a qualification from a particular university, which is a ‘form of objectification’ (Bourdieu, 1986, p. 17). Linguistic capital forms part of embodied capital (Bourdieu, 1977). It is acquired through one’s family and often determines who is noticed and paid attention to in class, lecture halls and even workplaces. Therefore, capital is often linked to privilege as it sets up its recipients in a better manner than their counterparts, often resulting in them being favoured (Akgun, 2020).

An aspect of cultural capital is also seen in how one’s family background often influences their school/university experience and how they interact with their social groupings (Lareau, 1987; Bazana & Mogotsi, 2017). This is mainly because cultural capital is often passed down through generations, where having a certain surname

or financial status contributes to the cultural capital (Bourdieu, 1986; Lareau, 1987). How high one's cultural capital is may positively influence their academic performance, depending on which higher institution they attend, as some universities have higher cultural capital requirements than others (Bazana & Mogotsi, 2017). Lareau (1987) reports that teachers and lecturers will often sense a particular student's cultural capital, which often means that this particular student would perform well at school, unlike their fellow students whose cultural capital may be low. DiMaggio (1982) called this the elite status culture, when a student receives better treatment than another student due to their cultural capital. Therefore, there is often discrimination in classrooms against those students whose cultural capital is low, proving, yet again, that cultural capital is linked to privilege (Kastillis & Rubinson, 1990; Bazana & Mogotsi, 2017).

Linguistic capital is one of the markers of cultural capital (Kiguwa, 2015; Akgun, 2020). This relates to communicating in the superior language of the day, which differs in different settings. At most universities, this would be English (Soudien, 2008; Bhana, 2014; Bazana & Mogotsi, 2017). As such, not having linguistic capital would affect one's academic performance and daily interactions (Walker & Mathebula, 2019; Gopal & Van Niekerk, 2018; Bazana & Mogotsi, 2017). This does not only relate to being able to communicate in English but the type of English, i.e., their accent (Bhana, 2014). Therefore, if one struggles to communicate in English when sitting among English speakers and those who are fluent in the language, this is more likely to affect the struggling speaker socially as they will be judged and discriminated against for being unable to speak the language (Blackledge & Pavlenko, 2001; Bhana, 2014). This is likely to affect the student's self-esteem and sense of belonging (Gopal & Van Niekerk, 2018; Bazana & Mogotsi, 2017). Those with a perfect command of the dominant language often get top positions in companies and become esteemed members of communities (Bourdieu, 1987).

In relation to room-sharing, cultural capital can be seen when roommates' backgrounds are vastly different, when one roommate comes from a wealthy background and the other roommate is from a poorer background. This would mean that one's cultural capital is quite high, while the disadvantaged roommate's cultural

capital would be quite low. Blackledge and Pavlenko (2001) argued that the student with a disadvantaged background would be judged for not being able to speak English and own certain things. This, in turn, would negatively affect the student's residence and university experience. Their sense of belonging would also be affected, as they would feel excluded and discriminated against.

However, it is important to note that the dominant language changes over time depending on the environment. For example, at most highly esteemed universities, the dominant language is English, but the debates on decolonising education (Fataar, 2018; Hlatshwayo & Fomunyam, 2019; Bazana & Mogotsi, 2017) could change this in the future. The environment is also important; for example, when travelling in a taxi in Johannesburg, the dominant language is IsiZulu and not English; some taxi drivers have been known to not reply to passengers communicating in English, forcing these passengers to either speak IsiZulu or any other vernacular language (Tsatsi, 2020c). Therefore one's cultural capital would be higher in this environment if they speak IsiZulu instead of English (Tsatsi, 2020c).

Habitus

Habitus, a term most associated with Bourdieu, is loosely translated from Latin, which can be defined as 'A habitual or typical condition, state or appearance, particularly of the body' (Jenkins, 1992, p. 74). Horolets et al. (2019, p. 317) described it as an 'individual's embodied way of perceiving and appreciating the world as well as acting upon it'. Whereas Bech (2021, p. 248) described it as '…a product of history that brings about history'.

Habitus was first termed by art historian Erwin Panofsky, defining it as 'habits of the mind'. However, Bourdieu later challenged Panofsky by saying that 'the body, and not the mind, is the site of habitus' as cited in Hanks (2005, p. 69). Hanks (2005, p. 69) further described the concept of habitus by saying that: 'The stability of the habitus is not expressed in rules, which Bourdieu rejects, but in habits, dispositions to act in certain ways, and schemes of perception that order individual perspectives along socially defined lines.' Sullivan (2016) argued that cultural, economic and social

capital combined contribute to habitus; everyday activities being passed down through generations have their foundation in the different forms of capital. This further highlights the significance of early experiences and how they shape thoughts and behaviour, resulting in habitus (Grillo, 2018; Hlatshwayo & Fomunyam, 2019). Bech (2021) postulated that we have been conditioned to behave in a particular way from a young age based on what we are exposed to, further extending the argument of the link between capital and habitus.

Thus, it can be argued that people behave a particular way due to ideas and behaviours that they internalised from a young age, which were formed by their environment and interactions. Bourdieu (1977) theorised that people are not even aware of these actions as they unfold. It is an unconscious event that manifests itself in how we carry ourselves and act daily (Bech, 2021). These come out in the way we walk, the language we use, the accent we use when speaking a particular language and how we occupy space. Hence the notion that we 'wear' our habitus, as these are expressed in our bodies (Bourdieu, 1977). Habitus is contributed to by past experiences (Rasanen & Kauppinen, 2020; Akgun, 2020). This occurs naturally without people being aware (Rasanen & Kauppinen, 2020; Horolets et al., 2019; Bech, 2021).

According to Bourdieu (1977), habitus exists due to social feeds; they are a pair that cannot be separated. This means that habitus cannot be formed or exist apart from one's daily interactions with people and the environment (Bech, 2021; Hlatshwayo & Fomunyam, 2019). Therefore, habitus is a social phenomenon, implying that habitus is not about individual identity relating to our personalities but rather a social identity, as this identity is derived from social interactions between people (Bazana & Mogotsi, 2017). Bourdieu (1984) also called it collective identity, as it is not about the individual but the collective that shares the same beliefs and habits.

Based on the discussion above, there is an assumption that habitus forms solely based on the environment, and the individuals themselves do not contribute to it. Pula (2020) criticised Bourdieu's habitus, saying there is no agency and no involvement on the part of the individual. The environment informs their values and

beliefs, and there seems to be no reflective capacity on the part of the individual (Pula, 2020). However, according to Bourdieu (1977, p. 15), '…even the most strictly ritualized exchanges, in which all the moments of the action, and their unfolding, are rigorously foreseen, have room for strategies', suggesting that different strategies can be employed to change one's habitus. Sullivan (2016) criticised this as he claimed that Bourdieu did not adequately outline how the habitus can evolve or exactly what that would entail. Rasanen and Kauppinen (2020) further criticised Bourdieu by saying that there is no psychosocial understanding or considerations of the habitus.

Both the concepts of cultural capital and habitus, as described and theorised by Bourdieu (1977; 1986; 1987) were utilised in the current study as a lens to interpret the data. Looking at the participants upbringing and cultural capital, or lack thereof, and how this influenced who they are as it pertains to room-sharing and university experience; as well as habits they learnt in their childhood that informed how they interpret their world and act in it, were explored.

3 METHODS

3.1 Methodology

This study adopted a qualitative approach with a narrative lens to derive rich, in-depth information. The qualitative methodology allows one to get detailed information, and the qualitative nature of open-ended questions also ensures that the information is in-depth and rich (Bowling, 2014). A narrative lens was employed not to lead the participants too much but to allow them to say what is in their hearts and what is important to them.

> 'Storytelling is such an important activity because narratives help people to organize their experiences into meaningful episodes that call upon cultural modes of reasoning and representation.' (Fraser, 2004, p. 180)

Everyone loves telling a story, or at least when one agrees to be interviewed, it often implies that there is an element of storytelling in them. Narratives allow the

participants to tell their stories the way they want to tell them, without being coerced to tell the story in a particular way. This also allows them to mention the details that are important to them. In this study, the student's experiences in room-sharing was important, thus giving the participants the opportunity to share their experiences as they saw fit and to also mention the aspects that were important to them. The aim was to find meanings participants attached to their own room-sharing experiences.

3.2 Participants

Thirteen participants aged between eighteen and twenty-one were interviewed. Six participants resided at Sunnyside Residence, located on campus, and seven participants resided off campus at various residences. The reason for interviewing both on campus and off campus residents was to ensure that there is rich, diverse data as the two types of residences were expected to elicit different stories and experiences. The participants' profiles are listed in Table 3.1 (*pseudonyms were used to ensure anonymity).

Table 3.1: Profile of the participants

Name*	Age	Degree	Home town	Ethnicity	Residence
Ayanda	19	BA (Politics & IR)	King Williams Town (EC)	Xhosa	Sunnyside
Azwi	18	BA (Psych & Sociology)	Hillbrow/Venda	Venda	Mill Junction (Newtown)
Lerato	18	BA (Film & TV)	Soshanguve (Pretoria)	Pedi	Braamfontein Centre
Anele	19	Bma (Music)	Eastern Cape	Xhosa	Sunnyside
Unathi	19	BA (Psych & Media)	Germiston/Eastern Cape	Xhosa	Sunnyside
Zukiswa	20	BA (Psych &	Eastern Cape	Xhosa	Sunnyside

		Anthro)			
Katlego	18	BA (Psych)	Pretoria	Tswana	Yale Village
Sindi	19	BA (Audiology)	Limpopo	Venda	Sunnyside
Tshego	18	Bacc	Pretoria/North-West	Tswana	Rennie House
Zanele	21	BA (Psych & Anthro)	Mamelodi (Pretoria)	Zulu	Rennie House
Zintle	19	BA (Law)	Berlin (EC)	Xhosa	Sunnyside
Khanyi	20	BSc (Geography)	KZN	Zulu	Reith Hall (Parktown)
Zinzi	20	BA (Psych & Eng)	Boksburg/Eastern Cape	Xhosa	Sunnyside

3.3 Procedure

After receiving ethics clearance from the ethics board (Appendix F), the Humanities Administrative team was approached and asked to email the first-year cohort with the invitation to participate in the study and an information letter explaining the study and the researcher's contact details for interested parties (Appendix B). Both the purposive sampling technique and snowballing technique were utilised to obtain participants. The purposive sampling technique was utilised because the research requirements were specific – participants had to be female, a student at Wits University and have a roommate. Thereafter, the snowballing technique was employed by asking those already interviewed to recommend participants as they had better access and knew friends or acquaintances that might also be interested and eligible to participate in the study. Both methods were employed as the initial method (purposive sampling) did not yield the required number of participants. All the participants were asked to sign consent forms – agreeing to be interviewed to be

a part of the study (Appendix C) and for the audio-recording in the event that the research gets published (Appendix D).

3.4 Data Instrument

Individual in-depth interviews were utilised to obtain information from participants. Individual interviews are advantageous because the participants do not have to worry about being judged or saying something that might not be received or perceived well, as might be the case in focus groups (Creswell, 2007). Individual in-depth interviews also allow for participants to speak about what is close to their hearts and go deeper without the need to censor themselves.

The use of open-ended questions was to assist the participants in telling their stories without being limited by close-ended questions (Creswell, 2007). The aim was to have them tell their stories in a detailed manner without being coerced to focus on specific details, the same way that close-ended questions tend to do. The limitation with open-ended interviews is that participants could say multiple things that might not necessarily fit neatly into themes (Creswell, 2007). The interviews were semi-structured to encourage freedom of speech and thought. Each interview was an hour to an hour and a half long. There was only one interview per participant, which was scheduled at a time convenient to the participant.

3.5 Data Collection

Participants engaged in in-depth, semi-structured interviews. Open-ended questions were posed to them to understand their room-sharing experiences better. These questions were structured to elicit their experiences, particularly given that they either resided on campus or off campus and how these experiences (positive or negative) affected them daily. With their consent, an audio recorder was utilised to record the interviews. As advantageous as this was for the researcher (ensuring that all the information is recorded as note-taking might miss some important details), the disadvantage was that the participants could censor themselves and not be natural, as some people are uncomfortable being recorded.

