Factors influencing enrolment and academic performance at a South African university

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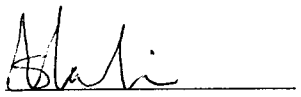
Declaration

I declare that this research report is my own unaided work. It is being submitted in partial fulfillment for the degree of Master of Education (Educational Psychology) to the University of the Witwatersrand, Johannesburg. It has not been submitted for any degree or for examination to any other university.



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Abstract

Although various policies have been implemented to lessen the impact of Apartheid on all levels of education since 1994, sub-Saharan Africa still has the lowest level of higher education enrolment in the world (Bloom, Canning & Chan, 2006). This study therefore aimed to identify which factors contributed to students' university enrolment in South Africa and how these factors affected their academic success at university. A self-developed questionnaire assessing factors influencing enrolment for three key areas (personal, parental and schooling) was administered to 337 psychology one students registered at the University of the Witwatersrand and academic success was estimated using their psychology one mark for the first semester. Data was analysed using frequency counts, Spearman's correlations and two independent sample t-tests.

Results showed that intrinsic and extrinsic motives had the greatest influence on individuals' decision to attend university, with those students intrinsically motivated performing better on average than those motivated by any other factor. In addition, socio-economic status played a role in success at university, possibly because it affects the quantity and quality of resources available to an individual. As a result, those students' with a higher socio-economic status tended to do better than those of lower socio-economic status. Further analysis indicated that fluency in English also had an effect on student's overall success.

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Chapter 1: Introduction

In South Africa, research has shown that the number of students enrolling at higher education institutes has increased since 1994 and so has the current output at these institutes (Council on Higher Education, 2004). Despite this, international research indicates that sub-Saharan Africa currently still has the lowest level of higher education enrolment in the world (Bloom, Canning & Chan, 2006). South Africa has become aware of this deficit through increased international pressure and the need to contribute to the global market in various sectors. South Africa also has acknowledged that education is a means of increasing economic growth in a country and giving people a way out of poverty (Council on Higher Education, 2004). In addition, tertiary education attainment has been shown not only to contribute to an individual's well-being but also to the greater improvement of the country by providing a greater skills base, and encouraging increased saving and creating greater tax revenue. Health, technology and a possible reduction in population growth are also factors thought to be affected by attaining a tertiary degree (Bloom et al., 2006; Coughian, 2006; Council on Higher Education, 2004). Therefore one can see that the attainment of a tertiary education has a cumulative positive effect on both individuals and their surrounding environment. It is thus vital that South Africa find ways to increase its rate of higher education enrolment to match international levels and compete effectively on a global scale.

The majority of research conducted in South Africa pertaining to university enrolment and university success is based largely on qualitative findings (Coughian, 2006; Gaganakis, 2003; Geldenhuys & de Lange, 2007; Gordon & Meyer, 2002; Toni & Olivier, 2004). This research will address both quantitative and qualitative aspects of university enrolment and subsequent

success. This is so that results can be triangulated and a better understanding of South African students' perceptions of factors that affected their entry into university can be attained.

Bitzer and Troskie-De Bruin (2004) have suggested that enrolment into university is affected by various individual and social characteristics or factors that relate to an individual's personality, motivation and character as well as their social circumstances. This is supported by Bronfenbrenner's (1979) theory of ecological development, which shows how no one factor affects an individual's development in isolation; instead every system and subsystem of society has an interactive effect on their development. Furthermore, Bourdieu (1998) suggests that academic success is affected by one's family background and an individual's aspirations and self-concept. Lin (2001) terms such factors social and human capital. Both social capital and human capital interact with one another across various levels of the ecological system among individuals at a similar hierarchical level. Success is defined as those who are able to attain access to a more valued commodity than their social system can provide (Lin, 2001).

This study will therefore attempt to identify which factors contribute to students' university enrolment in South Africa and, furthermore, the relationship of these factors with academic performance. Attaining such information will hopefully allow a greater understanding of the enrolment-contributing factors and success factors among university students which could then possibly be used as indicators to assess gaps in the promotion of university at secondary school level, and could provide possible suggestions as to how best to equip students with various skills or assistance which may help them to succeed in entering and completing university. The focus of this research therefore will be to assess the frequency and relative importance of various

factors in first year students' decisions to attend a South African university and how they are related to academic success. These factors will be based on those highlighted in previous research in the area of higher education enrolment – namely, individual, parental and schooling factors (cf. Bitzer & Troskie-De Bruin, 2004; Byrne & Flood, 2005, Coughian, 2006; Dinovitzer, Hagan & Parker, 2003; Gayle, Berridge & Davies, 2002; Marjoribanks, 1998, 2004; Mji, 2002; Perna & Titus, 2005; Rowan-Kenyon, 2007).

Chapter 2: Literature Review

2.1 Introduction

During the time of Apartheid, non-white individuals were seen as largely different as well as inferior to white individuals in South Africa (Ratele & Shefer, 2003). Non-white groups were separated into black, Indian and coloured individuals according to the *Population Registration Act* at the time. In addition each racial group was only permitted to attend schools for their specific race, except a few private schools which were racially mixed (Morrow, 1990). The difference between these schools included differential resources in terms of access to books, stationary, buildings and utilities, teacher availability, level of teacher training and the teacher-pupil ratio (Morrow, 1990; Nimubona & Vencatachellum, 2007). These differences, supposedly based on psychological proof, resulted in severe oppression and racial segregation which affected non-white individuals in all aspects of their lives (Ratele & Shefer, 2003).

For education, this resulted in the quality of education for different races in South Africa being highly stratified. Schooling was generally better for white individuals overall, and Indian and coloured education was comparatively better than black education (Morrow, 1990). Education for black individuals especially was based largely on the employment of 'Bantu education' (Morrow, 1990; Ratele & Shefer, 2003). Bantu education was the first policy to arise during Apartheid and was essentially an education program structured by white individuals for the Native community so that the community could learn how to support their own community rather than compete on a national level (Mubangizi & Mubangizi, 2005). The Apartheid system provided resources to white individuals but provided inferior services to non-white individuals,

furthermore this unequal distribution of resources was put in place so that the white population could prosper and the non-white population would labour to serve the white population (Makoe, 2006; Mubangizi & Mubangizi, 2005). Therefore because the schooling system was established by white individuals the skills and needs taught were essentially biased. Later other education policies were developed, namely, the Coloured Education Act and the Indian Education Act thereby separating these 'population' groups as well (Morrow, 1990). This resulted in few non-white individuals succeeding at school at varying levels and denied most non-white individuals access to higher education (Stevens & Lockhat, 2003).

This obvious segregation during Apartheid was one of the main causes of large economic disparities in the population due to previous differences in educational attainment (Mubangizi & Mubangizi, 2005). Educational inequality prevented non-white individuals from moving up in the labour market and as a result a highly skewed income distribution developed and currently still exists (Mubangizi & Mubangizi, 2005). Plank and Jordan (2001) suggest that 'stratification operates through structures of access and constraint' (p 948). This implies that those individuals with greater quantity and quality of resources essentially have the upper hand whereas others encounter barriers to learning and as a result of this stratification of populations, and due to historical events, in South Africa there is an unequal distribution of social and human capital causing a lack of social resources which may hinder the attainment of success (Lin, 2001; Paulsen & St. John, 2002; Plank & Jordan, 2001).

According to Nimubona and Vencatachellum (2007), education is one way out of poverty because it is one way of investing in one's human capital which could lead to higher earnings. In

South Africa, providing the general population with equal education opportunities could result in an increased upward mobility for previously disadvantaged individuals and address inequality. Various initiatives have been put in place since 1994 to try and combat inequality in South Africa but the problem continues due to a number of historic influences (McGrath, 2000). One of these initiatives is to offer education to all individuals in South Africa at a low cost, but this refers to primary and secondary education only whereas higher education is expensive for the majority of the population but extremely important in order to increase productivity in South Africa (Dunn & Nilan, 2007).

Tertiary education attainment has been shown to contribute to the country's greater skills base, as well as increasing saving and creating greater tax revenue, improving health and technology and reducing population growth (Bloom et al., 2006; Coughian, 2006; Council on Higher Education, 2004; Makoe, 2006; Mubangizi & Mubangizi, 2005). For South Africa to effectively compete on a global scale it is necessary for the country to encourage more of society to enroll at universities (Council on Higher Education, 2004).

This was attempted after the abolishment of Apartheid which caused large-scale changes throughout the country, especially with respect to the education system where there has been a shift in focus from differences to similarity and equality has now been emphasized (Council on Higher Education, 2004; Toni & Olivier, 2004). This change in focus has motivated more non-white adolescents to enter into previously predominantly white universities (Toni & Olivier, 2004). The main premise associated with this increased acceptance into university is that education provides individuals with an opportunity to escape economic and financial deprivation

and to increase social potential (Coughian, 2006; Council on Higher Education, 2004). The Council on Higher Education (2004) has conducted research since 1990 on various aspects of change within universities before the end of Apartheid and post-1994. Research has shown that overall enrolments into South African universities have increased. Enrolments into all higher education facilities have increased by 200 000 for enrolment between 1998 and 2002, and the overall output of students has increased by 100 000 graduates. In addition both gender and racial profiles changed drastically from 1994 onwards, for example, in 2002, 53% of all students were of African origin and 54% of students were female (Council on Higher Education, 2004).

Despite these changes, globally Sub-Saharan Africa is currently not performing as well as other countries with regards to higher education enrolment. This could partly be as a result of the fact that tertiary education seems to be a level of education largely ignored by many countries, with more focus being placed on primary and secondary education attainment (Bloom et al., 2006). In South Africa specifically, the wealth distribution is highly stratified and the Council on Higher Education (2004) has suggested that one factor resulting in a small percentage of the population entering and passing at university is explained by the immense cost of higher education compared to primary and secondary schooling in South Africa. Dunn and Nilan (2007) have shown that even though universities in South Africa have opened their doors to the general population there is a high drop-out rate because there is difficulty in sustaining studies due to high costs. Paulsen and St. John (2002) found support for this in their study conducted in the United States of America, where lower-income individuals were less likely to attend university because of the perceived high costs. They also reported that most lower-income students were not made aware of various financial aid options at the university. Furthermore, due to the

unequal income distribution, previous schooling opportunities are not equal for all individuals (Coughian, 2006; Mji, 2002). This has caused a stratification of applicants into universities, due to the fact that the main acceptance criteria into university have been based on academic performance and more specifically on matriculation results (Coughian, 2006; Mji, 2002).

While matriculation results have been widely used as a 'reliable' measure for university acceptance, research has shown that one third of individuals who enter university do not succeed or complete undergraduate studies for which they are enrolled (Coughian, 2006). Therefore one cannot assume that because there has been an increase in university attendance that the number of individuals who finish their undergraduate studies has increased to the same extent. On this basis, it is reasonable to assume that one could understand success in higher education as the attainment of at least an undergraduate-level degree at university. However, it is important to note that in order to attain a university degree students are required to pass a certain number of academic years, depending on the type of degree. Therefore academic success at the tertiary level can be further understood as the ability to pass each successive year in the structure of an academic degree.

2.2 Factors influencing enrolment and success

Factors influencing an individual to attend university and to succeed at university have been shown to be extensive and interdependent and it is difficult to isolate single factors that have a unique influence on enrolment and success (Gayle et al., 2002). This is in accordance with Bronfenbrenner's (1979) theory of ecological development which suggests that each factor has a collaborative impact on the individual and the individual himself has an impact on various

factors. Thus although the individual may choose to enroll at university or not, there are a number of other factors in the broader environment that also have an impact on his/her choice to attend university and his/her likelihood of succeeding at university. Both local and international research has shown that such factors tend to include intrinsic and extrinsic individual factors as well as background characteristics, parental factors and prior schooling. These factors can be assembled into an ecological structure, comprising of a micro-, meso- and exosystem (Bronfenbrenner, 1979).

The microsystem, according to Bronfenbrenner (1979), is a "pattern of activities, roles and interpersonal relationships experienced by the developing person in a given setting with particular physical and material characteristics" (p. 22). Mesosytems, on the other hand, involve interactions of the various microsystems. The exosystem refers to settings that are not directly associated with the individual as an active participant, but "in which events occur that affect, or are affected by, what happens in the setting containing the developing child" (Bronfenbrenner, 1979, p.25). These factors, according to Bronfenbrenner and Ceci (1994), interact with each other throughout the course of an individual's life and development takes place through a dynamic and reciprocal interaction of these factors, both genetic and environmental.

Various factors from previous research that have been shown to have some effect on students' enrolment and success at university include individual factors such as intrinsic and extrinsic motives, socio-economic status, language, gender and race/ethnicity and parental factors such as influence of a parent's expectations of their child, the parent's level of involvement in the child's academic career and the parent's own level of schooling (Bitzer & Troskie-De Bruin, 2004;

Byrne & Flood, 2005; Coughian, 2006; Gaganakis, 2003; Marjoribanks, 1998; 2004; Mji, 2002; Nakusura, 2004; Perna & Titus, 2005; Rowan-Kenyon, 2007; Toni & Olivier, 2004). In addition, the child's schooling environment will have an effect on their choices, including level of schooling attained, guidance received about further study options and the influence of peers (Coughian, 2003; Gaganakis, 2003; Geldenhuys & de Lange, 2007; Mji, 2002; Rowan-Kenyon, 2007; Toni & Olivier, 2004).