The interviews took place in one of the offices at Emthonjeni Centre, Wits University. There was concern that this might be uncomfortable for some participants as this was not “their” space; however, an effort was made to assure them that they could feel safe and be themselves. The initial plan was to interview each participant at their place of residence, but this was not possible as it would have required permission from each Head of Residence for all the residences, which was not feasible due to time constraints. Fieldnotes of what was deemed important were also taken, particularly of things that would have been missed by the recording, such as body language, as it is not just about what the participants say – body language can reveal a lot about what the participant thinks regarding certain topics (Ganguly, 2017).

3.6 Data Analysis

The first step in my analysis was to transcribe the data I had recorded from the individual interviews. Thematic content analysis was then utilised to interpret the interview data. Thematic content analysis is widely used by most qualitative researchers as it identifies, analyses and reports patterns within the data (Braun & Clarke, 2006). The six steps, as stipulated by Braun and Clarke (2006), were then followed to find themes and write the report.

The first step, as per Braun and Clarke (2006), was to familiarise myself with the data. Transcribing the data myself assisted in being familiar with the data. Over and above that, I read and reread transcripts once I had completed transcribing and made notes as I was going along while keeping the research aims in mind. The second step was generating initial codes. The notes I made while transcribing assisted in assigning preliminary codes to the data.

The third step was searching for themes (Braun & Clarke, 2006). Data were organised per code, reviewed again and clustered into broader themes based on similarities. The initial themes were: Background, Some residences better than others, Res – Home away from home, Relationship/Friendship, Personality and Studies. The fourth step was reviewing the themes. I took a short break and then

returned with “fresh eyes” to reread the transcripts; this process also assessed and ensured the relevance of the themes to the research questions. After this process, a thematic map was created, and the themes were adjusted to Residences, Capital, Friendship/Relationship, Challenges in room-sharing, Personality (Introvert versus Extrovert), Studies and Res – Home away from home.

The fifth step was defining and naming themes (Braun & Clarke, 2006), which included the refining of themes. I went over the themes again and refined the process, after which I added ‘Class’ as an additional theme. All the other themes remained the same. After consultation with the research supervisor, the themes were further adjusted and listed in the order: Residences, Friendship (Relationship and Effect on Studies), Class, Personality (Introvert versus Extrovert), Res – Home away from home, Challenges in room-sharing and Bourdieu – Cultural Capital and Habitus. After further consultation with the research supervisor, the themes were finalised as Residences, Friendship (Relationship and Effect on Studies), Seeing the World Differently (Introvert versus Extrovert), Residence- A Safe Space (Sense of Belonging & Sense of Exclusion) and Class, Cultural Capital and Habitus. The last step was producing the report. The themes were listed under the Results and Discussion section, and relevant quotes were included to support these themes. Thereafter, the themes were analysed and discussed in relation to the theory explored in the Literature Review.

3.7 Ethical Considerations

Ethical Clearance (Appendix F) was obtained from the University of Witwatersrand’s School of Human and Community Development Ethics Committee before data collection started. Permission was also obtained from the university to conduct research on first-year students staying in residences (Appendix E). An information sheet (Appendix A) was then provided to the participants detailing the study. Participants were informed that their participation was voluntary and that they could exit the study at any moment without any negative consequences.

Once the participants had agreed to participate in the study, they were given two consent forms to sign. The first consent form (Appendix B) was to agree that they will take part in the study. They were also informed that pseudonyms would be used to protect their identity and ensure confidentiality and anonymity. The second consent form was to gain their permission to audio record the interview session, use quotes in the study and also gain their permission to use the information if the research is published. Audio-recordings were to be deleted once the report had been finalised, and the transcripts would be archived, but anonymity would be ensured. The final research report will be made available to participants upon request.

Although there was no foreseen risk or harm to the participants, the Wits University Counselling and Careers Development Unit's contact details were provided in the event that any psychological or mental health difficulties arose after the interviews for which the participants needed counselling. The researcher's contact details were also made available in case there were any queries. The participants were given the option of a debriefing session after the research was completed should it be something that they are interested in.

Due to time pressure, participants were interviewed at one of the offices at Emthonjeni Centre, as permission was not obtained from each Head of Residence for the various residences to hold interviews at the various residences, which would have been ideal. This posed ethical concerns, as there was a likelihood that the participants might not feel safe as it was not their environment. To this end, there was a great effort taken to ensure that the participants were at ease, and they were also assured that they could feel free to speak and act as they would in their environment.

3.8 Reflexivity

Throughout the research process, I was constantly aware of my position of power as a researcher and any biases that may accompany my identity as a black woman and of middle-class status. That is why I did my best to be self-reflexive at all times,

noting my subjectivities, biases and experiences of the project as a whole. I was also aware of my insider-outsider status. I am an insider in that I am a black woman who had a roommate in my earlier years at Wits University, but I am also an outsider as I do not reside in a university residence presently.

I was quite aware that I was drawn to this project as I had stayed in an off-campus residence while I was a student at Wits University and that I had (mostly) a positive experience with having a roommate. As such, I was keenly aware not to be biased or only look for good/positive stories with regards to one having a roommate, but to pay careful attention to the negative stories/experiences too. I have to admit that initially, hearing the "not-so-good" experiences was challenging as it disrupted my own experiences/story, and I had to be careful not to discourage the narratives that were different from mine.

I had to also constantly be aware to strike a balance and not assume prior knowledge of roommate issues, particularly given that I had my own experiences of room-sharing. I also had to be careful to not come across as an expert on roommate situations. Sharing a room with my sister when I was growing up and being at boarding school from 12 years old helped me understand the challenges that some participants experienced with not having their privacy and having shared their space. However, I had to be aware not to project my experiences onto the participants, something that I had to reflect on and be aware of all the time. This was a personal challenge at times, particularly when I identified with a room-sharing story/experience.

Throughout the research project and constant reflection, I realised that the interviews and some participants' experiences disrupted the feel-good story that I had with regard to having roommates throughout my earlier university days. I believed that sharing a room with my sister and going to boarding school had prepared me for sharing a room at university and I mostly had positive experiences. But upon closer reflection, I realised that there were roommates that I preferred more than others, that the more challenging roommate had me longing to have my own room and private space, and that I was not friends with all my roommates but

had instead endeavoured to be civil with all of them, regardless of whether we got along or not. Although my overall positive experience of having a roommate/s did not change, I was more honest in that it was not always as positive or feel-good as I had been thinking.

4 RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

In this section, the significant themes and subthemes are reported and discussed in relation to the study's aims to explore young black female students' experiences of sharing a residence room at Wits University and how these experiences affect them daily. Through thematic content analysis, five themes were identified. The first theme, residences, explored the different room set-ups in the various residences, how differently on-campus residences are treated by management compared to off-campus residences, the safety of the female students while on and off campus, the politics of food or lack thereof and how management responds to complaints from on-campus residences as well as off-campus residences.

The second theme, friendship, is significant as the participants shared narratives of how friendship with their roommates helped them survive their first year and the challenges associated with that; some even reported how they benefitted academically as a result of these friendships. Conversely, those who were not friends with their roommates reported struggling with residence life and not feeling like they belonged in these residences. The third theme of personality (seeing the world differently) explored introversion versus extroversion and whether the participants had similar or different personalities to their roommates, and how these similarities and differences affected them. The fourth theme explored whether the participants felt that their residence was a "home away from home" and a safe space; and further discussed the concepts of sense of belonging and sense of exclusion, which was interestingly linked to the theme of friendship, as those who had friends in residence found that they belonged and those who were not friends with their roommates felt a sense of exclusion from the residence.

The last theme was that of class, cultural capital and habitus; where participants discussed the class backgrounds of their roommates in relation to their own and how this affected them. Bourdieu's concepts of cultural capital and habitus were then used as a lens to further analyse the data, from this emerged concepts of language capital, having a roommate when one was younger, either in having shared a room with a sibling or having gone to boarding school and how this assisted in

transitioning to having a roommate at university, sense of belonging or exclusion and how it relates to social capital and the link between class and habitus.

4.1 Residences

Residences are meant to be a space where students experience 'comfort, security, privacy, acceptance, companionship, recognition and community' (Munyuki & Vincent, 2017, p. 14); and yet, as we will see, this is not always the case, and the adverse effects of when some of these experiences occur are highlighted in the study's findings. How the room is set up, management's treatment of the different residences, safety concerns, the politics of food, previous room-sharing experience and how management deals with these concerns contribute to how the participants experience residences.

4.1.1 Room set-up

Black female students from Wits University residences (including both on-campus (Sunnyside) and off-campus residences (all others in the study) expressed their experiences of residing in both types of residences. It is important to discuss the different room set-ups in different residences as this often directly contributed to the participants' experiences of room-sharing. Ayanda, Katlego and Khanyi gave descriptions of Sunnyside, Reith Hall and Yale Village residences respectively, which are similar in that the roommates share a room (University of the Witwatersrand, n.d.).

> Ayanda: 'There's two beds and there's a cupboard separating my side from her side. Then there's a sink and a mirror…we have study desks and a small shelf for each …but our sides are separated by the cupboards…'(Sunnyside)

> Katlego: 'Uhmmm…it's like the bed…well, it's the same…okay, it's like one room and you can divide it in half…and then it's the same…*ja*. So beds on opposite ends and then there's a cupboard. Okay, the beds on this wall (shows by hand) and then the opposite wall there's a cupboard and a study desk and then it looks the same on the other person's side…' (Yale Village)

Khanyi: ‘There’s a door in the middle…then there’s one bed here and one bed here (demonstrates with hands).’ (Reith Hall)

The self-catering residence in Braamfontein Centre is set up as a mini-apartment, similar to Rennie House, whereas Mill Junction seemed very similar to a dormitory set-up, as explained by Lerato, Zanele and Azwi:

Lerato: ‘Okay so we share a kitchen, and there’s a common area…’

Tshi (interviewer): ‘Who’s we?’

Lerato: ‘We are four all in all. My roommate and I are in a two sharing room, the others have single rooms and what not…so we share a bathroom and everything.’ (Braamfontein Centre)

Zanele: ‘It’s a small room…probably like…whuuu…probably until that desk (points at one of the desks in the office)…it’s very small…and obviously we have to get along…’cos it’s that small. So there’s like a bed, a bed, tables (demonstrates with her hands) in the middle…and then I have a built-in wardrobe, she has a cupboard…plus a fridge in the room. Then outside we share a bathroom the four of us, plus a kitchen…’

Tshi: ‘Oh, so there’s two others?’

Zanele: Yeah, there are other two…but then the other room…there are three rooms actually in the unit…the other room has a bathroom…and then the other two we share a bathroom…and a kitchen…only B3 has a bathroom.’ (Rennie House)

Azwi: ‘It’s two sharing, and then next door there’s two sharing, and then the one friend stays at 13th. So it’s four of us on 6th floor, and then one on 13th , it’s a single room.’

Tshi: ‘So it’s double, double and single…and do you guys share everything?’

> Azwi: 'We share the kitchen, bathroom, fridge…basically everything…so it's divided into two parts…how can I explain this? Since there's too many of us in that residence…we are divided by doors…so there's a lounge, and then that other side there are rooms, bathrooms, kitchen and what not…so it can accommodate everyone. 'Cos I think there are a lot of two sharings than singles, 'cos I think per side we have three single rooms…' (Mill Junction)

Post-apartheid, more and more black students were now able to apply to attend university and subsequently, residences (Deacon et al., 2009; Le Grange, 2009; Akoojee & Nkomo, 2007); as good as this was as it meant more black students had access to university, this posed a challenge for University managements (including Wits University management) as there was not sufficient accommodation for everyone (Teferra & Altbachl, 2004). The structure of the rooms, as well as making first-year students share rooms, was a practical way to utilise space and accommodate more students, while also fostering a way for new students to make friends.

4.1.2 Different residences

According to Bojuwoye (2002), male students have better experiences at university than their female counterparts and tend to experience less stress than female students. Although the participants did not compare the male residences to female residences, they highlighted that on-campus residences seem to receive better treatment from management than off-campus residences, which was in line with what Khozaei et al. (2010) and Graham et al. (2018) had discussed. Lerato discusses below:

> Tshi: 'Why do you think that is? Like why do they treat them differently when they are all Wits res'es [residences]?'
>
> Lerato: 'Monetary reasons. We are not paying the same...And I also find it weird how they rate other res'es. Like for example, in terms of convenience, BC [Braamfontein Centre] downstairs is a pharmacy, there's a dentist, there's a salon, there's ATMs and Pick n' Pay is just here. Unlike Noswal, they pay

more. I understand that aesthetically it's pretty and everything, but in terms of space its quite a tiny res. BC, if you were to literally renovate it, or just paint, literally it would be that you getting more for your money. 'Cos space is there, everything. They could do so much with this space, I don't know why, maybe because it's one of the oldest res'es… or it's postgrad and they are not involved like that...'

Lerato: 'They (the rich people) go to Junction.'

Tshi: 'Oh really? I didn't know that…so Junction is for the more affluent, is it more expensive?'

Lerato: '*Ja* [yes]. I think it's the most expensive 'cos they even have their own buses. *Ja*, the mini-buses by amic-deck. It's designated for Junction. But I mean also, in Junction is where you find kids, like I know some first-years, who have three or four bursaries, just to live there…'(Braamfontein Centre)

Based on Lerato's account, seemingly on-campus residences are treated better than off-campus residences as had been stipulated by Khozaei et al. (2010) and Graham et al. (2018). This better treatment seems based on how expensive a residence is, as seen by the comparison Lerato makes between Junction, the most expensive residence that even has buses dedicated to its residents, as opposed to Braamfontein Centre, which is a less expensive residence. Lerato concluded that Braamfontein Centre does not get enough attention like Junction and is at the bottom of the priority hierarchy, purely because they do not pay as much as Junction residents do. This is a missed opportunity by Wits University management as there is more available at Braamfontein Centre, such as Pick 'n Pay, a dentist and a salon, which Lerato believes the university should be taking advantage of.

There was a sense that Sunnyside (on-campus residence) is like a community where one can seek help if needed, as per Zintle's description below, which confirms what Munro (n.d.) had written about the residence. However, one disadvantage was that it sometimes felt like a hostel, as discussed by Unathi below – she described the hall coordinators as very strict and overbearing; this was not surprising as Sunnyside is

one of the oldest residences at Wits University, with tradition carried over the years (Murray, 1982); this did not meet Unathi's expectations as she had expected more freedom at university, which was in line with what Munyuki and Vincent (2017) had discussed.

> Zintle: (pauses) 'Uhmmm… the culture that was created for us during O-week by our house comm has made me comfortable in the sense that, if I don't have something, I can ask someone…or if someone comes to me to ask for help…I'm not gonna have some rejection or attitude towards them, I can help out where I can! …they've [house comm] basically given us an open-door policy that if you have any problem, you can go ask for help…if you just want to have a conversation…they've remained available to us.' (Sunnyside)

> Unathi: 'I feel like also that there's management…hall coordinators that treat us like we are in [a] hostel! A high school hostel! I just feel it's just ridiculous! They feel like, at a university space, they can treat us like we are in high school! So it's not acceptable for hall coordinators to walk on corridors and knock on our rooms at any time that they feel like it…if you want an appointment with me, you slide a note under my room or you have my personal email…you know my student number…send me an email, come to my room at this time…you can't just rock up! Or they'll just walk around…I'm just like, this feels like I'm in [a] hostel and there's a matron…and that is just annoooooying…I don't want to lie…it's very very very annoooooying!' (Sunnyside)

When one goes to university, there is a sense that there will be freedom and that one will not feel like they are at home or in a hostel. However, this is how Unathi felt; instead of the freedom that university and residences are supposed to give, she experienced the opposite. Instead of discovering herself and learning independence at university, she found herself being treated like a child, with hall coordinators who behave as though they are mothers or matrons, and not treating the female residents as young adults.

Interestingly, there were no complaints or concerns when it came to mixed residences and sharing with male students at Rennie House, as shared by Zanele:

> Tshi: '…how is that experience, sharing with boys (in the same building)?'
>
> Zanele: 'Its…(sighs)…it's fine…it's just…they are there…it's normal…it's like living in a flat, you get into your neighbour…you are like, hey neighbour…it's fine. There's no rape…there's no crazy things that are happening…you know, whoever is trying to seduce whoever…okay, not that we know…(both laugh) it's not out there. I'd say it's comfortable. You don't need to think whuuu…whoever is gonna pass here…warawarara…it's just okay…' (Rennie House)

However, it is interesting to note that Zanele specifically mentions that there is no rape (reported) in the mixed residence. This confirms that this would concern female students sharing with male students, supporting Fitzgerald (1993) and Gqola, (2007; 2021). This concern is not surprising given the high gender-based violence statistics (Pandor, 2005; Gqola, 2007) and how unsafe women feel in general due to these high statistics and fear instilled by patriarchy on female bodies (Gqola, 2021).

4.1.3 Safety

Studies reveal that one in every two women will experience some form of sexual harassment in their life (Fitzgerald, 1993; Gqola, 2007; 2021). Women often live in fear while on campus (Gordon & Collins, 2013; Gqola, 2021). Some of this fear is instilled and perpetuated by institutions to maintain patriarchy; Gqola (2021) termed this the female fear factory.

In this current study, participants who stayed off-campus expressed safety concerns, whether walking in the street or in the residence itself, as expressed by Azwi below, who did not feel safe in her residence and surrounding environment. This is not surprising as both Gqola (2021) and Tsatsi (2020b) write about how unsafe women feel in public spaces and how men feel entitled to women's bodies, further perpetuating this fear and anxiety. Mosselson (2020) also discusses the high crime

rate in Johannesburg (inner city), and how certain streets are no-go areas, which Azwi confirmed as there was a street that they were warned about.

> Azwi: '…where it's situated [close to the Johannesburg central business district]…it's quite far…and the environment is just too quiet! Like it's not so busy like Braam [Braamfontein], and it seems like there's commercial business happening there, or factories …sometimes it's just too scary…like, when I'm done writing…I'll just go away, like it's too quiet! There's a street that they warned us about when we moved in…that we shouldn't use it, cos they mug people there…it seems like there's a squatter camp-*nyana*…' (Mill Junction)

Participants who stayed on campus felt that the rules were too rigid and there did not seem to be any flexibility, concurring with Murray (1982). There was also a sense that they were treated as children, as reported by Unathi below, who felt that the security guards were overly involved and very judgemental when the ladies would go out partying. She also felt that there was too much policing when one had visitors. However, this could be an attempt to protect the students as it is a female residence, particularly given the high statistics of rape, sexual harassment and gender-based violence (Fitzgerald, 1993; Gqola, 2002; Gqola, 2021).

> Unathi: 'If people want to sign in their friends, you are just being…like someone who's just being overall difficult and thinks that this is their house (Female Security Guard)*…nooo…like this is not your house…you cannot tell us when is it okay for people to come back…if people come back early morning, like if people go to groove [and come back early morning] she is that person who'll be like (mimics voice) aah you go out at night, what not what not…it's just one of those things where you are like, how is this any of your business? She's very overly involved in everyone's life!' (Sunnyside)

Therefore, there seemed to be an effort by management to address safety concerns for those who reside on campus (even though some participants did not appreciate it as such), but the same did not apply to off-campus residents, as expressed by

Lerato below. Lerato lamented that those who stay off-campus could not access resources as easily as their on-campus counterparts, which confirms what Khozaei et al. (2010) and Graham et al. (2018) reported, that one's experience at university can be greatly impacted by how far the residence is from campus, the living conditions of that particular residence, as well as access to resources on campus. Lerato reported that their concerns would not be prioritised as those of on-campus residents, which made her feel like she was not staying at a Wits University residence (which is supposed to be better) but rather one of the privately-owned accommodations, which does not have a good track record amongst students.

> Lerato: 'At BC [Braamfontein Centre] …fix the lifts, wifi…real resources. I think it's not necessarily the environment between people who live there, 'cos we can complain together, that's fine. It's easy. But to really make res [residence] something special and worthwhile…to separate it from living at a Southpoint or living at a… I don't know…these Auckland Park student accommodations actually give the resources and maintain the resources. 'Cos it's also a thing of, I'm in res, there's a so-called computer lab, but does it have internet? So it's the same as me living at Southpoint down the road [and] walking every night. You [are] not ensuring those benefits, that you sold me on…'
>
> 'No, it's not even treated the same way in management. Issues take months, whereas at other places. Like I'm (high-pitched voice) aware of what happens at like your Parktown res'es and stuff like that. And you find out that, oh, wifi was out for a day and immediately the maintenance guys…us install, it hasn't even been on since January.'

Off-campus residents reported safety concerns whereas on-campus residents lamented that the rules were too rigid. Azwi spoke of how unsafe she felt in Johannesburg central and that there were certain streets she could not walk in alone as the crime rate in those streets was very high, in contrast to Unathi, who felt that there were too many rules in Sunnyside and that the security guards and matrons policed their movements and stifled their freedom. Interestingly, off-campus

residents long for the safety that on-campus residents scoff at as a hindrance to their freedom and movements. Perhaps management could provide half of the security they offer on-campus residents to off-campus residents to create equality and balance. Management, yet again, seemed to fail off-campus residents as Lerato reported that their complaints do not get as prioritised as the on-campus residents. She lamented that they have to wait for months for their complaints to be addressed, whereas she was aware that on-campus residents' complaints get addressed much sooner, sometimes even with a day turnaround.

4.1.4 Politics of food

Food insecurity is very high at universities (Rudolph et al., 2018; Hames & Lewis, 2021). Food insecurity is the opposite of food security, which can be described as 'all people at all times having physical and economical access to sufficient, safe and nutritious food to meet their dietary needs and food preferences for an active and healthy life' (Rudolph et al., 2018, p. 21). Due to monetary issues, some students spend the whole day without eating, and some even go to bed hungry (van den Berg & Raubenheimer, 2015; Misselhorn & Hendriks, 2017; Rudolph et al., 2018); which is likely to affect their academic performance negatively as one cannot concentrate or study when hungry (van den Berg & Raubenheimer, 2015; Rudolph et al., 2018). Wagner et al. (2021) showed a correlation between food insecurity and failure/university dropout, further proving that food insecurity has a dire effect on a student's academic performance.

In the current study, most of the students who stayed in self-catering residences complained that their roommates often stole their food or that food would go missing, and they would not know what had happened, as Lerato shares below. Lerato lamented how she would notice her cupboard getting emptier and food getting less; she initially ignored this until she realised someone was stealing her food. This is not surprising given the high number of students who do not have sufficient food and often go to bed hungry, who might sometimes feel that they do not have a choice but to steal food (van den Berg & Raubenheimer, 2015).

> Lerato: 'So I know…especially if I buy sauce, I know how long it's supposed to last me, you know? And then I started to pick up…then I'm like, hey, maybe I'm delusional, maybe 'cos is just…you know? So I maized it at first. Then I started to notice that, okay, my cupboard is getting empty, then I'm like, okay. I let that slide…Now all of a sudden, without consent, I'm sharing [food] with someone.' (Braamfontein Centre)

It seemed that those who chose to buy groceries with their roommates, similar to Zanele below, did not have the same challenges as Lerato because everything was shared. Zanele was insightful in that she explained that sometimes people's dire situations forced them to steal food, which concurs with van den Berg and Raubenheimer (2015); but if the food was shared and one was going through a particularly tough time financially, they would not have to worry about food, eliminating the temptation to steal. Zanele further explained that she and her roommate contributed to groceries together, and they would talk and support each other when one of them was going through financial difficulties and could not afford food for that particular month. This confirmed what Rudolph et al. (2018) argued, that one of the ways that students can cope with food insecurity is to share food/meals.

> Zanele: 'And when she tells me this month I can't contribute to groceries…I go it's fine…that's the thing, we talk, and I know about her personal life at home…she knows…so it's good!...
>
> …We use the same fridge…so imagine if I have my milk there and you have your milk there…like…oooh, which one is my milk? …So rather contribute and when we cook, we cook for the both of us.
>
> …Rather no…let's just share…you don't have to steal it (the food), 'cos it's ours! It's very convenient, I think everyone should do it…'

Many students have food insecurity at university (van den Berg & Raubenheimer, 2015; Misselhorn & Hendriks, 2017; Rudolph et al., 2018), resulting in some students stealing food in order not to go to bed hungry (van den Berg & Raubenheimer,

2015), which Lerato experienced with her roommate who was stealing her food. Zanele and her roommate decided to share food to alleviate the temptation to steal food if one is struggling financially, which is one of the coping mechanisms for food insecurity (Rudolph et al., 2018). Although many universities have feeding schemes on campuses to assist students who are struggling, it seems that due to stigma, shame and some students not knowing about these feeding schemes, many of them still go to bed hungry (Rudolph et al., 2018; Adeniyi, 2021; Hames & Lewis, 2021).