2.3 Individual characteristics

Certain factors which influence an individual to attend and succeed at university pertain directly to the individual him/herself, and are based on both his/her genetic predisposition and environmental factors that have shaped that individual (Bronfenbrenner & Ceci, 1994). These factors include intrinsic and extrinsic motives, socio-economic status, race /ethnicity and gender (Gayle et al., 2002, Rowan-Kenyon, 2007). International and local research has shown that each of these factors could possibly contribute to or hinder whether an individual considers applying to university, decides to enroll at university and/or succeeds academically (Bitzer & Troskie-De Bruin, 2004; Byrne & Flood, 2005; Coughian, 2006; Dinovitzer, Hagan & Parker, 2003; Fraser & Killen, 2005; Gayle et al., 2002; Marjoribanks, 1998; 2004; Nakusera, 2004; Perna & Titus, 2005; Rowan-Kenyon, 2007). These factors also form the basis of the interactions an individual might encounter in his/her microsystem. Due to the fact that the microsystem involves a face-to-face, bi-directional interaction various personal qualities may influence these interactions (Hook, 2002). An individual's immediate interactions in relation to tertiary education may therefore depend on their motivation, socioeconomic status, language, gender and race/ethnicity.

2.3.1 Intrinsic and Extrinsic Motives

Intrinsic motivation is an individual's aspiration to learn in order to understand various phenomena and is congruent with the individual's sense of self and purpose (Byrne & Flood, 2005; Fazey & Fazey, 2001). Extrinsic motivation is associated with attaining an external goal or reward in order to avoid punishment and is influenced by factors external to the task and the individual (Byrne & Flood, 2005; Fazey & Fazey, 2001; Hendrich & Schepers, 2004). Intrinsic motives are an important aspect of autonomy whereas extrinsically motivated individuals are not considered autonomous (Fazey & Fazey, 2001). Motivation, whether intrinsic or extrinsic, is created by the effects of the environment on the individual, and in addition the meaning that individual places on the effect of the environment (Bronfenbrenner, 1979; Bronfenbrenner & Ceci, 1994). Research in South Africa has shown that combinations of both intrinsic and extrinsic motivations are what students have reported to be significant influences to attend university (Bitzer & Troskie-De Bruin, 2004; Gaganakis, 2003; Mji, 2002; Toni & Olivier, 2004). It has further been assumed that both intrinsic and extrinsic factors have affected South African students because these students perceive the external goal, attaining a university degree, as being an opportunity to create a better future in order to better themselves as individuals, through learning new skills and developing their knowledge as well as the ability to acquire a good job in the future (Mji, 2002; Coughian, 2006). Moreover, Hendrich and Schepers (2004) showed that extrinsic motives were significantly negatively correlated with success, suggesting that those individuals more extrinsically motivated were less likely to succeed at university. Similarly international research has shown that individuals with greater intrinsic motivation, developed through greater self-worth, determination, positive drive and preparedness for university, are more likely to succeed as compared with those individuals who are extrinsically

motivated by their parent's aspirations and external goals (Byrne & Flood; 2005; Dinovitzer et al., 2003; Fazey & Fazey, 2001; Marjoribanks, 2004; Mulder, 2004). Therefore local and international research seems to show that individuals feel that both extrinsic and intrinsic motives influenced their decision to attend university but that intrinsic motives seem to be more positively and significantly correlated with success and extrinsic motives more significantly negatively correlated with success at university.

2.3.2 Socio-Economic Status

Due to historic circumstances in South Africa, socio-economic status (SES) is one of the most influential factors that have been closely related to educational attainment (Coughian, 2006; Mji, 2002; Perna & Titus, 2005; Rowan-Kenyon, 2007). Bourdieu (1977) suggests that various factors within family, schools and individual background are cumulatively necessary as resources for an individual to draw on - the attainment of these resources is described as social and cultural capital. Social capital is the support a student gains from his/her social system, which he/she can use to enhance his/her productivity (Lin, 2001; Perna & Titus, 2005). Social capital focuses on the resources one can draw in one's network and how these resources benefit an individual's actions (Lin, 2001). Cultural capital is a measure of the values and norms that have been inherited from one generation to the next (Bourdieu, 1977). In order for an individual to increase their social capital they would have to access a network with greater resources, an example of this would be tertiary education (Lin, 2001).

Socio-economic status is one of the factors, according to Bourdieu (1977), that determines the amount and quality of resources that an individual can draw upon in order to be successful

generally and in terms of educational attainment, as well as determining their available social and cultural capital (Perna & Titus, 2005; Rowan-Kenyon, 2007). Bronfenbrenner and Ceci (1994) propose that not all of a child's genetic predispositions can be actualized without there being an environment which supports the expression of these predispositions. Therefore the resources that an environment can provide for an individual's development will either enhance or hinder his/her development. Lower socio-economic classes would, in theory, provide fewer resources for their children than would upper socio-economic class individuals (Bronfenbrenner & Ceci, 1994).

South Africa's historic context has affected a large portion of the population's economic position. Van Heerden (1995) showed that due to political and economic factors, many individuals were inadequately prepared for university and at times did not know what to expect at university. A more recent study by Gaganakis (2003) showed similar results and this seems to indicate that the influence of South Africa's prior political structure still has power in the present. In addition, Bourdieu (1998) proposes that the dominant culture is the one that is most likely to succeed because it is assumed that the dominant culture has a greater quality and quantity of resources. Such resources may include the kind of study environment available, money to pay university fees, access to textbooks, the availability of computers and the internet and stationary, as well as access to basic resources such as food and medical care.

The difficulties with enrolling into university for lower-income individuals, according to Paulsen and St. John (2002), are multifaceted and interrelated. They suggest that lower-income individuals are less likely to enroll into university because of the high cost involved, but this is

further exacerbated by the fact that lower-income secondary schools do not provide sufficient information about financial aid. This therefore prevents enrolment due to insufficient guidance. Plank and Jordan (2001) propose that individuals of a lower socio-economic status are less likely to attend university than those of middle and upper-income earning brackets and this may be due to the lack of resources available to lower SES individuals. As mentioned previously, SES influences a child's access to information, suggesting that individuals who attend lower SES schools may receive insufficient information about post-secondary schooling and therefore their chances of attending university are affected (Plank & Jordan, 2001). Therefore one's SES can affect an individual's ability to enroll into university as well as to succeed. This is because an individual's SES determines the quality and quantity of resources available to them and is closely linked with their social and cultural capital (Bourdieu, 1977, 1998; Bourdieu & Passeron, 1990; Lin, 2001).

Despite this, acquiring an education can possibly improve one's SES through increased skills and knowledge resulting in increased job opportunities (Coughian, 2006; Mji, 2002; Plank & Jordan, 2001). From this standpoint one can assume that one's current SES may act as an extrinsic motive for students to continue to study to a tertiary level. Furthermore, Geldenhuys and de Lange (2007) show how some individuals from previously disadvantaged backgrounds are more motivated to improve their SES by obtaining a university degree. Therefore in some cases, an individual's character and motives may have a greater impact on enrolment and success than other factors such as socioeconomic status, suggesting that this theory may not be applicable in every individual's case (Dinovitzer et al., 2003). In other words, despite an individual's

background or cultural influence, each individual has intrinsic and extrinsic motives which can affect his/her success to a lesser or greater extent.

2.3.3 Language

Studies involving language and education have been fairly contradictory however there seems to be a consensus that English is a necessary language in order to succeed at English-medium universities (Nakusera, 2004; Toni & Olivier, 2004). In Nakusera's (2004) review, it has been emphasized that English is a vital language which is necessary for success at the tertiary level. In a qualitative study by Toni and Olivier (2004), participants described their difficulty studying in a language that was not their primary language and therefore showed that English is not only required but necessary in order to succeed at English-language universities. In addition these participants had been penalized for the incorrect utilization of English at university compounding the difficulty of having to use a foreign language (Toni & Olivier, 2004). Desai (2001) emphasized that teaching and learning in one's mother tongue is more effective among student's who are not fluent in English. This allows students to express themselves more fully and expecting students to learn in English has been shown to be problematic. Furthermore, in South Africa the education policy has stipulated that any one of the eleven official languages can be used as a medium to teach in, however the dominant language of higher education institutes is still English and even though primary and secondary schooling have allowed students to learn in their mother tongue this poses an even greater difficulty at the tertiary level where classes are still only available in English or Afrikaans (Desai, 2001; Nakusera, 2004). Research by Dinovitzer et al. (2003) has also suggested that bilingualism may only help an individual when the individual can continue to speak to their parents in their native language, therefore

maintaining the relationship they have with their parents and thereby maintaining the social and cultural capital provided by the family. Therefore in South Africa not being sufficiently fluent in English is still a barrier to entering university and to succeeding at English medium universities especially if prior schooling has also not exposed an individual to the English language.

2.3.4 Gender

The effects of gender on university attendance tend to be influenced by cultural norms. Women in South Africa, specifically African women, are predominantly stereotyped as being "passive, nurturing, needing approval and being emotional and intuitive" (Gaganakis, 2003, p. 281) and are often associated with home life and the general domestic setting, whereas men are associated with the business and public environment and are usually described as being rational, ambitious and competitive (Agar, 2003; Gaganakis, 2003). Moreover research by Nimubona and Vencatachellum, (2007) has shown that children in female-headed households are more likely to be less educated than those from male-headed households. This is due to the fact that female headed households are usually single parent homes and among the poorest in South Africa (Nimubona & Vencatachellum, 2007). This gender difference has often motivated more men than women to attend university, yet recent studies have shown that more women are enrolling into universities since 1994 due to the abolishment of various education restrictions and possibly a transformation of women stereotypes (Gaganakis, 2003; Geldenhuys & de Lange, 2007; Toni & Olivier, 2004). Moreover, women are more readily applying for traditionally male-dominated fields and are in general more educated than men (Gaganakis, 2003; Nimubona & Vencatachellum, 2007). In addition, Agar (2003) suggested that more women are attending university or furthering their education in order to act as role models for their children and to

teach their children through example and in order to develop a sense of empowerment and transformation. Similarly in South African research, tertiary education is being perceived as a means for independence, confidence and social success (Geldenhuys & de Lange, 2007). Despite this shift, some women and men still enact traditional roles within their households, and it is therefore necessary to understand to what extent gender plays an important or influencing role in individuals entering university.

2.3.5 Race/Ethnicity

In South Africa, educational attainment seems to be closely linked to socio-economic status as stated previously, which in turn is linked to racial group status due to South Africa's history (Mji, 2002). In other words, certain race/ethnic groups may be within a specific socio-economic bracket because of being previously weighed down by Apartheid rules excluding access to certain types of jobs and education (Morrow, 1990; Van Heerden, 2005). Recently in South Africa though, there has been increased accessibility into universities despite any racial/ethnic differences, and since 1994, there has been an increased number of black adolescent individuals enrolling into previously predominantly white universities (Coughian, 2006; Toni & Olivier, 2004). Research from other, mostly western countries, on the other hand, has shown that individuals of certain races are underrepresented (Dinovitzer et al., 2003; Gayle et al., 2002; Perna & Titus, 2005; Rowan-Kenyon, 2007). This has occurred predominantly due to historical factors, which have compounded the low socio-economic status of these individuals, similar to the case in South Africa, thereby influencing the quality of education they can obtain and thus their ability to apply to university, which is particularly expensive (Paulsen & St. John, 2002; Perna & Titus, 2005; Plank & Jordan, 2001). Furthermore, international research has also shown

that people of colour are less likely to succeed and more likely to drop out of university before the completion of their undergraduate degree (Dinovitzer et al., 2003; Perna & Titus, 2005). Yet the way race and ethnicity have been categorized and measured in these studies has been based on arbitrary groups and therefore one cannot really compare these studies nor can any generalization across racial or ethnic groups be made (Marjoribanks, 2004; Rowan-Kenyon, 2007). Given this, it is still important to acknowledge that due to South Africa's prior political structure, individuals of colour were oppressed and education was not equal, causing severe segregation and unequal opportunities which seem to still affect the present (Gaganakis, 2003; Geldenhuys & de Lange, 2007; Van Heerden, 1995). Therefore due to the close influence of other factors such as socio-economic status, language, schooling and motivation, race/ethnicity may impact on both enrolment and success in South Africa because of historical segregation (Coughian, 2006; Gayle et al., 2002).