4.1.5 How management can improve

Regarding how management could improve, there were complaints about the process of changing roommates. Participants felt that changing one's roommate should be easier than it is currently and that one should not be forced to share a room with someone one does not get along with, as discussed by Khanyi and Zukiswa below. This is particularly important as a study conducted by Wahl (2014) showed a correlation between academic performance and one's social interactions and how that led to an overall positive university experience. Having a roommate that one does not get along with could negatively affect one's social interactions and potentially affect one's studies.

> Khanyi: 'I would say that maybe…there should be an easier system of changing roommates…'cos the thing is, if you are still in the same building…you'll still pay the same amount, you'll still take up one bed…so changing rooms should be easier, if you don't want to stay with someone you shouldn't be forced to stay with them…find a room with your friends.' (Reith Hall)

> Zukiswa: 'Okay…in terms of pairing up people for rooms?…If someone comes up with a complaint that they are not comfortable with their roommate…they should actually do something…'cos people spend the entire year with people they don't get along with…so something should be done when someone says that I'm not comfortable with this person.' (Sunnyside)

Another concern was the inequality between how on-campus and off-campus residences are treated by management. Participants felt that there needs to be more attention paid to off-campus residences, similar to on-campus residences. One of the complaints was safety, concurring with Gqola (2021), who wrote about how unsafe women feel. Security guards are visible on campus, and a student can be escorted from the library to their residence late at night. However, off-campus residents did not have the same security offered and often felt unsafe walking from campus to their residences further affirming what Gqola (2021) and Tsatsi (2020b) discussed; particularly late at night, as explained by Azwi, who reported feeling unsafe and fearful at her residence:

> Azwi: '…where it's situated [close to the Johannesburg central business district]…it's quite far…and the environment is just too quiet! Like it's not so busy like Braamfontein, and it seems like there's commercial business happening there, or factories …sometimes it's just too scary…like, when I'm done writing…I'll just go away, like it's too quiet! There's a street that they warned us about when we moved in…that we shouldn't use it, 'cos they mug people there…it seems like there's a squatter camp-*nyana*…' (Mill Junction)

The other concern was that complaints from on-campus residences were dealt with swiftly, whereas students from off-campus residences had to wait longer for their concerns to be dealt with, as Lerato explains below. She expressed how it takes longer for their wifi and lights to be fixed, whereas similar problems got sorted quicker at on-campus residences, which she felt was unfair as these resources were promised by the University. University management would do well to deal with these concerns as Khozaei et al. (2010) reported that one's living conditions in a residence and mechanisms put in place to ensure students' lives at residences are as comfortable as they can be, can greatly impact their university experience; and if negative, could lead to a possibility of students failing or dropping out of university.

> Lerato: 'At BC [Braamfontein Centre]…fix the lifts, wifi…real resources. I think it's not necessarily the environment between people who live there, 'cos we can complain together, that's fine. It's easy. But to really make res something

> special and worthwhile…to separate it from living at a Southpoint or living at a I don't know…these Auckland Park student accommodations, actually give the resources, and maintain the resources. 'Cos it's also a thing of, I'm in res, there's a so-called computer lab, but does it have internet? So it's the same as me living at Southpoint down the road walking every night. You not ensuring those benefits, that you sold me on…'
>
> '…No, it's not even treated the same way in management. Issues take months whereas at other places. Like I'm (high-pitched voice) aware of what happens at like your Parktown res'es and stuff like that. And you find out that oh, wifi was out for a day and immediately the maintenance guys…us install, it hasn't even been on since January.' (Braamfontein Centre)

Universities are now managed like private companies; it is highly hierarchical, and students need to follow bureaucratic steps to be heard, and they feel as though their needs are not heard; this is known as the corporatisation of universities (Jansen, 2005; Dlamini, 2018). Dlamini (2018, p. 54) described this corporate model as 'entreprenual and market driven' in nature, which often puts profit ahead of students' needs (Dlamini, 2018). The corporatisation of universities further limits access to higher education, particularly for students from previously disadvantaged backgrounds (Cloete, 2006; Dlamini, 2018).

Jansen (2005) argued that universities are run as an authoritarian system where students' voices are seldom considered in decision-making. He did empathise that university leadership needs to balance 'affirmation versus inclusion, retention versus restitution, caring versus correction, accommodation versus assertion and racial reconciliation versus social justice' (Jansen, 2005, p. 306) but that even with these tensions, students' voices need to be at the forefront. It is no wonder that the participants in this study felt that their concerns and complaints were not considered by management and that they were just instructed on how things are run in their residences, with little room for suggestion or improvement.

4.2 Friendship

Friendship with one's roommate was one of the significant themes that emerged in the study. It seemed that having a good relationship with one's roommate depended on whether they were friends or not. Those who reported the most challenges were not friends with their roommates or reported not getting along. This is in line with what Tinto and Cullen (1973), Wilcox et al. (2005) and Erb et al. (2014) discussed, that having friends at university was one of the most important things that led to students having a positive experience at university; this was directly correlated to whether students completed their studies or dropped out of university (Wilcox et al., 2005; Erb et al., 2014). Unathi spoke about how she and her roommate offer each other emotional support when they are going through difficulties, which she appreciated as she did not feel alone during difficult times. Zintle and her roommate had a dedicated time allocated for checking on each other and how they were doing academically and personally. University can sometimes be challenging, and some participants appreciated having someone to share these challenges with.

> Unathi: 'Ja…a lot! A lot of personal information and emotional support stuff …that's why I'm saying it's a really great relationship that has come…down to like family issues, financial problems…stuff that we talk about with each other…like, everything! For instance, my roommate's sister is in the middle of a divorce…so she talks about how it's happening with the family…and I can also talk the things that are happening in my family. It's a very strong relationship in terms of the things that we share about! I've been really lucky! We've seen people fight…it's terrible; we've seen people have to change roommates, because they just couldn't stand each other!'

> Zintle: 'We have this thing where from 11…we call it saddening hour starts…that's when you are going through the most, you are writing a test, and you need to study…you want to sleep, but also you need to study…and you also have a class in the morning…so you are also going through a lot! People normally go through a lot at that time, so we [are] usually considerate of each other at that time…in terms of asking, are you still okay? And we are

very open uhmmm, sharing challenges that we have with specific friends…we also share challenges that we face in our own families as well.'

One of the dire consequences of a lonely and traumatic experience at university is thoughts of suicide and suicide-attempts, which have been on the rise at universities (Falkof & van Staden, 2020; Makhubela, 2021). Lerato shared her struggles of suicide ideation and credited her friends and roommates for being there for her, offering emotional support and giving her hope; she reckoned that she would have attempted suicide had it not been for them; this, yet again, shows the importance of positive relationships at university. University can often be overwhelming, and having someone to share one's emotions with instead of bottling them inside, has helped many students not only survive university but also ensure that they thrive at university (Erb et al., 2014; Bojuwoye, 2002).

Lerato: 'Honestly!! I must be honest. (high-pitched voice) I've had breakdowns, I'd have probably jumped had there not been a roommate there to ask what's wrong. Because it's very easy to get lost…in like Wits. Nobody sees your face or is interested. You can cross a street, nobody sees your face, you are just a number. But when you go into your space, that one person who knows you and wants to see your face and acknowledges your existence, can ask you what's wrong. I think res, in general, it's beyond the privilege of…"*ja*, closer to school" it's…it's the privilege of being in the same space as people who understand Wits…Wits issues, Wits benefits…community…everything. Most people came with the same goal, and it's easier to be in that environment, unlike being at a general student accommodation.'

Conversely, students who did not get along with their roommates found university more challenging, and their experience was somewhat dampened (Wilcox et al., 2005; Erb et al., 2014). Tshego, Khanyi and Katlego all reported not getting along with their roommates and how this negatively impacted their daily living, from complaints being laid with management, not being able to sleep at night and constant tension in the room. Tshego reported how her roommate fabricated lies

about her and reported her to management, whereas Khanyi would have appreciated some consideration from her roommate, who would be making noise at 3 am. However, none of them reported such adverse effects that made them want to quit university. This could be because even though one might not be friends with their roommate, they might have other friends outside of the residence, which would achieve the same supportive purpose.

> Tshego: 'Oh my gosh (both laugh), it's been hectic really…it has been because we don't get along that much. 'Cos there was a time where she went to lay a complaint…which was partly …she was lying…… she went to lay a complaint to the people who guard at res or whatever…then the man came to our room…she said that I always have friends over until two o 'clock in the morning…(high-pitched voice) which is a lie…'cos at that time I'm sleeping. And I was like whyyyy? Why are you doing this? And I even asked her…you are lying right now, why are you doing this…she just kept quiet.'
>
> Khanyi: 'Horrible! Like even this morning at 3 am, I was sleeping…then I woke up because of her, she was watching videos on her phone…She didn't use earphones…and this is like the third time she does this…it's problematic …and we are not even friends…I don't even want a friendly relationship with her…it's just very annoying…'
>
> Tshi: 'So can you explain the quiet tension? What happens when there's quiet tension?'
>
> Katlego: 'Well…(pauses)…like we used to be cordial and greet each other…like goodbye or hello…or goodnight and then…Uhmmm…I don't know if it was me or her but at some point I noticed that she stopped greeting, so I stopped greeting. Like the only time we'll talk is someone saying…uhmmm…can you close the window or something…mhmmm.'

It has been documented that a positive relationship with one's roommate often positively impacts a student's studies (Waldo, 1984; Freeman et al., 2007; Wahl, 2014; Hlatshwayo & Fomunyam, 2019). Most of the participants confirmed this as

they reported that they saw direct benefits in their studies as a result of having roommates. Azwi and Anele reported being encouraged to study because of their roommates. Azwi would feel pressure to wake up and study when her roommate did the same. Anele reported that her roommate indirectly influenced her to study as she was forced to go to the study room not to disturb her while she was sleeping, and that environment encouraged her to focus and study.

> Azwi: 'It has…it has…when you have a roommate and you see her studying…it makes you feel that guilt…like she is studying and I'm doing nothing (both laugh) like, let me do it now! It pushes you, not a direct way…but in an indirect way…'cos you feel the pressure, like… (high-pitched voice) Azwi, wake up and smell the coffee!'

> Anele: (chuckles) 'I think it has affected my studies positively actually. Because I find that now I can't stay in my room 'cos I've got somebody else that I need to be considerate of. If she's sleeping, I can't exactly have the light on and studying all that. So I take my stuff, and I go [to] the study hall and then when you are there, the atmosphere is that I'm studying…so I think it's affected me positively because now I'm kinda [kind of] forced to have to remove myself from the comfort of my bedroom to just go and study.'

Zinhle was thankful that her roommate would remind her of assignments due when she had forgotten. Whereas Khanyi was inspired by her fellow residence students, who were struggling financially and could not afford all the textbooks required, therefore as they were roommates, they had decided to share textbooks to save costs; this would not have been possible if they did not get along, concurring with Waldo (1984), Freeman et al. (2007) and Wahl (2014).

> Zintle: (pauses) 'It's been beneficial in terms of…firstly, [a] reminder of assignments (laughs) for instance if I had law stuff that I'm busy with…I kind of forget…'cos I prioritise law courses a lot 'cos it's my major! So I'll forget I have other stuff that's due, so then she'll remind me…'

Khanyi: ‘Sometimes, there were these two, I remember they didn’t have enough money for textbooks, so they bought one textbook…and then they’d share the same textbook between each other.’

Friendship was a significant theme in the study. Participants who were friends with their roommates reported getting along with their roommates and receiving emotional support when they needed it the most, whereas those who were not friends with their roommates reported the most challenges. There was also a direct benefit to studies as participants reported that their roommates encouraged them to study and submit assignments on time, which they would have struggled with if they were staying alone.

4.2.1 Boyfriends and roommates

Some participants found it challenging to have a boyfriend while sharing a room with someone else or having a roommate who has a boyfriend. Lerato had to have an awkward conversation with her roommate whose boyfriend was visiting and they were making noise. Things escalated quite badly that the roommate even moved out as she could not stand being unable to do as she pleased with her boyfriend. This raised the question of considering one’s roommate when having a boyfriend over for a visit, and discussing it beforehand, which Lerato’s roommate was unwilling to do.

Lerato: ‘And then all of a sudden one night her boyfriend comes over and he’s making noise and then the other housemates asked me to tell her to keep it down...I was like, can you quickly help me with something in the kitchen. Not to make it awkward ‘cos you know it’s unnecessary to be like (stern voice) “We need to talk”…we are like we’ve noticed that you are making a bit of a noise…and everything. Just be considerate. Cool. Next thing, she’s packing up and hasn’t been back since.’

Tshi: ‘When was this?’

Lerato: ‘I think it was two months ago.’

Zanele, on the other hand, expressed that even if one gets along with their roommate, having one's boyfriend visiting will always be a challenge as there is no privacy as the roommate could walk in at any moment, which she experienced on several occasions.

> Zanele: 'Okay, I'd say…maybe privacy as well…when my boyfriend comes…and then she gets in…it's a little bit uuugh…uncomfortable…like, maybe let's leave you know? Or we just chill 'cos we [are] nice people and have a conversation…as I said, I like my roommate…we'll all have a conversation…but then you don't really get that much of a privacy…so that would be another thing…privacy…'

Differences between roommates will always exist, and understandably, these can be challenging. However, Laney and Laney (2007), van der Merwe (2009) and Kahnweiler (2016) all discussed the benefits of people with differences coming together, learning from each other, working at understanding each other, and finding ways to get along, despite their differences.

4.3 Seeing the World Differently (Introvert vs Extrovert)

Swiss psychiatrist and psychoanalyst Carl Jung first termed the concepts of introversion and extroversion (Watts et al., 2002); however, it is important to note that these personalities exist on a spectrum, and one is neither wholly introverted nor extroverted. Extroverts thrive among people, whereas introverts prefer their own company (Watts et al., 2002). The current study confirmed that different personalities could either make a roommate relationship flourish or could destroy a relationship. Participants reported either having similar personalities with their roommates or clashing with their roommates. Those with similar personalities seemed to get along and seldom complained, whereas those with differing personalities expressed some challenges, although there were a few who reported benefitting from having a different personality from their roommate.

Having to share a space with someone who is the opposite of who you are could initially be challenging as introverts and extroverts often see the world differently

and respond to problems/crises differently (Watts et al., 2002; Laney & Laney, 2007). Azwi reported sometimes needing space and not wanting to talk much, suggesting that she is an introvert, and her roommate struggled with that and called her moody. Zanele on the other hand is an extrovert and loves having conversations, something that her roommate struggled with, as she is an introvert. Zinzi, who is an introvert, struggled with her roommate who is an extrovert and always has friends visiting her in their room. This was in line with literature, as people tend to focus on the negative attributes and differences of those different from them (Laney & Laney, 2007; Kahnweiler, 2016).

> Azwi: 'Ja…like, I'm a talkative person, but I have times when I'm like, can I just think…can I just refrain from talking…can I just…'cos Wits is just a lot itself…so like, to her it seems like I have mood swings…like what's wrong with you? Haai, *uzoba* right [you will be right] (laughs). Like, I can't!...'
>
> Zanele: '...Whuuu *futhi [actually]* a resting b*** face, it's just…Ja! It goes beyond that…when she walks she looks very angry…like, you wouldn't want to greet her, especially if you guys are not fully with it. So that's how different we are…and sometimes she just doesn't feel like talking. She's not a morning person…and mina, you can wake me up to have a conversation…Yho, I'll talk with you…I will talk! So that's how different we are…'
>
> Zinzi: She…*angazi [I don't know]*…she's got too much attitude with her…(high-pitched voice) you know how girls are. I don't know (chuckles)…the very first time you meet a person…sometimes you might feel like you don't even like her. *Ja* so, I don't remember what really led to us not really getting along and all that. But *ja*…I think it was…I don't really remember. But small petty things-*nyana nje*…okay…we are totally different because…her…she is an extrovert, and I'm an introvert. I believe I'm an introvert. Or maybe let me say an ambivert. We are totally different people.'…She always has friends around. She doesn't party since she is a Christian and all that. She just has friends around and goes out a lot to meet with other friends and going to church. She's just a loud person.'

Decuyper et al. (2012) argued that perhaps instead of focusing on ensuring that different personalities can be teamed up, along with the associated challenges, the focus could be on pairing similar minded people with less challenges to deal with. Unathi, Anele and Sindi proved this below. They all expressed getting along with their roommates as they have similar personalities and confirmed that it is easier to co-exist with a person if the personalities are similar.

> Unathi: 'We both have strong personalities in that…uhmmm…we don't like people disrespecting us and stuff like that…the idea of …we don't like people just coming into our room and then, you are just there. We like the same books…music…same TV shows.'
>
> Anele: (pauses) 'I think we are similar. She'll have like, mmmm, how can I say? We both have our dramatic outbursts. We are just like: "Oh, my goodness" like, I'll be on my phone and I'll just scream at something, and she'll do the same. But I think we are similar, *ja*, we have similar personalities.'
>
> Sindi: 'We are always indoors (laughs). I could say we are both indoor people…ja.'
>
> Tshi: 'So similar kinds of personalities?'
>
> Sindi: '*Ja*. I'd say so…'

However, Laney and Laney (2007) and Kahnweiler (2016) argued that however challenging it might be for the two personalities to stay together, it could be mutually beneficial for both. They could complement each other as their strengths and weaknesses are different. Zintle, who expressed her appreciation that her roommate is an extrovert, whereas she is an introvert, confirmed this. She reported benefitting immensely as her roommate, an outgoing person, introduced her to many people, something that she herself would not have managed to do as she prefers being on her own.

> Zintle: 'I think it was beneficial in the sense that I'm not really into meeting new people… so she's helped with that, and she is a very good person and a great judge of character! When I meet new people through her, I don't have this worry that I must figure out if this person is shady…she's been helpful in that I get to meet new people, but she is very understanding of the fact that I like being by myself…so she'll always extend an invitation, but she won't be offended if I decide not to go.'

Zintle's account proves that different personalities, when intentional, can live together and mutually benefit from each other, confirming what Laney and Laney (2007), van der Merwe (2009) and Kahnweiler (2016) postulated. Therefore, it could be argued that sharing with similar minded people and similar personalities could be seen as staying in one's comfort zone, whereas a student could benefit and grow as an individual when paired with a student of a different personality.

4.4 Residence – A Safe Space

4.4.1 Sense of belonging in residences

Participants were asked if they believe that res (residence) is a "home away from home", and there were divergent views. There was a correlation between a residence being a "home away from home" and the participants feeling they belonged as had been discussed by Wahl (2014), Jagessar & Msibi (2015) and Munyuki & Vincent (2017). Most participants reported that friendship with their roommate determined whether a residence was a "home away from home" or not, as reported by Zinzi, Zukiswa and Anele. Zukiswa said that her friends made the residence feel like a "home away from home", more importantly, because she could rely on them when she had run out of essentials. Anele agreed with Zukiswa that friends make residence a "home away from home" and also expressed that it is like a community, fostering a sense of belonging. On the other hand, Zinzi started feeling like residence is a "home away from home" when she would miss it whenever she would go home for the holidays.

> Zukiswa: 'I'd say that in some instances, I do agree with it. From my personal experience, I'd actually say it is a home away from my home. 'Cos like I made some friends. Like…when I'm out of money I'd go to them…when I'm out of toiletries…we'd share. So *ja* I'd say…it's really a home away from home.'
>
> Anele: 'Yes. I think…and I think it's the people that make it a home away from home. Because as much as there are resources like showers and beds and everything…if you are all on your own, you are going to be miserable. So I think yes, it is a home away from home because of the people. Because people make a home. Yes…and I've got a good…I think I have a good support system, like my friends are…so ja.'
>
> Zinzi: 'Residence is a home away from home? Yes, it is. It does feel like home…at first when I got here, it was a bit strange, but it does feel like home. To show that it does feel like home, whenever I'm home, I miss res…I get home for about a week or so, then my grandmother starts yelling (both laugh) I'm like, oh no…I just want to be in my room.'

It appears that friendship with one's roommate contributed immensely to whether participants felt like they belonged in that residence and whether it was a "home away from home" or not. This was in line with literature as friends can offer emotional support, particularly in the transition to university and the high expectations to perform academically, and the challenges associated with that, which the participants would have likely experienced (Tinto & Cullen, 1973; Hurtado & Carter, 1997; Gevisser, 2014; Falkof & van Staden, 2020; Davidson & Wilson, 2013). A shared emotional connection between roommates could further contribute to this sense of belonging (Hurtado & Carter, 1997; Friedlander et al., 2007). Lerato below offered a unique insight in that she found her residence to be a new home for her, where she could learn independence before venturing into the working world, as described by van der Merwe (2009).

> Lerato: (pauses) 'I wouldn't say a home away from home, but…a new home for yourself.'

Tshi: ‘Aah, nice! That’s a nice tag line (both laugh).’

Lerato: ‘…because that’s literally where you get to see you. And its only you. You are accountable for your thoughts, your actions, everything. And that’s where you get to develop your own kind of home. ‘Cos now when you leave res and you move into your own apartment, you get your first job and everything, you establish how your living environment will be like, for you, by what you experienced at res.’

Friendship with one’s roommate determined whether participants felt like their residence was a “home away from home” or not. This relationship with their roommate made them feel a sense of belonging at the residence, as it felt like a small community, as reported by Zinzi, Zukiswa and Anele. Those who found meaning in being at res, as Lerato did by expressing that it was preparing her for independence and the world of work one day, also found it to be a “new” home for them.

4.4.2 Sense of exclusion in residences

Those with no friends or who did not get along with their roommates felt excluded and said that residence was not a “home away from home”, as expressed by Kim et al. (2010). Katlego confirmed this as she expressed that residence does not feel like a “home away from home” for her because she does not have friends, and the only reason she was there was that it is too far to commute from home.

Katlego: ‘Mmmm (pauses) I think it applies to some, but for me, it hasn’t felt like home. I don’t have any friends at the res... So it feels like the place I have to sleep at for school…because the commute was too much…so I had to find a place here…Like my sisters, they also told me that having friends at res also makes you want to stay more ‘cos you do want to be with your friends during that free time. So I think having friends would also want to make you stay more.’

Ayanda, on the other hand, lamented that the residence does not feel like home because she cannot trust her fellow female students at her residence; this was contradictory to some participants from Sunnyside who said that the residence is like a community. This further confirmed the fact that a sense of belonging or exclusion was dependent on one's relationship with their roommate or other female students in the residence, as per Wahl (2014) and Jagessar and Msibi (2015); since Zukiswa and Anele (above), who felt like the residence was a community, reported having friends at the res, whereas Ayanda, who had no friends at the residence, said that it is not a community.

> Ayanda: 'Nooo!...uhmmm…especially from the res that I'm from…so they'll say (high-pitched voice) Sunnyside! Sisterhood…what what what…I think there are aspects to that, having strong relationships with people…finding strong relationships with people…and I do agree that res life contributes to your whole experience of being at university! 'Cos I think people that are day students compared to res students, are having two very different experiences of what a university is…but I don't think it's a home away from home…there's just been too many moments where I was just like, I want to go home. Especially, I feel like with our females…there's a lot of fighting, a lot of gossiping…just hostility to one another…that just doesn't make sense…people are malicious!'

The above reports by participants show that when a residence feels like a community, it is easier for people to feel like they belong, and the relationships that one has in the residence make a residence feel like a community, supporting Wahl (2014) and Jagessar and Msibi (2015). Therefore, a good relationship with one's roommate can have a positive impact on a student's sense of belonging, whereas a negative roommate relationship will foster a sense of exclusion and make one feel like they do not belong to that particular community or residence (McMillan & Chavis, 1986; Friedlander et al., 2007; Kim et al., 2010).