2.4 Parental Factors

Various parental factors have been shown to provide social and cultural capital for the individual attending university (Bourdieu, 1977, Bourdieu & Passeron, 1990; Lin, 2001). Parents provide children with numerous resources in order to succeed and some of these resources have been shown to contribute to academic success specifically. For parents to extend and assist their children academically they require various resources themselves which inevitably originate from the parent's environment, therefore parental networks provide children with access to valued resources which can help children's educational attainment (Bronfenbrenner & Ceci, 1994; Lin, 2001; Weis, Mayer, Kreider, Vaughan, Dearing, Hencke & Pinto, 2003). These parental factors include the influence of a parent's expectations of their child, the parent's level of involvement

in the child's school career and the parent's level of schooling. These factors are incorporated into three of Bronfenbrenner's (1979) subsystems, namely the microsystem, mesosystem and the exosystem. The microsystem pertains to the parents' expectations of the child and their role as a child in the family based on their individual aspects. The mesosystem pertains to the parents' level of involvement in the child's education and the parents' interaction between two microsystems - the school and the home. The exosystem is characterized by the parents' level of schooling.

2.4.1 The influence of parents' expectations

Research in South Africa has shown two factors that affect the degree to which students are affected by their parents' expectations - the identification with a specific parent as a role model for the child and the pressure of cultural conformity in the specific family (Gaganakis, 2003; Toni & Olivier, 2004). The parent whom the child identifies with most will normally be the example the child will follow. Among South African women research has shown that if the father is present he is often the most prominent role model, yet due to various factors the father is often absent and the mother becomes the prominent role model (Geldenhuys & de Lange, 2007). Women aspire to be independent and to be able to be successful like their fathers (Gaganakis, 2003). Despite these aspirations, the pressure of a traditional role of a woman seems also to have a significant impact on South African women as mentioned above. Some women seem to be intrinsically motivated enough though to pursue a university degree despite these expectations and some women take on both roles, both domestic and career orientated, but others remain unable to move beyond the domestic role (Toni & Olivier, 2004). Many women have certain expectations which cause their future to be somewhat predetermined into a more domestic role

(Gaganakis, 2003). Boys, on the other hand, tend to have little or no involvement with the domestic obligations at home, and therefore have a greater social freedom (Gaganakis, 2003). Furthermore boys are perceived as the primary income earner in families and are expected to move out of home to work (Gaganakis, 2003) although this implies that boys will more likely work after completing their matriculation rather than go on to study further (Nimubona & Vencatachellum, 2007). This has therefore resulted in more females attending university and having higher education than males in South Africa (Nimubona & Vencatachellum, 2007). Some international research has shown that both father and mother's expectations of their children's higher education attainment has been the most influential in determining university enrolment and academic success (cf. Dinovitzer et al., 2003; Marjoribanks, 1998; Perna & Titus, 2005) whereas more recent international research has shown that the mother's expectations have the greater influence on their child's higher attainment (Rowan-Kenyon, 2007).

2.4.2 Parents' level of involvement in the child's career choice

A substantial amount of research has shown that if a parent is actively involved in helping their child make future decisions it will have positive effects on both enrolment and success at university (Dinovitzer et al., 2003; Gaganakis, 2003; Marjoribanks, 1998; Perna & Titus, 2005; Rowan-Kenyon, 2007). As previously mentioned parents are seen to provide resources, both cultural and social, for their children (Lin, 2001; Paulsen & St. John, 2001; Perna & Titus, 2005; Plank & Jordan, 2001). Parents' support for the child's learning during the child's school years may allow him/her to have greater aspirations to learn further compared with those who may have had a poor early learning environment (Coker, 2003; Marjoribanks, 1998; Weis et al., 2003). This parental support can be closely linked with a family's SES and the quality and

quantity of information provided by children's parents and the amount of time devoted to their children and their educational needs (Plank & Jordan, 2001; Weis et al., 2003). Generally parents' involvement in their child's education and decision-making also offers support and reassurance for the child (Perna & Titus, 2005; Rowan-Kenyon, 2007). Parents' involvement in their child's career choice in the form of cumulative knowledge that they themselves have gained through involvement in their own social groups as well as in the child's school community helps parents give their children guidance into future decision-making (McNeal, 1999; Perna & Titus, 2005; Plank & Jordan, 2001; Rowan-Kenyon, 2007). Level of parental involvement has also been a factor linked to success among individuals attending university because of the supposed influence parents have on their children as well as the expectations that some parents have of their children's academic performance (Marjoribanks, 1998; Perna & Titus, 2005).

2.4.3 Parents' level of education

Research has shown that individuals whose parents attended university and completed a degree are more likely to attend university as well (McNeal, 1999). In addition, Bourdieu (1977) has suggested that the higher a parent's level of education the greater resources and opportunities that parent can provide for their child in relation to education and subsequently this allows the child to aspire to be as successful as his/her parent. International studies have shown that a parents' level of education has also been a factor that has influenced the level of success among students at university, in that students whose parents have obtained a higher education are more likely to succeed at university than those whose parents have not obtained a university degree (Gayle et al., 2002; McNeal, 1999; Perna & Titus, 2005; Rowan-Kenyon, 2007). In South African research this does not seem to be entirely the case as there are individuals from

previously disadvantaged backgrounds that have started to attend university despite their parents' level of education (Mji, 2002; Toni & Olivier, 2004). Yet this assumption has been based on limited local data, therefore a greater amount of data would need to be generated with regards to parents' level of education. Also while many students register, often completion of their studies is made difficult by a lack of resources and many are forced to drop out or extend their degrees (Coughian, 2006). Despite the seemingly unconvincing local data on this specific factor it can be said that due to South Africa's past, many parents may not have been afforded equal educational opportunities. Due to increased equity in tertiary institutes and amended educational policies current students may be afforded different and improved opportunities to their parents (Council on Higher Education, 2004). Therefore one may postulate that current students are enrolling into university despite their parents' educational level and success may also be determined by other factors, although such results are not yet conclusive resulting in a need for further research pertaining to this factor.

2.5 School Influences

The school environment fulfils a similar function to that of the individual's parents in terms of providing certain resources to equip the child to be successful in the direction the child sees most fit. Research has shown that the level of education at different schools varies, especially in South Africa where the standard of teaching and resources at schools differs greatly according to location and historical categorization (Coughian, 2006). The schooling system contributes to part of the individual's mesosytem through the interaction of various microsystems. These microsystems include the individual's actual school environment, the relationship with his/her teachers as well as the relationship with his/her peers.

2.5.1 Level of schooling

Differential levels of education have been shown to affect individuals' success at university because some students are academically under-prepared (Coughian, 2006; Toni & Olivier, 2004). In South Africa, there are differences in quality of education, availability of teachers and resources between schools, which affect an individual's potential academic success (Coughian, 2006; Mji, 2002). According to Coughian (2006), this has become a problem because universities in South Africa have removed many restrictions with regard to university entrance, allowing many individuals who are not prepared for higher education into universities. Researchers have also shown that early success at school has a positive effect on success at higher education institutes (Marjoribanks, 2004). In a qualitative study by Gaganakis (2003), participants elaborated on this point by highlighting that importance to succeed was emphasized by their parents as well and that they already realized from when they were at high school that they must succeed if they were to have a chance at bettering themselves and having the future that they wanted. Rowan-Kenyon (2007) has also postulated that academic achievement at the high school level is one of the most important predictors of university enrolment. This further shows how the quality of education at school level is important for enrolment into university and subsequent success.

2.5.2 Guidance

One of the consequences of a low level of schooling or poor resources at school is that some individuals have not been provided with alternate options to equip them after leaving school (Coughian, 2006). Some students have found that due to the lack of guidance they have chosen subjects which will not allow them access into university or will not help them pursue the career

they wish (Coughian, 2006; Gaganakis, 2003, Mji, 2002). Studies have also shown that some students are not aware of the demands and expectations of university and that this has affected their performance at university (Coughian, 2006; Rowan-Kenyon, 2007; Toni & Olivier, 2004). Various schools are equipped with the resources and skills to provide their pupils with such knowledge, whereas others find such acquisition of knowledge difficult and rely on the information, sufficient or not, that they already have (Geldenhuys & de Lange, 2007). Career indecisions have been largely a result of poor career guidance at schools, therefore it is important to establish such facilities in order to help individuals make the correct choices with respect to their future decisions (Gordon & Meyer, 2002). With appropriate guidance students who do want to pursue higher education at a university would be certain about the expectations and requirements of the university, which might consequently improve success at universities (Coughian, 2006, Mji, 2002). School guidance therefore seems to be an important aspect contributing to an individual's choice or ability to attend university and it would therefore be necessary to understand the level of guidance individuals in South Africa receive and how important they feel this is so as to establish not only whether students are aware of various higher education opportunities but also whether they are making informed study choices.

2.5.3 Peer influence

Research has shown that the influence of an individual's peers can play a role in that individual's career decisions. Peer encouragement to attend university has been seen to have a strong constructive effect on students (Rowan-Kenyon, 2007). Perna and Titus (2005) have proposed that parents seem to select their children's peer groups because of the supposed effect that peers have on their child's future plans. This is further evidence to suggest that peers may have a

somewhat influential effect on student's entering university but no reference is made in the literature as to whether this factor has a significant effect on academic success.

2.6 The macro and chronosystems

The factors outlined above do not relate to two of the systems in Bronfenbrenner's (1979) theory - the macro-system and the chronosystem. Even though these systems do not pertain particularly to the factors mentioned above they do affect the individual's development and in addition his/her choice to attend university. 'The macrosystem refers to the consistencies in the form and content of lower order systems, that exist or could exist, at the level of the sub-culture as a whole, along with any belief system or ideology underlying such consistencies" (Bronfenbrenner, 1979, p. 26). In other words, this system pertains to the overarching system that affects all other systems, that is: political, economic, social, educational and legal (Hook, 2002). In addition, the chronosystem is the placement of these systems within a time frame (Hook, 2002). Past time may affect the system as well as present and future time. In the case of this study one may suggest that Apartheid is a time past which may currently affect the development of every individual in South Africa as well as the schooling system, education policy, human rights and women rights and the socio-cultural-political context generally. These systems are important to include in such research because of the vast impact South Africa's political history has had and currently still has on individuals in South Africa. Furthermore Bronfenbrenner and Ceci (1994) and Bronfenbrenner (1979) have shown that the broader environment (or systems) provides the resources and the means for optimal development of the individual. These resources are also embedded within an ecological structure and according to Lin (2001), interactions of these resources are more likely to take place among individuals of a

similar hierarchical level, therefore social class and distribution of human, social and cultural capital may not change unless an individual actively seeks resources from a more socially elite system.

Therefore as noted throughout there are many factors which affect an individual's decision to enroll at university and succeed. It is necessary to assess such factors in South Africa because of the relatively recent change in education policies as well as changing numbers of individuals attending university currently. In addition, assessing such factors within their environmental contexts may provide a greater understanding of how these factors affect enrolment and throughput at the tertiary level in South Africa today.

The Current Study

On this basis, the current study seeks to address three questions. The first question asks which of the factors (personal, parental and schooling) and specific issues evaluated in the research have an effect on students' decisions to attend university. The second question asks what importance these factors and issues hold for these students and the third question asks what the relationship is between these factors and their academic success.

Chapter 3: Methods

3.1 Methods

The design used for this study was a mixed quantitative and qualitative cross-sectional design. Information was gathered using a survey method with closed- and open-ended questions to gather data that was quantitatively and qualitatively analysed. Due to the short time period available to complete the study, a cross-sectional design was used.

3.1.1 Sample and Sampling

The sample was collected from the first-year psychology class at the University of the Witwatersrand. First-year students were chosen because the decision to attend university is the most recent for them. In addition, individuals who take the main Psychology module as a subject can be enrolled in three of the five faculties (Arts, Science and Commerce); therefore this was a way to incorporate participants from three different faculties into the study. Permission was granted by the internal and external Ethics Committees, respective Deans, Heads of Schools and lecturers.

The sample was collected using non-probability, purposive volunteer sampling because the sample relied on volunteers from the class (Strydom, 2005). This sampling method was used because a specific population group was needed for this research. The difficulty with using volunteers though is that they have particular characteristics that are not always the same as that of the general population and this limits the generalisability of the findings and may create a sampling error (Fife-Schaw, 1995).

The final sample consisted of 337 first-year psychology students. Of these 337 students, 83 were males and 253 were female. 117 participants described themselves as black and 147 participants were white. All other races were combined into an 'other' category comprising 73 participants. In the 'other' category, 40 participants described themselves as Coloured, 29 participants considered themselves Indian and 4 participants described themselves as Chinese. Participants ranged from 17 – 32 years of age, where the majority (84%) of the sample fell within the 17 – 19 years old age range. All participants included in the study were in their first year of study and were from all three of the possible faculties although the majority of the sample was from the Humanities faculty (65%).

The parent's level of schooling varied. As seen in Table 1, just over half the sample had at least one parent who was qualified at a tertiary and post-tertiary level (54%). A significantly large proportion (81%) of the sample had at least one parent educated at a matriculation level or higher.

314 of the total sample of 337 participants gave permission to access their Psychology marks as an estimate of success. Due to the time constraints of this study, it was only possible to track students' marks through one semester of study (January-June).

Table 1: Demographic Description

Demographics (N = 337) Variable	Number of Participants
Gender	
Male	83
Female	253
Race	
Black	117
White	147
Other	73
Age	
17-19	286
20-25	45
26-32	6
Year of study	
First	337
Faculty	
Humanities	220
Commerce	50
Science	67
Home language	
English	210
Other	127
School Language	
English	329
Other	8
Parent's level of education	
None	45
Secondary	18
Matriculation	91
Tertiary	156
Post Tertiary	27
Number of friends	
0	21
<15	172
>15	144
Guidance	
Yes	208
No	129

3.1.2 Measures

Demographic Questionnaire (Appendix C)

Participants were asked to complete a brief demographic questionnaire assessing their age, gender, race, Faculty and year of study, parent's level of education, home language, school language, how many of their friends attended university and if they had a guidance counsellor at their school. Participants were required to fill in the questions in this section in order for the researcher to accurately describe the sample and trace trends within the responses.

Academic Success (Appendix D)

In order to estimate the participants' 'academic success', their marks were obtained for their first semester (January to June) of Psychology One. Participants consented to the release of their marks before such information was gathered and permission was granted by the University Registrar and various Faculty registrars as well. Only one mark was used for the data analysis, this was the final mark for the Psychology One module after their first semester. This is not ideal because it is not a true reflection of true academic success, which would only be represented by obtaining the participant's final marks for the year. Nevertheless obtaining only one mark was practically necessary because of specific time constraints pertaining to the research.

Factors Questionnaire (Appendix E)

A self-developed questionnaire relating to factors influencing university enrolment was used. This was administered as a survey in the form of a self-report questionnaire (Babbie & Mouton, 2005). The survey was used to gather descriptive, explanatory and exploratory information for the research (Babbie & Mouton, 2005). The questionnaire was self-developed because no specific previously developed instrument which included all items of interest for this study could be found.

The questionnaire included three different sections. Firstly participants were required to fill in open-ended questions pertaining to reasons why they had decided to study at university, if there were any difficulties attending university and what factors influenced their decision to attend university.

Secondly the participants were required to answer close-ended questions on two separate scales, an 'effect' scale and an 'importance' scale. The items for this part of the questionnaire were developed on the basis of the literature included in this study. The scales consisted of the same 54 self-report items. Respondents were required to indicate whether or not a specific issue affected their choice to attend university (effect scale) and to then indicate the importance of that issue in their decision to attend university (importance scale). The effect scale required a simple yes or no as a response, while the importance scale was rated on a five point Likert-type scale and scored as follows:

Very important	**Important**	**Neutral**	**Unimportant**	**Very unimportant**
5	4	3	2	1

In addition, the scores for various issues were added to form scores for specific factors seen as relevant from the literature (please see Appendix F).

The final section of the questionnaire asked respondents to consider the issues listed in the above questionnaire, as well as others not discussed that they would consider important to their decision to attend university, and to write down, in order, the five issues they would consider most important and then the five issues they would consider least important.

Due to the fact that this measure was self-developed, the scales' reliability was calculated using internal consistency reliability (Cronbach's Alpha).

3.1.3 Procedure

After obtaining approval from the University Ethics Committee, the Department of Psychology was approached in order to obtain permission to approach students. After permission from the Head of Department and year-level coordinators was obtained, permission was obtained from various individual lecturers to approach their students during lecture time for approximately five to ten minutes at most. The researcher introduced herself to the students and briefly explained her research and requested volunteers. The researcher then distributed the questionnaire pack to those willing to participate. The questionnaire pack consisted of a participant information sheet explaining the research (please see Appendix A), which participants were asked to keep, the demographic questionnaire (please see Appendix C), a separate page requesting participants' student numbers (in order to access their academic marks for that academic year) (please see Appendix D) and the self-developed factors questionnaire (please see Appendix E). Consent to participate was indicated through completing the questionnaire. Each participant was asked to take the questionnaire home and to fill it in if they were willing. On completion, they were asked to place their questionnaires in a sealed box which was placed in their class every week for three weeks after the original date of distribution.

The students' marks needed to be obtained in order to determine success. If the participants were willing to supply their marks they were asked to fill in their student number on a separate form attached to the questionnaire (please see Appendix D). Each questionnaire was coded using a random three digit number. This code was matched with the student number. The marks were obtained and matched to the student numbers by an independent person. This was done by creating an Excel spreadsheet with codes and student numbers. The independent person then

matched the academic marks to the student number and, when finished, deleted the student number column. Therefore anonymity was maintained because the researcher had no access to any of the participants' identifying data.

3.1.4 Ethical Considerations

This research was granted ethical clearance by the Human Research Ethics Committee (non-medical), protocol number H070903 (please see Appendix B). In terms of ethical procedures each individual was given a participant information sheet which was kept by the participant indicating that they were aware of the nature of the study and that they understood all implications of the study, as well as their rights as a participant in the study (see Appendix A). Filling in the survey suggested that the participants consented to participate. In order to obtain the participants' marks permission from the Faculty was sought. Separate consent from participants was also necessary for the researcher to obtain the participants' results.

Each participant was assured anonymity, as no identifying information was available to the researcher or placed in the report. This was ensured through having a separate form attached to the questionnaire which required consenting participants to fill in their student number (See Appendix D). This form was coded as per their questionnaire pack. An independent person matched up the marks of each student to the allocated code. Therefore anonymity was assured by the researcher because she did not have access to the students' personal information through their student number and only saw the participants' marks in relation to the code, which was random. In addition the completed questionnaires were placed in a sealed box in the participants'

classroom, kept in a safe location during analysis, and destroyed once data analysis and publication was complete.

There were no direct benefits or foreseeable negative consequences to taking part in the study. It was emphasized to participants that their participation was entirely voluntary and that they could withdraw from the study at any point until handing in the questionnaire with no negative consequences. The researcher provided contact details should participants have had questions or wanted further information.

3.1.5. Data analysis

3.1.5.1 Quantitative analysis

Each issue was scored on a five point Likert-type scale according to the response given by the participants. After scoring, the data from the questionnaires was captured. Each factor was allocated a total score which was calculated depending on the number of issues per factor. An actual score for the factor was calculated as a sum of the individual scores allocated by the participants for each issue. In addition each issue was also allocated a total and actual score in a similar way to the factors but only using the individual questions or items for every issue. Reliability of the questionnaire was calculated using Cronbach's Coefficient Alpha, an estimate of internal consistency reliability (Howell, 2004). The reliability of each issue and each factor was then calculated.

In order to analyze the data, various methods were used to answer the different questions. Descriptive statistics were used to analyze the variables and the frequency of yes and no answers

on the questionnaire. This was calculated for each issue and each factor in order to determine which factors were reported as either having or not having an effect on the participants' enrolment into university (research question one). Frequency and descriptive statistics were also used in order to assess the relative importance each factor had in the individual's decision to enroll into university (research question two).

Table 2: Shapiro-Wilk W test to test for normality of each factor and issue

Shapiro-Wilk (effect)			Shapiro-Wilk (importance)		
Factor	z-value	p-value	Factor	z-value	p-value
Individual	0.324	0.373	Individual	2.903	0.002
Intrinsic motives	6.292	0.0000	Intrinsic motives	5.490	0.000
Extrinsic motives	7.257	0.0000	Extrinsic motives	8.529	0.000
Socio-economic	3.506	0.00023	Socio-economic	5.236	0.000
Language	1.924	0.02710	Language	3.168	0.001
Gender	3.133	0.00086	Gender	3.133	0.001
Race/ethnicity	2.288	0.01108	Race/ethnicity	0.580	0.281
Parental	3.183	0.001	Parental	0.873	0.191
Parent's expectations	4.259	0.0000	Parent's expectations	0.809	0.209
Parent's level of involvement	2.263	0.0118	Parent's level of involvement	1.018	0.154
Parent's level of education	2.339	0.0096	Parent's level of education	-0.615	0.731
Schooling	1.922	0.027	Schooling	0.568	0.285
Level of schooling	3.980	0.0000	Level of schooling	2.353	0.009
Academic performance	4.373	0.0000	Academic performance	2.714	0.003
Guidance	0.516	0.3028	Guidance	1.981	0.023
Peer influence	0.505	0.3066	Peer influence	0.938	0.174

Secondly analyses were run to ascertain whether the two scales (effect and importance) were normally distributed or not. Determining the distribution of the data informs whether the tests used will be parametric or the non-parametric equivalent. A Shapiro-Wilk W test was used to test for normality and histograms were generated for each issue on both the effect and importance scales (Brown & Hettmansperger, 1996). The statistic for the Shapiro-Wilk W test is always positive and less than or equal to one. If $p<0.05$ then the data is not normally distributed (Brown & Hettmansperger, 1996). In order to establish whether certain factors affected the success of a student (research question three), Spearman's Correlation Coefficients were run between issues and marks, as well as factors and marks, to establish the nature of the relationship between the

factors and issues relative to academic success. Spearman's correlations were only run on the importance scale values because this scale was measured on an interval scale. The effect scale, on the other hand, was measured using only yes/no answers and was therefore nominal. The effect scale did not fit the assumptions for a Spearman's correlation so only the importance scale was used (Howell, 2004). Furthermore a non-parametric alternative to Pearson's Product Moment Correlations was necessary because, as observed from Table 2 and the histograms (please see Appendix, G, H, I, J), most of the issues and factors were not normally distributed and therefore did not meet the assumptions for normality (Howell, 2004).

In addition to the Spearman's correlations, two independent sample t-tests were run to compare the marks of two groups. In order to run the t-tests two groups were created and assigned dummy variables. As for the Spearman's correlations, only the answers on the importance scale were used. The participants' answers on the importance scale were separated into two groups, 'high' and 'low'. These categories were established using the mean of each issue or factor. All values greater than and equal to the mean were termed as 'high' and all values smaller than the mean were termed 'low'. Dummy variables were assigned to each category (0='low' and 1= 'high'). These two groups then formed the two independent samples. Two independent sample t-tests were then run using these dummy variables and marks as the dependent variable. Two independent sample t-tests could be used because two independent samples were being used and the students marks were normally distributed (Howell, 2004). The two group means were then compared and the statistical significance of the difference was calculated, where all p-values smaller than 0.05 were considered significant.

3.1.5.2 Qualitative analysis

Methodological triangulation was used in order to ascertain the relevance of the factors included in the self-developed questionnaire to the specific sample used as well as to establish additional factors not included in the questionnaire (Babbie & Mouton, 2001). In this particular study, both quantitative and qualitative methods were used to analyse the data. Additional open-ended questions were included in the questionnaire pack before the self-developed questionnaire. *A priori* categorization was used in order to develop themes from the questions asked. These questions pertained to the reasons why the participants attended university, the factors that made it difficult for them to attend university and the factors that influenced their decision to attend university. Data was analysed using content analysis with frequency counts (Babbie &Mouton, 2001).

The questionnaires were separated into one of three groups; those with high marks (70% and above), those with intermediate marks (50%-69%) and those with low marks (below 50%). 50 questionnaires were randomly selected from each group. The data was then separated into categories and analysis for each group was done for each open-ended question asked on the questionnaire. These questions included 'What made you decide to study at university?', 'Was there anything that made it difficult for you to study at university?', and 'What factors do you think influenced your decision to attend university?'

Chapter 4: Results

4.1 Reliability

The questionnaire used to gather the data necessary for this study was a self-developed questionnaire. Reliability was calculated for each factor and each issue to determine to what extent each question was able to measure the given factor or issue. The internal consistency reliability coefficient (Cronbach's Coefficient Alpha) was calculated for each factor as well as each issue on the questionnaire (on both the effect and importance scales). The greater the internal consistency of an issue or factor, the greater the extent to which each question is able to measure a particular construct (Devlin, 2006). Items with an internal consistency greater than or equal to 0.7 are assumed as measuring satisfactory consistency (Devlin, 2006).

Table 3: Cronbach Alpha Coefficients (internal consistency) for each factor and issue

Cronbach's alpha			
Factor	Number of items	Effect Scale	Importance Scale
Individual	22	**0.6832**	**0.8329**
Intrinsic	4	0.5353	0.4857
Extrinsic	4	0.2051	0.5370
Socio-economic	4	0.3246	0.5835
Language	3	0.4310	**0.7062**
Gender	2	**0.6876**	**0.8036**
Race/Ethnicity	5	0.6345	**0.7306**
Parental	13	0.6540	**0.7789**
Parental expectations	5	0.5548	0.5938
Parent's level of involvement	5	0.3941	0.5013
Parent's Level of education	3	0.6173	0.4324
Schooling	18	**0.7166**	**0.8639**
Level of schooling	5	**0.7198**	**0.7806**
Academic performance	4	0.5900	**0.7107**
Guidance	4	0.6164	**0.7573**
Peer influence	5	0.4769	**0.6865**

* alpha values in bold are considered satisfactory

From Table 3 it is evident that there are few issues that have a satisfactory reliability, however all three key factors (Individual, Parental and Schooling) had a satisfactory reliability for both the

effect and importance scale. Issues that had satisfactory reliability for both scales included: gender and level of schooling, race/ethnicity, academic performance, guidance and peer influence, which showed satisfactory reliability only for the importance scale.