4.5 Class, Cultural Capital and Habitus

'Class is in everything about the person, from location of home, to the dress, their body, their accent' (Lucey et al., 2003, p. 39). The class/background discussions were very interesting in that the participants' had varied accounts. Some of the participants confirmed the literature in that they had roommates that were from a higher class than them and they felt looked down upon (Bourdieu, 1986; Grillo, 2018; Akgun, 2020). Zinzi spoke about the challenges of having a roommate from an upper-class. She lamented the unnecessary 'things' that her roommate owns, which do not fit in the room as it is a small space, this confirmed what Grillo (2018) and Bech (2021) had discussed.

> Zinzi: '*Ja*, we come from very different backgrounds. I think she is from…she was from a very rich family. She says her father was a doctor…but now the father passed away. She told me that when we were still getting along…the father was a doctor, even the way she behaves…the things that she has in her room…unnecessary things…you know those cheesegirl typa thing.…we've got two mirrors that we found at Sunnyside, but she brought another mirror (laughs)…a very fancy nice mirror and it's cramping the space…the room is small. Remember we are sharing? Now it's making everything…she has a fridge…she has so much *nje*. *Ja,* and all those fancy nice-*nyana* things. I'd say she is from a very rich…not very rich but…uhmmm…well-off family. And as for me…in Boksburg, I stayed in an informal settlement. *Ja*…where there is no electricity…no water. Okay, there is water, but you have to fetch it from far, with a wheelbarrow…*ja*, that was it…shacks and all that…'

Ayanda expressed how pleased she was that she and her roommate were from a similar class background, which made things easier. Her body language (rolling of eyes) suggested that she would not have been pleased with a roommate who is from a higher class than her (she called them snobs) and the challenges that that would have brought, concurring with Motsemme (2003), Bhana (2014) and Masango (2020). Ayanda also spoke about the benefits of having someone who comes from a similar background, in that there is understanding when they cannot afford certain

things or have to budget, which confirmed what Beagan (2005) argued, that there is more in common with people of similar backgrounds than those from different backgrounds.

> Ayanda: 'I think that was one of my worries beginning of the year…I was like, oh, my roommate! I hope I don't get a roommate that is rich and snobbish (rolls eyes)…but we come from…first of all, we come from the same place…King Williams Town! We also come from [a] similar class background in terms of our parents financially! So there's a level of understanding…where we come from…what we can afford, what we cannot afford…so, in that respect, I don't think there's any problems with class background. We are on the same level…'

Surprisingly though, some participants, for example, Lerato and Anele, spoke of how they got along with their roommates, even though they are from different classes. They did not feel judged or looked down upon, which was unexpected as this differs from literature (Bourdieu, 1986; Lin, 1999; Akgun, 2020; Bech, 2021). Anele discussed how her roommate was wealthier than her, whereas she was from a middle-class family, as described by Southall (2014) and Mattes (2015), however she did not feel discriminated against or judged.

> Anele: 'I mean, I wasn't shocked, I was just surprised to find out that…'cos I went to a public school and then she told me that she went to a private school. So when I found that out it was quite surprising because of the way she carries herself. It's not, oh, I went to…and you know being at Wits, it's like a…how can I say?...(pauses) you expect to find that a lot. To find people that are like quite wealthy… and I feel like I'm more on the average side of things. So I mean if we are…in terms of financially…she doesn't go on as if she is, 'cos she'll have her days where she's like aaag, do you have like a R50 for me? And I'll be like *ja*, here you go. So she doesn't…I don't really…*ja*…'

Interestingly, Lerato and her roommates had three different upbringings; Lerato described her family as poor and 'survivor-stricken', whereas her one roommate was

from an upper middle-class family and another roommate was from a lower middle-class family. Southall (2013; 2014; 2016) discusses how most black families are defined by and act hierarchically due to these different classes; however, Lerato shared how she and her roommates would have meaningful conversations about their different childhoods and upbringing, and this was not cause for discord, as suggested by Beagan (2005) and Southall (2014).

> Lerato: 'So I know, I'm used to a certain kind of environment, more like a survivor-stricken, and the other housemate, she's more from a middle class, but like lower middle-class, kind of thing. And then the one she is literally from upper-class and everything. But its lovely how we can all just…I never wanted to make it a thing for me in my life. I never want to interact with someone and then they are like, oh, you are my poor friend, mh-mh-mh (shakes head). Noooo, like, it shouldn't be a thing. I'm glad it's not a thing. But we can acknowledge that we are from different places, but it's not a thing of I'm different, or I'm better or lesser or whatever…it's a thing of…hey, it's interesting that you said that 'cos at home it's like this and that.'

Langhout et al. (2007) discussed that those from higher classes tend to look down on those from lower classes or poorer backgrounds, which often results in those from poorer backgrounds feeling lesser. However, this was not the case for all participants; some reported as expected (feeling looked down upon due to their "lower" class), whereas others got along with their roommates despite the different class backgrounds. This would imply that coming from different classes does not always result in a hierarchy, as theorised and discussed in the literature (Bourdieu, 1984; Bourdieu, 1987; Grillo, 2018; Mosselson, 2020; Southall, 2014; Bhana, 2014). This perhaps shows that there is a different conversation to be had and things might not be as clear-cut as roommates from different backgrounds hating each other and not getting along; that people from different backgrounds can get along and have enlightening conversations about their differences.

4.5.1 Cultural goods and taste

Fashion plays multiple roles in society, and one of these roles relates to classism (Motsemme, 2003). Clothes can also express one's social and class background and differentiate people from lower classes (Bourdieu, 1984; Motsemme, 2003; Mitchell et al., 2012). In the current study, Lerato and Tshego reported instances where their roommates would steal their clothes or wear them without consent. They both expressed that they did not have a problem lending their roommates clothes, but their difficulty was that their roommates took the clothes without asking.

> Lerato: 'Because we have like really bad old cupboards, when the wind blows, you can hear…so this one night, hers was making noise, so I take her chair to block it, right? And then after that, I see my jacket, while the cupboard is open, and I'm like, *Hee Banna*! [oh wow!] And then I look into the cupboard and I'm like, so this is where my clothes were at.... and the thing is, I don't borrow her. I'm the type of person that when you like hey friend, its cold, let me borrow your jacket, I'm like, it's called bring me back. I don't mind *ne*. Like, I can always wash it, its fine *ne*. So I texted the other housemates, I'm like, please check, maybe *ka hlanya* [maybe I'm crazy]. Then she checks, she takes out her flash, she checks the cupboards…everything, my jewellery, razors, everything. And then I was like wow, so that's where everything has, you know, been going.'

> Tshego: (sighs) 'You know what she did recently? (both laugh)…okay, I'm fine with sharing my clothes right? It's okay…girls do that…sooo, she borrows earrings, I give it to her… (high-pitched voice) but she takes my t-shirt, she didn't borrow it. Why did you do that? And I was surprised…(pauses)…who does that?…I was surprised…really surprised…I was shocked actually. Why do you?...Where do you get the audacity to open my wardrobe and actually take an item of my clothing. I saw her wearing it…and I was like…oookay…but I didn't say anything…'

These accounts appear related to class and taste; however, after some probing, it emerged that both Lerato and Tshego were not necessarily from a higher class. Therefore, desiring another's sense of style does not always correlate with a higher class, and neither does it mean that only those from higher classes have access to better taste, as per literature (Bourdieu, 1984; Motsemme, 2003; Mitchell et al., 2012; Masango, 2020). This is in line with what Pula (2020) wrote when he criticised the notion that upbringing determines one's future and sense of style, further arguing that people have agency and are able to move past their upbringing or previous class and how they have been conditioned.

Sindi, on the other hand, recalled a time when her roommate had a 'backwards and not with the times' hairstyle. Sindi alluded having looked down on her roommate because of her hairstyle and sense of style, as alluded to by Motsemme (2003) and later taking her shopping to improve her wardrobe.

> Sindi: 'Hairdo…(pauses)…well, the first time she came with a hairdo (chuckles), it was really off track. And I mean…I didn't judge…I don't judge…but it was off track…it was a Mohawk, straight back kind of style? But then it was really old and it wasn't done properly…so since I can do hair and since we were friends…I did her hair and then it became better. Her hair has improved since then (laughs). Uhmmm… What else?...She didn't have much wardrobe…at least the bursary paid out and we went shopping…(high-pitched voice) you see it was a happy week, we even went shopping together… now she is okay.'

Bourdieu (1984) theorised that a particular class of people would develop a particular taste for cultural goods as a way of communicating that they are better than the perceived lower class. He further stipulated that this is inscribed in people's minds from a young age and further translates into knowing what to buy and for which purpose, which is linked to habitus (Bourdieu, 1984). As true as this was for some participants, there were other participants who proved that sense of style and knowing what to purchase, does not always correlate with coming from a higher class, which confirmed what Pula (2020) had argued.

4.5.2 Language capital

Linguistic capital forms part of embodied capital and is also one of the markers of cultural capital (Bourdieu, 1977; Kiguwa, 2015; Akgun, 2020; Bazana & Mogotsi, 2017). Language was significant in the data collected. Zukiswa reported that her roommate would correct her pronunciation of certain words. Although the roommate was not malicious about it, as noted by Zukiswa, it did leave her feeling discriminated against and self-conscious. Zukiswa also implied that her roommate came from an affluent family, as she was specific to mention her roommate's accent. This would imply that her roommate had cultural capital as she had gone to a "good" school, with her "acceptable English" accent, as discussed by Bourdieu (1986), Bhana (2014) and Blackledge and Pavlenko (2001).

> Zukiswa: 'Like…the way I pronounce things…like; for example, I'd say…you know Nikey's? I used to call them Nike. And she'd say no it's Nikey's it's not Nike. And I said Florida is Flor-aida…and she was like it's Florida-h (said with an accent) (laughs)…'
>
> Tshi: 'Did it ever make you feel like you were lesser than? When she kept on correcting your words?'
>
> Zukiswa: 'Yes! *Ja*…it did. I was like okay…now I feel like I'm feeble-minded or something…now even before you speak…you have to think…like, am I gonna pronounce this word properly? Okay…*ja*…let me go. That's how it felt. Not that she was judging but…she was just correcting…she was not even making fun…she was like…what did you say? Just call it. (high-pitched voice) No, it's not that…it's this. That's how she has been.'

It is important to note that the dominant language changes over time or depending on the environment. For example, at most highly esteemed universities the dominant language is English; however, debates of decolonising education (Fataar, 2018; Hlatshwayo & Fomunyam, 2019; Bazana & Mogotsi, 2017) could change this in the future. Environment is also important; for example, when travelling in a taxi in Johannesburg, the dominant language is IsiZulu and not English. Being able to

converse in IsiZulu, especially when talking to the taxi driver is deemed more acceptable, whereas speaking in English is mostly frowned upon (Tsatsi, 2020c). Therefore one's cultural capital would be higher in this environment if they can speak IsiZulu as opposed to English (Tsatsi, 2020c).

This was seen with Zanele and her roommate, who decided to do things differently, where they chose not to succumb to the "dominant language" at the university, but rather chose to speak their mother tongue (Ashlee et al., 2017; Fataar, 2018). Zanele and her roommate considered themselves to be woke by choosing to rebel against the "dominant" language prescribed at the university (Fataar, 2018; Ashlee et al., 2017; Bhana, 2014). They decided to go against the "norm" and prioritise speaking IsiZulu. They even considered those who spoke English as snobs and un-African, meaning that they did not care about the cultural capital as conveyed by the university in lecture halls.

> Zanele: 'Similar…we are pro-African!'…We don't like snobs for some reason…okay, it's not a bad thing…do your thing girl…then there's us…we are always gonna speak Zulu or our African languages…'

Ashlee et al. (2017) wrote a poem and described being woke as follows:

> 'To be woke
>
> is not just a political ideology,
>
> It is an unretractable existence
>
> A contradictory remedy of healing and pain.
>
> The cultivation of a deep and necessary consciousness of survival
>
> that slices white patriarchal supremacy
>
> and wounds the heart—opening minds.
>
> Our eyes never shut. Our voices never seize.
>
> We are courageous, we are fierce, we are exhausted.