4.2 The effect and importance of factors and issues relating to enrolment

Each factor as well as each issue investigated in this study was measured on two separate scales. These two scales included an 'effect' scale (please see Table 4 and Table 5) and an 'importance' scale (please see Table 6 and Table 7). The effect scale measured whether or not an issue or factor affected participants' decision to enter university and was measured using a yes/no option. 'No' was given a value of 1 and 'yes' a value of 2. The importance scale measured how important that issue or factor was in influencing a participant to enter university and was measured using a five-point Likert-type scale. A score of one was used to indicate 'very unimportant' and a score of five was used to indicate 'very important'.

In order to ascertain the relative effect and importance of each issue as well as each factor, frequency counts were carried out for each issue and factor. Total values for each factor and each issue were calculated based on the number of items for both effect and importance. Frequency of 'yes' and 'no' responses was calculated and plotted on histograms (please see Appendices G and H). The frequency of importance responses (1 to 5) was also calculated and plotted on histograms (please see Appendices I and J). In addition, the mean, standard deviation, maximum and minimum values were calculated for both effect (please see Table 4 and 5) and importance (please see Table 6 and 7). Comparing the mean, the measure of central tendency used for each factor and issue, relative to the maximum and minimum value indicates what most participants

answered in relation to effect or importance. Furthermore the standard deviation indicates the relative deviation from the mean.

4.2.1 Question 1: Factors and issues affecting enrolment

Table 4: Factor Description and Frequency (Effect)

Factor Description Factor	Mean	Standard Deviation	Number of items	Minimum	Maximum
Individual	36.55786	3.038993	22	28	44
Parental	21.20772	2.356261	13	14	29
Schooling	27.90801	3.374514	18	19	36

Table 5: Issue Description and Frequency (Effect)

Effect Description Factor	Mean	Standard Deviation	Number of items	Min	Max
Individual					
Intrinsic motives	7.41543	0.8760024	4	4	8
Extrinsic motives	7.605341	0.6184427	4	5	8
Socio-economic status	6.735905	0.8512868	4	4	8
Language	4.679525	0.8887336	3	3	6
Gender	2.839763	0.8369218	2	2	4
Race/ethnicity	7.281899	1.453874	5	5	10
Parental					
Parent's expectations	8.287834	0.9926517	5	5	10
Parent's level of involvement	8.522255	0.8202843	5	6	10
Parent's level of education	4.192878	0.8026424	3	3	6
Schooling					
Level of schooling	8.462908	1.560092	5	5	10
Academic performance	5.816024	1.129414	4	4	8
Guidance	6.31454	1.266156	5	4	8
Peer influence	7.284866	1.244814	5	5	10

Table 4 and Table 5 describe the relative effect each factor and issue had on participants' decision to attend university respectively. From Table 2 and Appendix G it is noticed that the frequency distribution for the individual factor on the effect scale was normally distributed whereas the parental and schooling factors did not show a normal distribution.

Factor 1: Individual scale (effect)

From Table 5 and Appendix H, it can be seen that both intrinsic motives and extrinsic motives were positively skewed, that is that most participants perceived these two factors as having an affect on their decision to attend university. Extrinsic motives seem to have had a slightly greater influence on participants' decision as the mean calculated for extrinsic motives (7.605) relative to the maximum (8) and minimum (4) values showed that most individuals answered 'yes' to this issue (please see Appendix H). Furthermore the standard deviation (0.618) suggests that the deviation from the mean was small, indicating that the items related to the issue of extrinsic motives had the greatest effect on participants deciding to attend university. Intrinsic motives showed a slightly smaller positive influence on participants' decision but nevertheless showed a predominantly positive outcome (please see Appendix H). The standard deviation (0.876) is larger than that of the extrinsic motives but the mean (7.415) is still large enough to suggest that most participants answered 'yes' to items for this issue.

Socio-economic status and language seem to show a similar distribution based on Appendix H. From the mean (6.736) and standard deviation (0.851) for socio-economic status, it can be deduced that individuals answered 'yes' to most but not all the questions. Similarly, it can be deduced that individuals answered 'yes' for most but not all the questions pertaining to language (M = 4.680; s = 0.889). From Appendix H, it can be seen that the graphic representation for gender and race/ethnicity were similar whereby most individuals answered 'no' to questions pertaining to these two issues.

Factor 2: Parental scale (effect)

Within the parental factor, the issue that seemed to have the greatest effect was parent's level of involvement in the participants' decision to attend university (M = 8.522; s = 0.820). This factor was measured by assessing whether parents had helped their children financially to attend university as well as emotionally by supporting or encouraging their children to attend university. Parents' expectations of their children to attend university and parents' level of involvement showed similar results (M = 8.288; s = 0.993). Data from Table 1 (demographic information) shows that over half the participants who answered the questionnaires (54%) have at least one parent who already has a university degree or a post-graduate degree. Despite this, though, the issue related to parents' level of education did not seem to have an overall effect on participants' decision to attend university (M = 4.193; s = 0.803).

Factor 3: Schooling scale (effect)

Overall the issues pertaining to the schooling factors showed less of an overall positive effect as compared with both parental and individual factors. From the questionnaire, it was ascertained that approximately 80 percent of the participants reported that they were automatically accepted into university. The remaining 20 percent were not initially accepted into university but after writing entrance examinations were accepted. The issue with the greatest positive influence or greatest number of participants answering 'yes' was level of schooling (M = 7.282; s = 1.454). This issue was related to the resources available at the participants' schools, including access to the internet and books as well as the quality of the teachers. These resources were important in the relative effect they had on the participants' decisions to attend university. Another factor with somewhat of an effect was that of peer influence (M = 6.315; s = 1.266). Guidance did not seem

to have an overall effect on participants' decision to attend university (M = 6.315; s = 1.266). Generally participants did not seem to perceive academic performance as an issue that affected their decision to attend university.

4.2.2 Question 2: Importance of factors and issues relating to enrolment

Table 6: Factor Description and Frequency (Importance)

Factor Distribution (N = 337)

Factor	Mean	Standard Deviation	Number of items	Minimum	Maximum
Individual	79.33333	11.98241	22	30	108
Parental	45.19288	7.922328	13	22	63
Schooling	56.4597	12.51289	18	18	90

Table 7: Issue Description and Frequency (Importance)

Issue description (importance)

Factor	Mean	Standard Deviation	Number of items	Min	Max
Individual					
Intrinsic motives	17.25223	2.337302	4	9	20
Extrinsic motives	17.83976	2.301234	4	4	20
Socio-economic status	16.82738	2.717543	4	4	20
Language	9.973294	3.346444	3	3	15
Gender	5.130564	2.594784	2	2	10
Race/ethnicity	14.1276	4.223486	5	5	25
Parental					
Parent's expectations	17.72997	3.645132	5	8	25
Parent's level of involvement	18.50148	3.156743	5	10	25
Parent's level of education	8.72997	2.693924	3	3	15
Schooling					
Level of schooling	17.08012	4.609397	5	5	25
Academic performance	5.816024	1.129414	4	4	20
Guidance	12.68843	4.034924	5	4	20
Peer influence	13.66964	3.901906	5	5	25

Table 6 and 7 respectively describe the relative importance of each factor and issue in participants' decision to attend university.

Factor 1: Individual scale (importance)

From Table 6 and Appendix I, it can be seen that the individual factor seemed to have a slightly greater importance for participants than either the parental or the schooling factors. Both the parental and the schooling factors were normally distributed but the individual factor was not (please see Table 2).

As with the effect scale, extrinsic and intrinsic motives were perceived as most important in the participants' decisions to attend university. Extrinsic motives were slightly more influential overall (M = 17.840; s = 2.301) than intrinsic motives, (M = 17.252; s = 2.337) based on results calculated in Table 7. It is noted that the values for extrinsic motives are more closely concentrated at the higher end of the histogram thereby showing that most individuals answered 'very important' and 'important' for most or all of the items pertaining to this issue. Intrinsic motives, on the other hand, showed a slightly sparser frequency distribution (please see Appendix J). In addition, the histogram for socio-economic status shows a slightly positive frequency distribution suggesting that socio-economic status had a moderate effect on participants' decision to attend university. Language, gender and race/ethnicity did not seem to show an overall positive or negative influence on participants' decision to attend university (please see Appendix J).

Factor 2: Parental scale (importance)

Parents' level of involvement seemed to have the greatest importance amongst participants within the parental factor (M = 18.733; s = 3.030). Even though the issue related to parents' expectations seemed to have an effect on participants' decision to attend university, the overall

importance showed that most participants did not show either a positive or negative tendency suggesting that most participants rated these items as having a 'neutral' importance (please see Appendix J). Similarly, parents' level of education did not seem to be either important or unimportant in participants' decision to attend university (M = 4.192; s = 0.802).

Factor 3: Schooling scale (importance)

As was previously noted from Table 5, where level of schooling had the greatest effect in the schooling factor, the same seems to be true about the importance. The availability of various resources at the participants' schools was also perceived as an important issue in the decision process to attend university (M = 17.080; s = 4.609). Peer influence did not seem to have any overall importance according the graphic representation (please see Appendix J). The graphic representations of academic performance and guidance also did not show any overall importance (please see Appendix J).

4.2.3 Question 3: The relationship between factors and issues and success

Success was measured using the participants' first year psychology marks obtained after their mid-year examinations. To obtain results, participants were required to fill in their student number on separate sheets - this process was optional (please see Appendix D). Of the 337 participants who filled in the questionnaire, 314 participants provided their student numbers. The marks obtained ranged from 89% to 11%, with a mean value of 58.051 and a standard deviation of 12.452.

Firstly correlations were calculated between each issue and each factor with the participants' marks, in order to develop an understanding of the relationship between the factors and issues and the marks. Spearman's correlation coefficient was used because, as noted above, most issues were not normally distributed so a non-parametric test was used. In addition correlations were only run on the importance scale and not the effect scale. This is because the effect scale was nominal and did not fit the assumptions for a Spearman's correlation. Another reason for only using the importance scale is that the effect is actually incorporated into the importance, because if they reported that an item was unimportant that would essentially imply that it had no effect and if they reported that it was very important it could be implied that it had an effect.

Secondly, two independent sample t-tests were carried out for each issue and each factor with the participants' marks as the dependent variable (marks were normally distributed therefore it was possible to use a parametric analysis). The t-tests were used to calculate the significance of the difference between the two means of each factor or issue for those who rated the issues 'high' and 'low' (Howell, 2004). The t-tests were run using the results from the importance scale only because the effect scale was nominal, that is yes/no, and the importance scale incorporated whether it had an effect or not.

Table 8: Spearman's Correlations Coefficients for the factors and issues correlated with the students' marks and their significance

Spearman's Correlations coefficient (N = 314)	
	Marks
Marks	1.000 < 0001
Individual	-0.1659 0.0032
Intrinsic motives	0.1506 0.0075
Extrinsic motives	-0.0509 0.3648
Socio-economic status	-0.1784 0.0015
Language	-0.2460 <0.001
Gender	-0.1721 0.0022
Race/ethnicity	-0.0812 0.1510
Parental	-0.2235 <0.001
Parents expectations	-0.2093 <0.001
Parents level of involvement	-0.1872 <0.001
Parents level of education	-0.0943 0.0953
Schooling	-0.2556 <0.001
Level of schooling	-0.1827 0.0011
Academic performance	-0.3544 <0.001
guidance	-0.1798 0.0014
Peer influence	-0.0075 0.8952

Table 8 provides the correlations between the students' first semester marks and the factors and issues. All the factors, individual, parental and schooling showed highly significant negative correlations ($p < 0.005$) with the participants' marks. Most issues within each factor showed negative correlations with the participants' marks except for the correlation between the participants' marks and intrinsic motives.

The issue pertaining to intrinsic motives was positively correlated with marks (r_s = 0.151; $p<0.05$). This suggests that those individuals with higher marks rated the items pertaining to intrinsic motives as more important in their decision to attend university, i.e. they rated the items pertaining to this issue as either important or very important. Extrinsic motives showed a negative correlation but this correlation was not significant (r_s = -0.051; $p> 0.05$). Socio-economic status showed a significant, negative correlation with marks (r_s = -0.178; $p<0.005$). Language and gender also showed significant, negative correlations with the participants' marks. With regards to the parental factor, both parents' expectations (r_s= -0.209; $p<0.005$) and parents' level of involvement (r_s= -0.187; $p<0.005$) showed significant negative correlations with marks. Level of schooling, (r_s= -0.183; $p<0.005$), academic performance (r_s= -0.354; $p<0.005$) and guidance (r_s= -0.1798; $p<0.005$) were also all significantly negatively correlated with the participants' marks. The issues that had significant negative correlations show that those individuals with higher marks tended to rate these issues as either unimportant or very unimportant. From the above results it is evident that participants who were more intrinsically motivated tended to do better in their mid-year examinations.

Two independent samples t-tests (importance)

Dummy variables were created to distinguish between those participants who answered 'high' (important or very important) and those who answered 'low' (unimportant or very unimportant). High and low categories were calculated relative to the mean for each factor and each issue. All values greater than or equal to the mean value were assigned as high (1) and all those below the mean were assigned as low (0). Two independent sample t-tests were then run to determine the

significance of the difference between the two means for the two groups. Results of the two independent sample t-tests are given in Table 9.

Table 9: Two independent sample t-tests for all the factors and issues (importance)

Two independent sample t-test		
Factor	**t-value**	**p-value**
Individual	2.017	0.0223
Intrinsic motives	- 1.791	0.0372
Extrinsic motives	1.662	0.0487
Socio-economic Status	1.912	0.0285
Language	3.765	0.0001
Gender	2.879	0.0021
Race/ethnicity	1.864	0.0316
Parental	4.301	0.0000
Parent expectations	3.085	0.0011
Parents' level of involvement	2.910	0.0019
Parents' level of education	3.064	0.0012
Schooling	2.345	0.0035
Level of schooling	3.220	0.0007
Academic performance	6.411	0.0000
Guidance	1.828	0.0343
Peer influence	0.162	0.4357

Factor 1: Individual scale

For intrinsic motives 161 participants rated the item as having an important or very important influence on their decision to attend university (please see Appendix K). Furthermore results for the t-tests showed that the mean mark obtained for those who fell in the 'high' category (M = 59.273) was significantly higher than for those participants who had rated the items as 'low' (M = 56.76471) ($t = -1.791$; $p<0.05$). In terms of extrinsic motives the mean for those who answered 'low' (M = 60.578) ($t = 2.693$; $p<0.005$) was significantly higher than for those who answered 'high' (M = 57.0289). Results for socio-economic status, language, gender and race/ethnicity also showed that those individuals who answered 'high' had an overall lower mean than those who answered 'low'.

Table 10: Two independent sample t-test showing the difference of mean marks of those who have English as a home language and a language other than English as a home language

Two independent sample t-test			
Factor	Mean	t-value	p-value
English	61.57436	6.8766	0.0000
Other	52.27731		

Table 10 shows the effect of participants' home language on their relative success at university. These results showed that participants who spoke English as a home language showed a significantly higher overall average (M = 61.574) than those individuals who did not speak English at home (M = 52.277) (t = 6.8766; p<0.005).

Table 11: Two independent sample t-test showing the difference of mean marks of parents with different educational levels

Two independent sample t-test			
Factor	Mean	t-value	p-value
At least tertiary	61.57436	-1.2141	0.1128
Below tertiary	52.27731		
At least matriculation	53.19298	-3.3070	0.0005
Below matriculation	59.1284		

Table 11 shows the effects of participants' reported socio-economic status on their marks. Socio-economic status for this study was measured by asking the participants what level of schooling their parents had acquired. Analysis was then carried out on participants who had at least one parent with a tertiary level of education and those who did not have at least a tertiary level of education. Analysis showed that there was no significant difference between the two groups. Analysis was then carried out on parents with at least a matriculation and those without. Results showed significantly higher overall average for the group that had at least one parent with a matriculation or higher level of education (M = 59.128) than those who did not have at least a matriculation (M = 53.193) (t = -3.3070; p<0.005). In addition correlations for both socio-

economic status and language were significantly negatively correlated with the marks (please see Table 8). Items pertaining to socio-economic status and language mainly asked if individuals wanted to improve their current socio-economic status or English ability, therefore those who wanted to improve their English ability and/or socio-economic status did less well than those who did not want to improve either their English or socio-economic status. In addition both the t-tests (Table 10 and 11) and the correlations (Table 8) show that those individuals with higher socio-economic status or better English language abilities tend to do better at university and rated the importance of the items related to socio-economic status and language as low.

Factor 2: Parental scale

Those who rated parents' expectations as important or very important generally had a lower mark average (M = 56.082) than those who rated it as unimportant or very unimportant (M = 60.375) ($t = 3.085$; $p<0.005$). Parents' level of involvement showed a similar result where those individuals who were performing better on average (M = 60.124) generally rated the items pertaining to this issue as either unimportant or very unimportant whereas those who performed less well (M = 56.081) reported that the items were important or very important. In addition, the difference between the average marks was significantly different ($t = 2.910$; $p<0.005$). Those individuals who perceived items related to parent's level of education as important had a significantly lower mark average (M = 55.385) than those who perceived this issue as unimportant or very unimportant (M = 59.745) ($t = 3.064$; $p<0.005$).

Factor 3: Schooling scale

Those individuals who reported that the items pertaining to their level of schooling were important factors in their decision to attend university tended to do significantly worse (M = 56.081) than those who reported that this was not an important factor in their decision to attend university (M = 60.124) ($t = 3.220$; $p<0.005$). In addition, a significantly lower average was also obtained by those individuals who rated items related to academic performance as having some importance (M = 53.261) whereas those who rated the items as having little importance obtained a significantly higher overall mark average (M = 61.807) ($t = 6.411$; $p<0.005$). Results for the items pertaining to guidance showed similar results as the above mentioned issues, that is those who perceived the items pertaining to guidance as important had a significantly lower overall average mark (M = 56.755) than those who perceived it as unimportant (M = 59.315) ($t = 1.828$; $p< 0.05$). The issue of peer influence, on the other hand, did not show a significant difference in the overall average mark of those who perceived these as important (M = 57.915) and those who perceived these items as unimportant (M = 58.148) ($t = 0.162$; $p>0.05$).

4.3 Qualitative analysis (please see Appendix M and N)

The questionnaires were separated into one of three groups; those with high marks (70% and above), those with intermediate marks (50%-69%) and those with low marks (below 50%). *A priori* categorization was used in order to develop themes from the questions asked. The data was separated into categories based on the answers from the questions, and analysis for each group was done for each open-ended question asked on the questionnaire. These questions included 'What made you decide to study at university?', 'Was there anything that made it

difficult for you to study at university?', and 'What factors do you think influenced your decision to attend university?'

Theme 1: Studying at university

Figure 1: Pie chart showing the proportions of each issue raised in the 70% and above group for theme 1

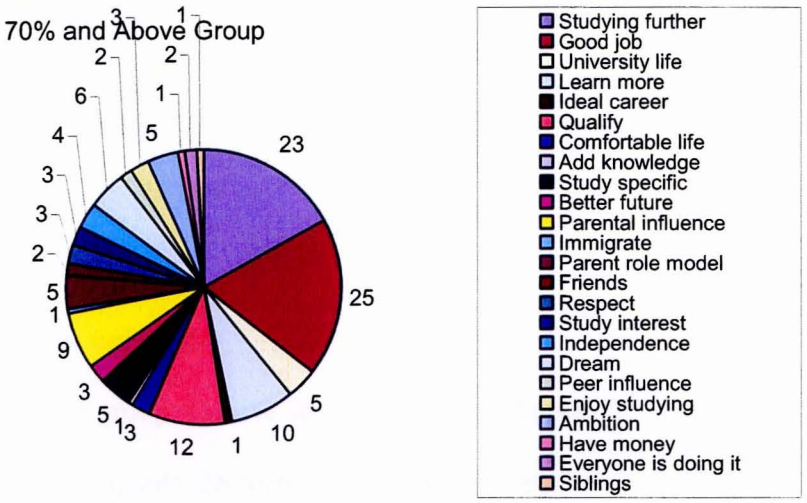


Figure 2: Pie chart showing the proportions of each issue raised in the 50 % - 60% group for theme 1

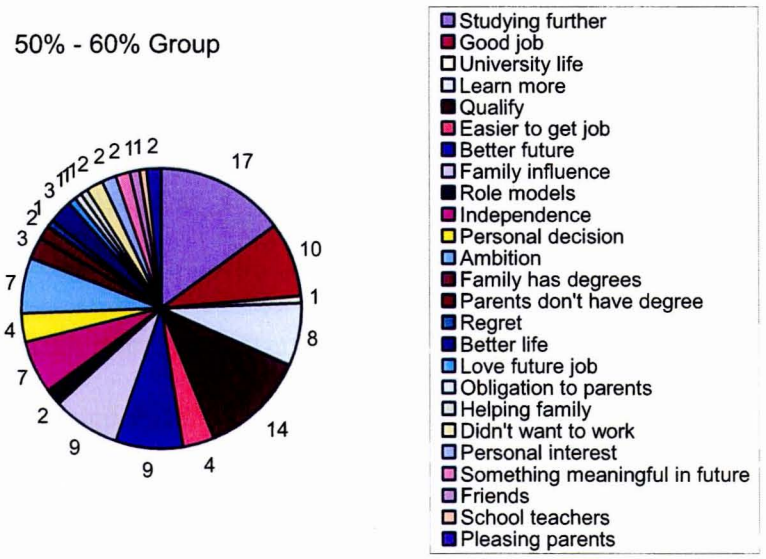
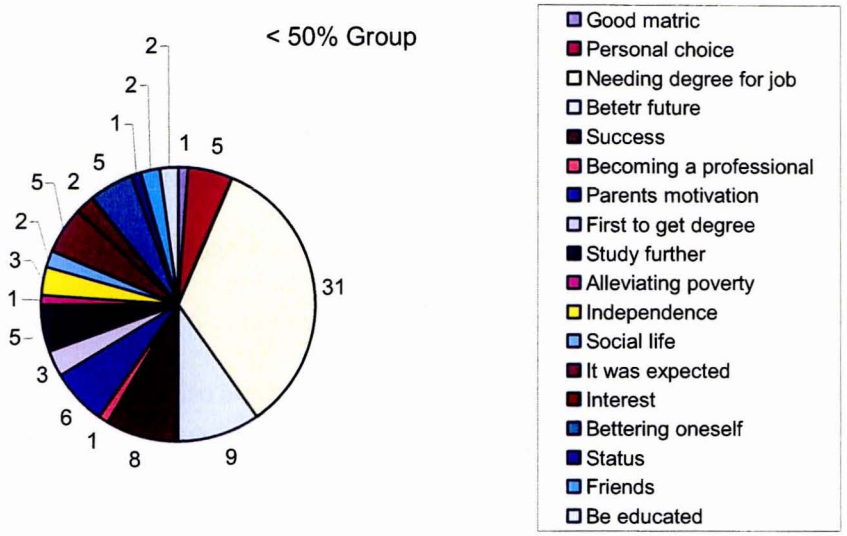


Figure 3: Pie chart showing the proportions of each issue raised for theme 1 in the < 50 % group



Theme 1: Studying at university

In the 70 % and above group, (please see Figure 1 and Appendix L) the most frequently stated reason about why participants decided to attend university was because they wanted to study further and get a degree (66%). Half (50%) of the sample reported that an important reason why they decided to attend university was so that they could get a job in the future, with specific emphasis that it would be easier to get a job if they had gone to university. 24% of the sample also suggested that they wanted to go to university in order to study something that they enjoyed or to increase their knowledge in a field that they enjoyed. Another factor affecting these participants' decision to attend university was parental influence (18%). Participants reported that their parents wanted them to attend university or they had been forced by their parents to attend university - some even stated that they had been given no choice other than to study at university. There were also some participants that stated that their parents were a main influencing factor in their decision to attend university but that they were perceived as role models and had acted as an encouraging factor for them to attend university (10%). Other factors that influenced

participants' decision to attend university included; ambition and making money (10%), it was a personal choice or a dream of theirs (12%) and to gain independence in the future (8%).

In the 50%-69% group (please see Figure 2 and Appendix L) participants also decided to attend university in order to get a degree and study beyond a secondary level of schooling (34%). Even though this was a factor in this group it was a lower percentage to that in the 70% and upward group. Other participants also wanted to be able to qualify for the job that they wanted and the job they wanted required a degree (24%). Some participants suggested that they had decided to go to university in order to get a good job in the future and to have a successful career (20%). Another factor reported by these participants was that they wanted to 'secure a better future' or 'open doors in the future' (18%). Others also had family members or parents that expected them to attend university (18%). Other factors that showed some importance included a desire to learn more (16%) and ambition to earn more money (14%).

Amongst those individuals who failed (please see Figure 3 and Appendix L), the most important deciding factor to attend university was to get a degree in order to get a good job in the future or wanting to pursue a specific career and needing a degree in order to do that (60%). Second to this was that individuals were looking to gain a better future or better life (18%). Some of the individuals in this category stated that their family currently was not wealthy and that they wanted a better life compared to what they had grown up with. These seemed to be the predominant factors in this group, although other factors included that they wanted to make money in the future (16%), their parents had motivated them to attend university (10%), wanting to study further (10%) and that they wanted to be independent (6%).