> And yet we persist. We are Alive. We are here.
>
> We are WOKE.' (Ashlee et al., 2017, p. 89)

This poem seemed to be in line with what Zanele and her roommate were expressing with being pro-African and standing against white supremacy and cultural capital as conveyed by institutions.

The language discussions were interesting as it was not just about speaking English. In some contexts, it had to do with not just the ability to speak English but having the right accent as well, which is linked to cultural capital, as alluded to by Blackledge and Pavlenko (2001), and Bhana (2014), as had been described by Zukiswa. In other contexts, like Zanele, the roommates described themselves as 'woke' (Ashlee et al., 2017) and pro-African, and chose to reject the dominant language and rather converse in IsiZulu.

4.5.3 Sense of belonging (exclusion) and social capital

Social capital relates to being a member of a group with boundaries and rules to exclude those who do not qualify (Bourdieu, 1986; Lin, 1999; Bazana & Mogotsi, 2017). The members of the group benefit from being a part of the group, depending on what is needed at the time, and can also get the backing of the group if required. Zukiswa and Anele confirmed this, expressing that Sunnyside Residence was like a community and they benefitted immensely from it. Zukiswa was able to approach her community for assistance when she had run out of money or toiletries; and Anele expressed that her friends at the residence were her support system, and she did not feel alone.

> Zukiswa: 'I'd say that in some instances I do agree with it. From my personal experience I'd actually say it is a home away from my home. 'Cos like I made some friends. Like…when I'm out of money I'd go to them…when I'm out of toiletries…we'd share. So *ja* I'd say…it's really a home away from home.'
>
> Anele: 'Yes. I think…and I think it's the people that make it a home away from home. Because as much as there are resources like showers and beds and

everything…if you are all on your own, you are going to be miserable. So I think yes, it is a home away from home because of the people. Because people make a home. Yes…and I've got a good…I think I have a good support system, like my friends are…so *ja*.'

The above reports by Zukiswa and Anele were in stark contrast to Ayanda and Katlego's accounts below. Ayanda expressed that she did not find Sunnyside to be a sisterhood as it had been sold to her during Orientation Week and said that she found the females at her residence to be backstabbers, whereas Katlego lamented that residence was not a community for her, but a place where she slept as home was too far to commute from.

Ayanda: 'Nooo!...uhmmm…especially from the res that I'm from…so they'll say (high-pitched voice) Sunnyside! Sisterhood…what what what…I think there are aspects to that, having strong relationships with people…finding strong relationships with people…and I do agree that res life contributes to your whole experience of being at university! 'Cos I think people that are day students compared to res students, are having two very different experiences of what a university is…but I don't think it's a home away from home…there's just been too many moments where I was just like, I want to go home. Especially, I feel like with our females…there's a lot of fighting, a lot of gossiping…just hostility to one another…that just doesn't make sense…people are malicious!'

Katlego: 'Mmmm (pauses) I think it applies to some but for me it hasn't felt like home. I don't have any friends at the res... So it feels like the place I have to sleep at for school…because the commute was too much…so I had to find a place here…Like my sisters they also told me that having friends at res also makes you want to stay more cos you do want to be with your friends during that free time. So I think having friends would also want to make you stay more.'

It is interesting, however, as the common theme between all these accounts is whether these participants had friends at the residence or not. Those who had friends at the residence (Zukiswa and Anele), met the criteria to belong at that residence, and further benefitted from it; whereas those who had no friends (Ayanda and Katlego) did not meet the criteria to belong, had no social capital and as such felt excluded (Bourdieu, 1986; Lin, 1999; Soudien, 2008; Bazana & Mogotsi, 2017). This would suggest that making friends at the residence contributed to the participants' social capital, and those without social capital did not benefit from the residence as a community.

4.5.4 Religion

Religion was an unexpected theme in that one would expect roommates with the same religion to get along, however, that was not always the case, as discussed by Marshall (2014) and Woodhead (2004). Although Zinzi has the same religion as her roommate (they are both Christian), she expressed not getting along with her. Zinzi initially was conflicted and let her roommate hold cell groups (Christian bible studies) in their room. She initially did not complain as she expressed that she herself is Christian. However, her roommate seemed to take advantage of this, and the bible study would go beyond the allocated hour, which Zinzi struggled with as it meant that she could not study, eat in the room or come sleep, as she had to wait for them to finish.

> Zinzi: 'She started doing home cell [bible study group] in the room. But because I'm also a Christian, I did allow that to happen, although they don't allow having *ama*-home cells in a sharing room, but, if you have a single room, you can have a home cell in your room. But then *yena [she]*, she did a home cell in the room, but I didn't have a problem because I'm also a Christian. A home cell is supposed to last like an hour or so, but *yena*, she extended it more than that…after that they would chill with her friends in the room…and I'm tired I wanna study or I just want to rest. So *ja*, even now, we are not even getting along. When we just wake up, it's just hi…hi and that's it.

…And it continued and continued…she didn't even ask me *kuthi [that]*, can I please have a home cell in the room? When the thing went on, we even reported it to the…to the…the hall coordinator. And then she asked her *kuthi*, if Zinzi was a Sangoma [traditional healer] or something like that…and had ritual practises, and she did them in the room, how would you feel and all that? Yes, we understand, and we respect your culture…but your culture or religion shouldn't affect the person that you are living with.

…they told her if you ever hold a home cell…it's totally wrong to hold a home cell in sharing room. Find a place where you won't disturb your roommate.'

Tshi: 'You said you struggled also with the fact that she is Christian, she should be living this godly life…but she's acting funny towards you. Do you guys go to different churches?'

Zinzi: 'Yes, it's different churches. I think she said she goes to CRC [Christian Revival Church]…these Sandton churches or something like that. And I go to JTL [Jesus is the Lord Ministries] here on campus…but I'm originally an Apostolic Church member from back home.'

Upon more probing, it emerged that Zinzi and her roommate go to different churches. This explained a lot as Zinzi described her roommate's church as "these Sandton churches" suggesting that she did not approve of her roommates' choice in church; particularly because Zinzi attended an Apostolic Church back home. This is in line with literature as it pertains to modern charismatic churches versus traditional churches. Meyer (2004) discussed how traditional churches in Africa (such as Protestant and Apostolic churches) have lost some congregants, who have left to join the more modern charismatic churches. Some traditional church leaders have accused charismatic church leaders of using prosperity sermons to lure their followers (Meyer, 2004). As such, there has been slight animosity between traditional church congregants and modern charismatic church congregants over the years (Meyer, 2004).

Zukiswa, on the other hand, had a different religion than her roommate, and one would have expected challenges as per van der Merwe (2009); however, Zukiswa and her roommate got along, which was unexpected given the different religions. This confirmed what Laney and Laney (2007) and Kahnweiler (2016) discussed; that people with different values and belief systems can learn from each other and co-exist.

> Zukiswa: 'She was Buddhist and I'm Christian.'
>
> Zukiswa: '…And she would burn incense…but I was fine with that. 'Cos some people would be like…I have sinuses…but I was fine with that…'Cos for me, it actually smelled nice (laughs).'…she actually respected that (I'm Christian).'

One would expect roommates with the same religion to get along, and those with different religions to have some challenges (Marshall, 2014; Woodhead, 2004), similarly to how one would expect roommates from a similar class to get along and those from different classes to clash (Bourdieu, 1986; Lin, 1999; Akgun, 2020; Bech, 2021); however the opposite was true for the participants of this study. Zinzi and her roommate, who are both Christian, struggled to get along and exposed the different value systems among Christians (Meyer, 2004). Whereas Zukiswa and her roommate, who had different religions, reported no challenges and instead respected their different religions (Laney & Laney, 2007 & Kahnweiler, 2016).

4.5.5 Class and habitus

There is often a link between class and habitus (Akgun, 2020). Zinzi contrasted her wealthier roommate's upbringing with her own; she reported growing up in an informal settlement where they had no running water and electricity, suggesting that she had a basic childhood where there was no need and means for frivolous possessions. Zinzi's roommate, on the other hand, was from an affluent family and had learnt certain class behaviours from a young age, which was evidenced with the possessions she owned. Bourdieu (1986) theorised that it is not just about having cultural capital or expensive taste, but also about knowing what possessions to buy, as seen by Zinzi's description of her roommate's possessions as "fancy, nice-*nyana*

things… for cheesegirls" (fancy, somewhat nice things associated with snobs).

> Zinzi: '*Ja*, we come from very different backgrounds. I think she is from…she was from a very rich family. She says her father was a doctor…but now the father passed away. She told me that when we were still getting along…the father was a doctor, even the way she behaves…the things that she has in her room…unnecessary things…you know those cheesegirl typa thing.'
>
> '…we've got two mirrors that we found at Sunnyside, but she brought another mirror (laughs)…a very fancy nice mirror and it's cramping the space…the room is small. Remember we are sharing? Now it's making everything…she has a fridge…she has so much nje. *Ja*, and all those fancy nice-nyana things. I'd say she is from a very rich…not very rich but…uhmmm…well-off family. And as for me…in Boksburg, I stayed in an informal settlement. *Ja*…where there is no electricity…no water. Okay, there is water, but you have to fetch it from far, with a wheelbarrow…*ja*, that was it…shacks and all that…'

There is a link between class and habitus as one would have to know what to buy and own in a higher class, which is learnt from a young age (Bourdieu, 1986), as evidenced by Zinzi's roommate. This further proves that class is actually learnt behaviour, which is often learnt from one's family and upbringing (Bourdieu, 1986).

4.5.6 Boarding school and sharing with siblings

Participants who had either gone to boarding school, like Lerato and Zanele, or shared a room with a sibling when growing up, as Anele did, found it easier to adjust to sharing a room with someone else; whereas those who had never shared a room when growing up struggled to transition, as Azwi laments below. This is in line with what Bourdieu (1977) theorised with the concept of habitus. Those participants who found it easier to share with someone else because they had a roommate when growing up meant that they had embodied this behaviour from childhood, as discussed by Grillo (2018) and Bech (2021); it had become a part of who they are, translating in them finding it easier to share a room with someone else at university.

Lerato described how living in hostel and also visiting friends during school holidays (as her parents were seldom home) prepared her to share with practically anyone, regardless of how difficult that roommate might be. Zanele on the other hand, spoke about how her hostel, which was set up as a dormitory, prepared her for having a roommate at university. Whereas Anele reported that having siblings whom she had to share with when she was younger, prepared her for room-sharing.

> Lerato: 'I've lived in hostel before right…and generally my mom and dad would travel a lot. So when it was like holiday breaks, I had to live with friends…And usually my friends would be in family spaces where it's a lot of people. So I've learnt how to deal with any kind of person in any living space. In the most tight living space, in the most…you know…uncomfortable situations and everything. So, it's not difficult for me when having a roommate…'
>
> Zanele: 'Okay…so boarding school…my boarding school wasn't like, girl do you want a single room or a roommate? It was like, bed on bed on bed…'
>
> Tshi: 'Like…dormitory?'
>
> Zanele: 'Yeeees…like dormitory…from Grade 9 to Grade 11…'
>
> Anele: 'It's just that thing of I've got siblings at home, so the sharing thing wasn't really a problem for me…'

Azwi, on the other hand, lamented how challenging it was having to transition from having her own space at home and not sharing with anyone, to now having to "report" to someone and the constant need to have conversations.

> Azwi: 'Uhmmm…*ja*…I think it was hard because me enjoying my own space…and not having to report to anyone, or in a sense like, always talking to somebody…like having somebody to talk to…'

Learnt behaviour, such as sharing a room with siblings and having gone to boarding school (Bourdieu, 1977), made the transition of sharing a room at university much

easier (Grillo, 2018; Bech, 2021), as evidenced by Lerato, Zanele and Anele. Those for whom it was not learnt behaviour, such as Azwi, struggled with this transition, further proving the importance of habitus and learnt behaviour in adjusting to room-sharing.