Theme 2: Difficulties for studying at university

Figure 4: Pie chart showing the proportions of each issue raised for theme 2 in the 70% and above group

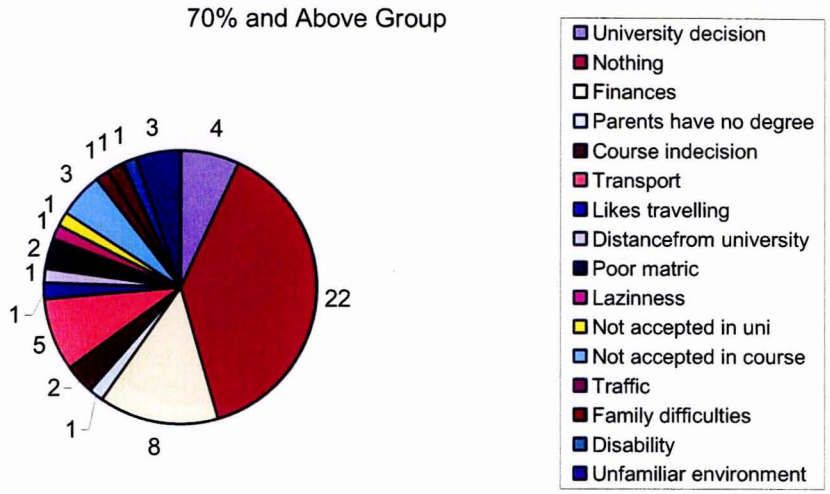


Figure 5: Pie chart showing the proportions of each issue raised for theme 2 in the 50% - 60% group

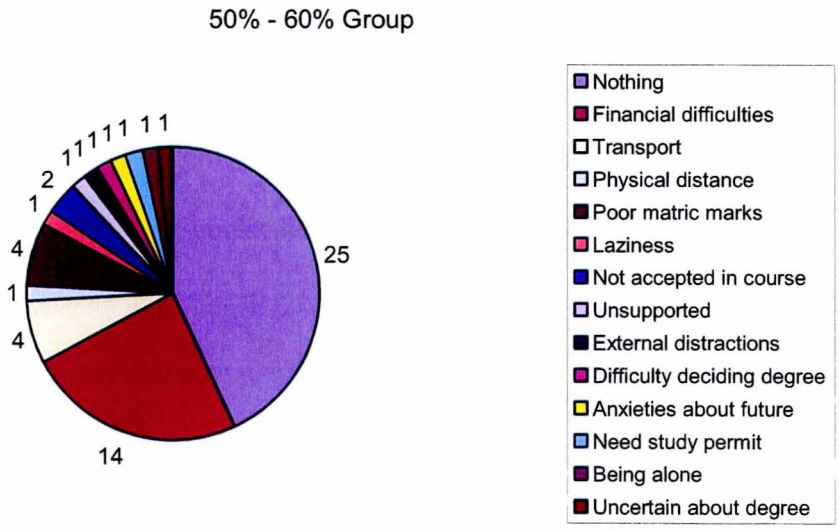
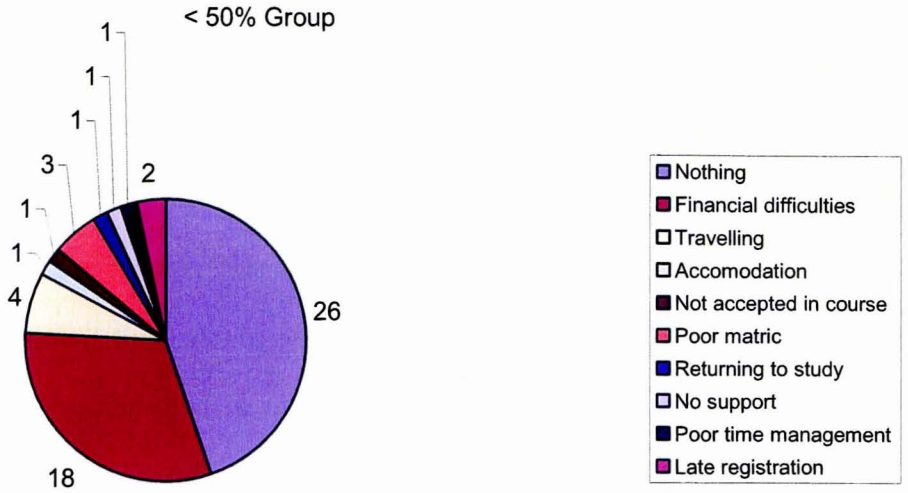


Figure 6: Pie chart showing the proportions of each issue raised for theme 2 in the < 50% group



Theme 2: Difficulties for studying at university

Most participants in the highest level of performance (please see Figure 4 and Appendix L) reported that there were no factors that made it difficult for them to attend university (44%). Eight of the fifty (16%) participants in this group reported that finances were a problem and that they required financial aid in order to attend university. Transportation to and from the university also seemed to pose a difficulty for some individuals (10%). Of those who had transportation difficulties most suggested that the university was far from where they lived and that it was difficult finding a lift to the university, whereas others reported that travelling by bus or taxi was expensive and unreliable.

Other factors which seemed to show some importance were difficulty in deciding which university to attend (8%), the change from school to university (6%), including the unfamiliarity

and not knowing what to expect, as well as not having been accepted into their first degree of choice (6%).

In the middle group (please see Figure 5 and Appendix L), most individuals also reported that there were no factors that made it difficult for them to attend university (50%), although financial difficulties seemed to affect a larger proportion of individuals in this group than it did in the higher group (24%). These individuals suggested that the high cost of university made it difficult for them to study and there were some individuals who had financial aid or who had had to work for a few years before attending university in order to earn money to pay for the fees. Some individuals also suggested that transportation was a difficulty (8%). Others reported that they did not initially have enough points to get into the degree that they wanted or not enough points to get into university and they had to write entrance examinations in order to be accepted (8%).

The lowest group (please see Figure 6 and Appendix L) had the largest number of participants reporting that nothing made it difficult for them to attend university (52%) but it also had the largest number of individuals reporting that university was expensive and that finances were a problem for them (36%). Some individuals in this group suggested that travelling was difficult (8%) and others reported that they did not do well enough in their matriculation and had had to write an entrance examination (6%).

Theme 3: Factors influencing decision to attend university

Figure 7: Pie chart showing the proportions of each issue raised for theme 3 in the 70% and above group

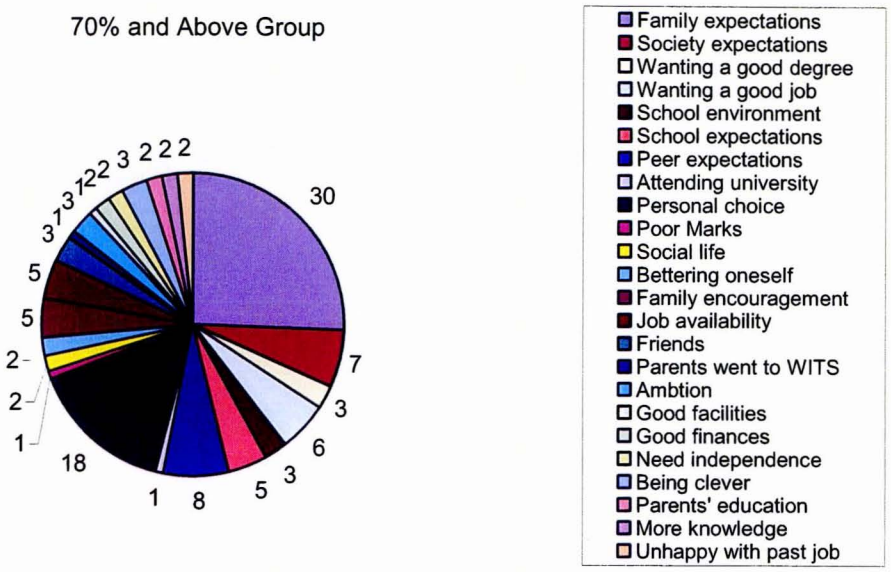


Figure 8: Pie chart showing the proportions of each issue raised for theme 3 in the 50% - 60% group

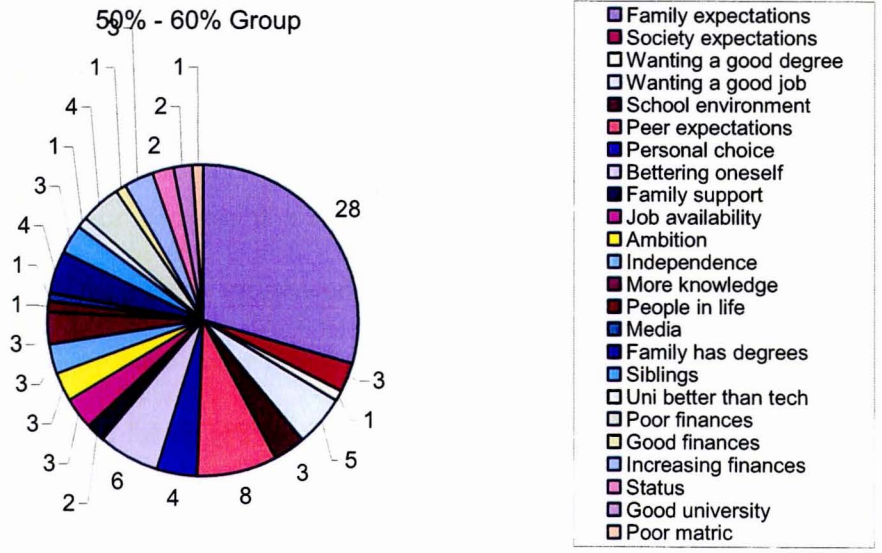
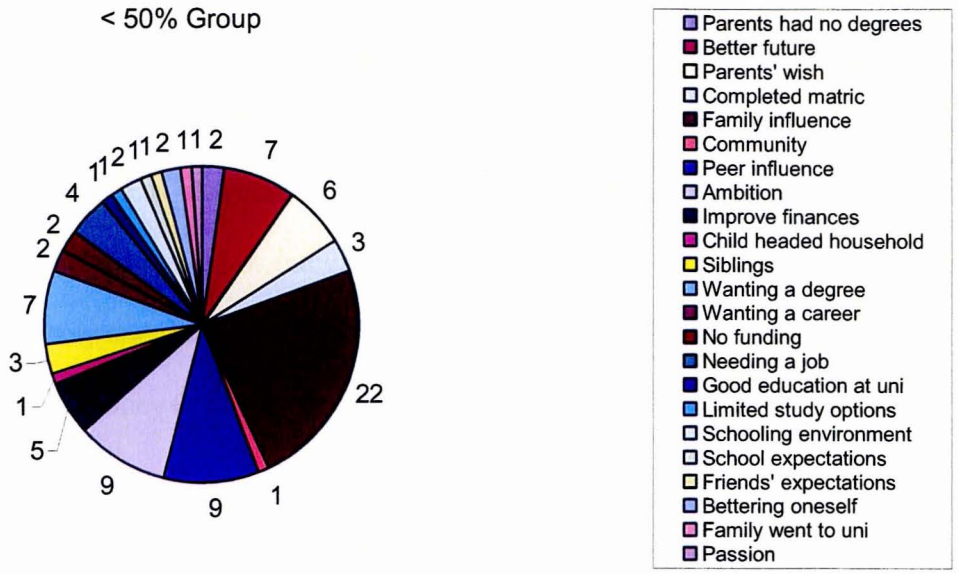


Figure 9: Pie chart showing the proportions of each issue raised for theme 3 in the < 50% group



Theme 3: Factors influencing decision to attend university

Most participants in the highest group (please see Figure 7 and Appendix L) reported that their parents had specific expectations of them attending university and that this influenced them most (60%). Another factor was personal choice (36%), that is, participants attended university because they wanted to or because it was something they had always wanted to do. Some participants stated that they were influenced by society's expectations of them (14%), while others were influenced by their peers (16%). Some participants wanted a good job in order to make a lot of money in the future (12%). Other participants suggested that an influencing factor for them was that they perceived there to be more job availability for individuals with degrees (10%).

In the middle group (please see Figure 8 and Appendix L) most participants reported that their family or parents expected them to attend university (56%). Others suggested that their peers expected or influenced them to attend university (16%) and some wanted to better themselves or have a better life than what they may already have (12%). Another factor which seemed to be important for some individuals was that everyone in their family had a degree and they felt obliged to get one as well (8%). A few individuals reported that they did not have the financial means to attend university and that this influenced their decision to attend university in that they initially did not have the money to pay for the university fees (8%).

As in the previous two groups, the main influence for the lowest-level (please see Figure 9 and Appendix L) participants was that their family influenced or expected them to attend university (44%), although this was not as high as the previous two groups. A large proportion of individuals in this group suggested that they were ambitious and that they wanted to achieve specific personal goals (18%). Other individuals also suggested that their peers influenced them to attend university (18%). Others were influenced by their perception that they needed a degree in order to have a better future (14%) or wanted a higher level of education (14%).

Chapter 5: Discussion

Various international and local research has shown that a number of factors influence participants' entry into university and some of these factors have also been shown to have an effect on students' subsequent success at university. This study's main aim was to better understand the effect and importance a number of factors had on participants' decision to attend a South African university. In addition, the relationship between the relative importance of these factors and the students' individual psychology marks was assessed to ascertain the effect of these factors on academic success. This research was initiated due to the lack of quantitative data pertaining to factors affecting academic success. Research in South Africa thus far has been predominantly qualitative in nature. This research opted for a multi-method approach in order to gather both qualitative and quantitative data on this topic to provide a richer understanding but also because the questionnaire was self-developed and may not have included items pertaining to this particular sample. Therefore gaps in the questionnaire could also be identified through the qualitative analysis. Furthermore research in South Africa has focused on a few factors whereas this research attempted to incorporate most factors identified from local and international literature and create a more broad understanding in South Africa.