4.5.7 Conclusion

There was not always discord among roommates from different classes, contrary to what some authors suggested (Bourdieu, 1984; 1987; Southall, 2014; Grillo, 2018; Mosselson, 2020). As true as this was for some participants, other participants got along despite the class differences. Language capital is a marker of cultural capital (Bourdieu, 1977; Kiguwa, 2015; Akgun, 2020), which was evident when students who could speak the English language, with the right accent, were more privileged at university than students who struggled with the language. However, there were students who decided to stand up against the dominant language and speak their vernacular language in protestation against the dominant language as prescribed by the institution (Ashlee et al., 2017; Fataar, 2018). Students who had embodied room-sharing when they were younger, either through boarding school or sharing a room with a sibling, found it easy to share a room at university, whereas those who never shared a room in their childhood struggled with the transition at university (Bourdieu, 1977; Grillo, 2018; Bech, 2021). Students who had friends in their residences found those residences to be a community that they benefitted from, whereas those with no friends felt excluded (Hurtado & Carter, 1997; Friedlander et al., 2007); this implied that those with friends had social capital, whereas those without friends did not meet the criteria to belong in those residences, and therefore felt excluded (Bourdieu, 1986; Lin, 1999). There were links between class and habitus in that the students who had a higher class and sense of style would have had to learn those class behaviours from a young age (Akgun, 2020), further assisting them in knowing what is acceptable to buy and own (Bourdieu, 1986). Therefore cultural capital and habitus were evident in the participants' narratives in how it assisted them to navigate room-sharing at university, and in instances where there was a lack of cultural capital and/or habitus, saw those students struggle a little bit more with this transition at university.

5 CONCLUSION

5.1 Summary of Findings

Interviews were conducted where participants were asked to share narratives of their experiences of sharing a residence room at Wits University and further exploring how these experiences affect them on a daily basis. When speaking about the different residences, off-campus residents complained that management treated on-campus residences better than off-campus residences, with on-campus concerns being dealt with more swiftly than off-campus complaints. Off-campus residents did not feel safe in the streets of Braamfontein and the inner central business district; these students wished that more security would be provided for off-campus residents similar to on-campus security that patrols main campus, particularly at night when students are walking from the library or computer laboratories. On-campus residents however, felt that the residence matrons were too strict and did not give them the freedom that they had expected to experience at university.

Friendship was a significant theme that emerged as those who had friends at their respective residences felt that they belonged and benefitted from this community, whereas those who did not have friends felt excluded and did not feel they belonged in these residences. There were benefits such as having someone to discuss personal difficulties with and also the challenging transition to university; some participants even reported seeing a positive impact on their studies due to these relationships. The friendship theme was also linked to whether participants felt like their residence was a 'home away from home' or not, with those who had friends reporting that they had a sense of belonging and the residence was a 'home away from home' and a safe space. Those with no friends reporting a sense of exclusion and felt that the residence was not a 'home away from home'.

There were mixed reports with regards to personality (introversion versus extroversion); some participants found it difficult having roommates with a different personality, while others were thankful that they were paired with similar personality roommates. Surprisingly, Some participants reported benefitting from a

roommate with a different personality. There were also varied accounts with regards to class, with some participants feeling looked down upon and discriminated against for being of a lower class than their roommates, whereas other participants reported that while their roommates were from a different class to them, there was no discrimination, and they could have meaningful conversations about their upbringing and different backgrounds.

Bourdieu's cultural capital and habitus were also seen throughout the narratives as participants reported how learning certain behaviours and embodying certain behaviours at a young age had assisted them in transitioning to room-sharing at university. Learnt class behaviours assisted some participants in knowing what to buy and own and informed their sense of style. Language capital was not as straightforward; although there were participants who reported not having the language capital as prescribed by the university and feeling discriminated against for not having the right accent, there were also participants who rejected English as the dominant language, and chose to speak IsiZulu, as they described themselves as being pro-African and woke.

5.2 Limitations of the Study

The study was homogenous, consisting of only black female students; the inclusion of male students could have elicited different responses. Although there are not many diverse races in the residences (University of the Witwatersrand, n.d.), the inclusion of Indian students and white students (albeit a few) could have also elicited different responses. Sunnyside residence was the only on-campus residence that was included in the study; the rest were off campus. Including another on-campus residence, such as Jubilee or Barnato, could have enriched the data. Due to time limitations, only one interview was conducted per participant; a second interview could have produced more in-depth data as the participants would have been even more comfortable with the process. The interviews were conducted pre-Covid-19, therefore, there was no inclusion of the effect of the pandemic on room-sharing and residences.

5.3 Clinical Implications of the Study

The knowledge derived from this study could add to the body of research that exists on residences and room-sharing, particularly because most residence studies tend to focus on interracial room-sharing (Shook & Fazio, 2008a; Shook & Fazio, 2008b); this study adds more knowledge on same race-sharing. This body of work also adds to the area of young black women. The literature tends to primarily focus on white males. Depending on the research scope, the focus interchanges between black males and white females. Black women were often at the bottom of this hierarchy (Mama, 2002), therefore this research will enrich the literature, spotlighting the voices of young black women. Lastly, this study will advise Wits University management and perhaps even other university managements, to improve the experiences of students in on-campus and off-campus residences.

5.4 Recommendations for Management and Future Research

5.4.1 Recommendations for management

The study's results provide direction for university management toward improving on-campus and off-campus residences. Firstly, equal treatment of on-campus and off-campus residences. Off-campus residents lamented that their complaints were not swiftly dealt with as were those pertaining to on-campus residences. According to the study's participants, complaints were dealt with efficiently at on-campus residences, whereas off-campus residents had to wait for a long time for their concerns to be heard. Secondly, equalising residences' resources. According to the study's participants, resources were skewed towards on-campus residences, with off-campus residences having limited resources in comparison, such as working computer labs and wifi access. Thirdly, the issue of safety. Security is perceived more visible on campus; off-campus residents felt that they equally needed security provided as walking the streets of Braamfontein, especially at night, was not safe, more so for female students. Lastly, all participants felt that the process of changing one's roommate needed to be made easier, with the current rule of enduring the

entire year with the same roommate not working for some participants, particularly in cases of unresolved and untenable conflict.

5.4.2 Recommendations for future research

A more diverse sample could be employed for future research with the inclusion of male students and different races. The Wits University residences that did not get the opportunity to be included in this study could perhaps be included in future studies, particularly male-only residences compared to female-only residences and mixed residences, this would be to assess if different responses and divergent views are elicited. Finally, future research could incorporate the impact of the Covid-19 pandemic on room-sharing.

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Appendix A: Interview Schedule for Participants

Participant: _____

Age: ☐

Residence: _____

- How have you experienced having a roommate?
- What does your room look like? What kind of room is it?
- What are some of the main challenges you have found with sharing a room with someone else?
- What would you say are some of the benefits of having a roommate?
- Do you and your roommate get along?
- Would you say you and your roommate are similar or different? Explain.
- Had you ever shared a room when growing up? How is it similar or different?
- Did you go to boarding school? If yes, did that help with the transition?
- Would you say that room-sharing has affected your studies? How?
- If you had the option, would you choose room-sharing or staying alone? Why?

Appendix B: Information Sheet for Participants

School of Human and Community Development

Private Bag 3, Wits 2050, Johannesburg, South Africa

Tel: (011) 717-4500

Greetings,

My name is Tshiamo Sibanyoni. I am currently enrolled as a Masters student in Community-Based Counselling (MACC) Psychology at the University of the Witwatersrand and it is necessary that I conduct this research project to fulfil the requirements of my degree. This research project will explore the experiences of young black women's narratives of room-sharing in the Community of Braamfontein, Wits University.

I wish to invite you to participate in this study. Should you agree to participate, you will be interviewed for an hour to an hour and a half. Interviews will be recorded using an audio/voice recorder only if you are willing to have the interview recorded. If you are not comfortable with certain questions, you do not have to answer them. If you are not comfortable with the interview as a whole, you are free to terminate it at any point during the session. Should you, however, be willing to be interviewed, please note that all interview material will be stored in a secure computer where only my supervisor and I will have access. Once analysed, the content (in voice and transcribed form) will be destroyed after a period of 5 years. For the purposes of the study, I may directly quote some of your statements; however, your identity will remain unknown to readers. As such I will use pseudonyms in order to protect your identity.

Should you choose to participate in the study, but then later choose to withdraw, there will be no negative consequences. Furthermore, if participating in this study evokes any distress, you can contact a counsellor at the CCDU (Tel: 011 788 4784/5). The research outcomes will be presented in the form of a research report. If you are interested in the findings of the study, you may contact me (email: tshiamo.sibanyoni@gmail.com).

Requirements for participation include the following:

- You must be a registered student at Wits University
- You must be between the ages of 18-21
- You must share a room with another woman

If you agree to participate in this study, sign in the designated area.

If you have any further enquiries, please do not hesitate to contact me, or my supervisor.

Tshiamo Sibanyoni – 072 4821566; tshiamo.sibanyoni@gmail.com

Malose Langa- (011) 717 4536

Yours sincerely,

Tshiamo Sibanyoni

Appendix C: Consent Form (Interview)

Psychology

School of Human & Community Development

University of the Witwatersrand

Private Bag 3, Wits, 2050

Tel: 011 717 450 Fax: 011 717 4559

I, _____, consent to being interviewed by Tshiamo Sibanyoni, for her study exploring Young Black Women's Narratives of "Room-Sharing" in the Community of Braamfontein, Wits University. Please tick relevant boxes. I understand that:

- Participation in this study is voluntary.

- I may refrain from answering any questions.

- I may withdraw my participation and/or my responses from the study at any time before the research report is examined.

- There are no risks or benefits associated with participation in this study.

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

- If I am quoted, a pseudonym (Participant A, Respondent B etc.) will be used.

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

- I am aware that the results of the study will be communicated in the form of a research report or journal articles.

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

Signed:_____

Date:_____

Appendix D: Consent Form (Recording and Publishing)

Psychology

School of Human & Community Development

University of the Witwatersrand

Private Bag 3, Wits, 2050

Tel: 011 717 450 Fax: 011 717 4559

I, _____ give my consent for my interview with Tshiamo Sibanyoni, to be audio recorded for her study. Please tick the relevant boxes. I understand that:

- The audio-recordings and transcripts will not be seen or heard by anyone other than the researcher and her supervisor.

- The audio-recordings and transcripts will be kept in a password-protected computer.

- No identifying information will be used in the transcripts or the research report.

- Although direct quotes from my interview may be used in the research report, I will be referred to by a pseudonym.

Signed:_____

Date:_____

Appendix E: Permission to Conduct Research

UNIVERSITY OF THE WITWATERSRAND, JOHANNESBURG

OFFICE OF THE DEPUTY REGISTRAR

21 June 2018

Tshiamo Sibanyoni
Student number 0212229J
School of Human and Community Development

TO WHOM IT MAY CONCERN

"Young Black Women's Narratives of "Room-Sharing" in University Residences, Wits University"

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 within specific Schools and within the teaching term, permission must be sought from Heads of School or individual academics.

No research can commence before ethical clearance has been obtained. Kindly forward a copy of the clearance certificate to this office.

Nicoleen Potgieter
University Deputy Registrar

Private Bag 3, Wits, 2050, South Africa | T +27 11 717 1204/8 | F +27 86 553 2271 | www.wits.ac.za

Appendix F: Ethics Approval

UNIVERSITY OF THE WITWATERSRAND, JOHANNESBURG

HUMAN RESEARCH ETHICS COMMITTEE (SCHOOL OF HUMAN & COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT

CLEARANCE CERTIFICATE	**PROTOCOL NUMBER: MACC/18/010 IH**
PROJECT TITLE:	Young black women's narratives of "room sharing" in university residences, Wits University
INVESTIGATORS	Sibanyoni Tshiamo
DEPARTMENT	Psychology
DATE CONSIDERED	29 May 2018
DECISION OF COMMITTEE*	Approved

This ethical clearance is valid for 2 years and may be renewed upon application

DATE: 29 May 2018

CHAIRPERSON
(Prof. Hugo Canham)

cc Supervisor: Prof. Malose Langa
Psychology

DECLARATION OF INVESTIGATOR (S)

To be completed in duplicate and **one copy** returned to the Secretary, Room 100015, 10th floor, Senate House, University.

I/we fully understand the conditions under which I am/we are authorized to carry out the abovementioned research and I/we guarantee to ensure compliance with these conditions. Should any departure be contemplated from the research procedure, as approved, I/we undertake to submit a revised protocol to the Committee.

This ethical clearance will expire on 31 December 2020

PLEASE QUOTE THE PROTOCOL NUMBER IN ALL ENQUIRIES