The main conceptual frameworks used in this research were based on theory by Bronfenbrenner (1979), Bronfenbrenner and Ceci (1994) and Bourdieu (1977, 1990, 1998) and the two approaches were used because together they give a better understanding of the workings of different ecological systems and the distribution of human, social and cultural capital between the subsystems of each ecological system and their effects on individuals entering university.

The distribution of such capital is important in the understanding of individuals' ability to attend university as well as their ability to succeed at university (Bourdieu, 1990). It has further been shown that individuals fit within a specific ecological model based on the resources available in that system (Bronfenbrenner & Ceci, 1994; Lin, 2001). Due to South Africa's historical and past political structure, the distribution of resources to various race groups has been substantially stratified (Morrow, 1990). Currently many young South Africans are still affected by the remnants of this severe inequality and education in South Africa still does not have equal primary and secondary schooling opportunities across groups (Coughian, 2006; Mji, 2002). Despite these differences though, South African universities have nevertheless accepted individuals from all race, ethnic and class groups with the premise that education provides individuals with the opportunity to escape economic and financial deprivation and to increase social potential (Coughian, 2006).

Findings from the qualitative analysis showed that a substantial proportion of individuals throughout each group stipulated that they needed a degree in order to gain financial independence by being able to get a good job in the future in order to better their current living circumstances. This was supported in the scale, which showed that most participants thought an important reason to attend university was to improve their current socio-economic status. This suggests that individuals attending university are no longer from the upper-class or elite of society, but that universities are opening their doors to the whole population and affording all individuals the opportunity of a higher education and therefore a better future. Unfortunately though, approximately one third of the population that enters university does not finish their undergraduate studies (Coughian, 2006). Therefore it is important to better understand the effect

of various factors on participants' entrance into university and the effects these factors have on an individual's likelihood of succeeding.

Findings from the self-developed questionnaire showed that participants perceived extrinsic and intrinsic motives to be the main contributing factors affecting their decision to attend university. In addition, Bronfenbrenner and Ceci (1994) suggest that children are more likely to be affected by their parents' influence at a young age but as they develop and become older their decisions become more individually orientated. These results are congruent with research conducted in South Africa, which showed that individuals perceived that there was a combination of intrinsic and extrinsic motivation in their decision to attend university (Bitzer & Troskie-De Bruin, 2004; Gaganakis, 2003; Mji, 2002; Toni & Olivier, 2004). South African research has also shown that the youth are affected both extrinsically and intrinsically in that they perceive the external goal of obtaining a university degree as essential in the creation of a better future and an opportunity to better themselves through learning new skills and furthering their knowledge (Coughian, 2006; Mji, 2002). Results from the qualitative research showed that participants wanted to further their studies in the area they were interested in and some further stipulated that they wanted a degree in order to better their future and in order to get a good job in the future. This suggests that some participants also wanted to improve their socio-economic status by attending university.

From this research it was evident that intrinsic motives had a significantly positive correlation with participants' marks. Furthermore, those participants that rated intrinsic motives as having a more important effect on their decision to attend university had a higher overall mean mark,

while those individuals who rated extrinsic motives as having an important effect on their decision to attend university had a significantly lower average than those who did not. This is supported by previous research - according to Hendrich and Schepers (2004), those individuals who are more extrinsically motivated seem to show less likelihood of succeeding at university.

Bronfenbrenner (1979) put forward that motivation, whether intrinsic or extrinsic, is created by the effects of the environment on the individual, therefore those individuals who are intrinsically motivated may have been influenced to be this way due to their ecological environment. The micro-system of development is affected by more proximal sub-systems, such as socio-economic status, race/ethnicity, language and parental and schooling influences and these sub-systems help the individual to develop as either more intrinsically or predominantly extrinsically motivated. One main factor which determines this development could be socio-economic status. As previously mentioned, many South Africans perceive the external goal of attaining a university degree as important in bettering their future, that is, they want to improve their socio-economic status through acquiring a university degree.

The individuals' socio-economic status also defines the quality and quantity of resources available to that individual provided by his/her environment (Bourdieu, 1977, 1990). In the case of this research, the participants' parents were considered the primal proximal environment and this has been based on Bronfenbrenner and Ceci's (1994) findings. Parental networks can provide an individual with various social networks which can provide resources (Lin, 2001). Despite the fact that South African universities have opened access to all race, class and socio-economic groups, university is still very expensive and this expense prevents the lower socio-economic

groups from applying (Gaganakis, 2003; Plank & Jordan, 2001). 27 % of the sample that was analysed qualitatively showed that participants perceived financial difficulties and high university fees as a main difficulty for their entrance into university. Some participants further stipulated that they had to work before attending university and this had delayed their entry into university after school.

Van Heerden (1995) has suggested that due to South Africa's prior political and economic history, some individuals are inadequately prepared for university. This inadequate preparedness, according to Bourdieu (1990), is due to a lack of resources provided by the individual's environment. Attaining a university degree can be a way to improve the system's resources because the individual would have access to a network with greater resources than those already available (Lin, 2001). According to Geldenhuys and de Lange (2003), many individuals from previously disadvantaged backgrounds are more motivated to improve their socio-economic status by obtaining a university degree. Most questions in the questionnaire related to socio-economic status pertained to improving current socio-economic status and from the demographic statistics it was evident that 54% of the participants that answered the questionnaire had at least one parent who had a tertiary or post-tertiary education. Based on these findings it can be assumed that more than half the sample was from families of middle or upper-income earning brackets. This would support the findings that only a moderate proportion of those who participated in the study reported that items related to socio-economic status had some importance. Further findings from the research showed that those participants who perceived socio-economic status as an important factor in determining their decision to attend university had a significantly lower overall mark average than those who did not perceive socio-economic

status as an issue of importance and that there was a significant negative correlation between socio-economic importance and participants' marks. Therefore those who decided to attend university in order to better their socio-economic status were less successful academically.

The majority of the participants who reported financial difficulties fell within the middle to low mark range and socio-economic status showed a significantly negative correlation with the participants' marks. When this was analysed further using a two independent sample t-test, results showed that participants with parents who had at least a matriculation performed significantly better than those with parents with a secondary school qualification or no education at all. Plank and Jordan (2001) showed in their research that individuals from lower-income households were less likely to succeed at university than those from middle and upper-income households. This was supported by Bourdieu (1977), who suggested that it is the dominant culture that is more likely to generally succeed because it has a greater quality and quantity of resources. Therefore in South Africa, those parents with at least a matriculation can provide their children with sufficient social, cultural and human capital to ensure that they succeed at university.

International research has shown that parents of a lower socio-economic status tend to provide fewer resources for their children in terms of schooling and preparedness for university (Lin, 2001; Paulsen & St. John, 2001; Perna & Titus, 2005; Plank & Jordan, 2001). This could be one of the explanations for the above results pertaining to socio-economic status. From this research, it was clear that a parent's level of involvement in their child's decision to attend university was perceived as important by many of the participants. In addition, a large proportion of the sample

that was analysed qualitatively reported that their parents had an influence on their decision to attend university, of the 150 questionnaires analysed in the qualitative analysis, 80 participants suggested that this was an important factor in their decision to attend university. This influence was perceived as both an expectation by their parents (being forced to attend university) as well as a supportive factor (being encouraged and supported in their decision to attend university). Between the three groups analysed qualitatively, the group with the highest marks had the most number of participants reporting that their parents had an influence on their decision to attend university.

Furthermore those individuals whose parents had at least a matriculation performed significantly better than those who had only a secondary school education or no education at all, therefore these results provide further data to suggest that those individuals who have at least a matriculation in South Africa have higher expectations of their children and influence their children more to attend university. From the data collected from the self-developed questionnaire, most individuals reported that their parents' level of involvement and their parents' expectations for their education were perceived as having the most important overall effect for most participants. Contrary to the qualitative findings, these results were significantly, negatively correlated with the participants' marks. This could be because participants who performed better did not necessarily perceive their parents influence or involvement as important in their decision to attend university.

Another factor that showed significant importance was that of language. Even though it did not show a significant overall importance for the participants, those who did report that it had some

importance performed significantly lower than those who did not perceive it as being important. Results showed that those individuals who spoke English as a home language performed significantly better than those individuals who did not speak English as a home language. This is important in South Africa because a large proportion of South Africa's population does not speak English as a home language and this was evident from the sample distribution which showed that 38% of the sample that answered the questionnaire spoke a language other than English as their mother tongue. Nakusera (2004) emphasizes that English is a vital language which is necessary for success at a tertiary level. Results from this study clearly confirm this statement. Furthermore any of the eleven official languages can be used at primary and secondary level schooling but English remains the main language used at tertiary institutions, which can significantly affect students who are not fluent in the language (Nakusera, 2004; Toni & Olivier, 2004).

In contrast to the findings in the literature, schooling factors did not seem to have an overall importance in the participants' decision to attend university. The qualitative analysis showed similar results, where very few participants reported that their school had any effect on their decision to attend university. Furthermore all the issues related to the schooling factors except peer influence showed that those who thought these issues had some importance had a lower overall average than those who did not find these factors to be important in their decision to attend university.

This study therefore showed three main findings. Firstly individuals who are more intrinsically motivated are more successful than those who are motivated by external goals and factors. Internal factors include increasing one's knowledge, having an interest in the area of study and

wanting to do something meaningful with one's life. External goals include improving one's socio-economic status, parental influences and schooling influences. According to Fazey and Fazey (2001), individuals who are more intrinsically motivated are generally more autonomous. Bronfenbrenner and Ceci (1994) suggest that an individual is affected by his/her environment despite the individual having intrinsic or extrinsic motivation. Therefore it can be assumed that autonomy is related to the environment that an individual is already a part of.

This leads to the second main finding from this research, the fact that a systems-general socio-economic standing has an overall impact on other subsystems, especially the individual. The chronosystem, according to Bronfenbrenner (1979), is the position of an ecological environment in time. Past, present and future time have an effect on the system as a whole and inevitably on the individual. The macrosystem pertains to the overarching system that affects all other systems. These include political, economic, social, educational and legal aspects (Hook, 2002). It has been evident up until now that South Africa's socio-political past has had a vast impact on the majority of South Africa's population and that the subsequent macrosystems that have developed to encompass various communities have been as a result of historical circumstances.

This has subsequently affected children's education and availability of various resources. Many participants of colour would have had parents directly affected by the Apartheid system which resulted in unequal opportunities for these previously disadvantaged individuals. Furthermore, Bronfenbrenner and Ceci (1994) suggest that development is reliant on the available resources in the given environment. Lin (2001) suggests that interactions occur between individuals of a similar class and in order to obtain better or more resources an individual should actively obtain

these from a system with greater resources. Tertiary education could be a way to obtaining increased resources from another system, therefore opening tertiary education to all individuals could provide a way to rectify inequality, but the historical effects have nevertheless still shown their consequence in this study. This study has clearly shown that participants of a lower-socio economic status have less financial means to attend university and do not perform as well as those of a middle and upper socio-economic status. A substantial amount of literature has shown that individuals of a lower socio-economic status generally have fewer resources and social capital. This affects their exposure to information about university, due to the lack of resources at school and a lack of knowledge and resources afforded by their parents.

The third important finding from this research is that English as a first language is an important factor that may affect success. Due to the fact that all tertiary institutes use English or Afrikaans as their main languages, this could pose a difficulty for second language English speakers and is also an added disadvantage for many previously disadvantaged individuals.

Chapter 6: Conclusion, contribution to knowledge, limitations and directions for the future

6.1 Conclusion

This study aimed to assess which factors, identified in previous literature, had an effect on individuals' decisions to attend university and furthermore what level of importance was afforded to each factor by the participants in the study. These factors pertained to factors that affected participants' decision to attend university, and included individual factors, parental factors and schooling factors. Results from the analysis showed that both intrinsic and extrinsic motivation were perceived to be the main factors affecting participants' entry into university and also had the greatest importance for students' decisions to attend university. Other factors such as parent's level of involvement and parent's expectations had some importance and effect on the participants but the effect was not as great as that of intrinsic and extrinsic motives.

This research also showed that intrinsic motivation was the only issue to have a positive effect on success. Those individuals who reported that intrinsic motives were more important in their decision to attend university had an overall better mean performance than for any other factor or issue measured. Substantial prior research has shown that those individuals with greater intrinsic motivation, self-worth and positive drive are more autonomous and more likely to succeed at university (Byrne & Flood, 2005; Dinovitzer et al., 2003; Fazey & Fazey, 2001; Majoribanks, 2004; Mulder, 2004) and research in South Africa has shown that individuals who are more extrinsically motivated or motivated to succeed in order to attain an external goal or for a reward or avoiding punishment are less likely to succeed at university (Hendrich & Schepers, 2004).

Results from this study have also shown that this also seems to be the case because all other issues assessed were based on external drives and all these factors showed significantly negative correlations with success. The reason for other factors not showing a positive effect on success was attributed to the lack of resources these individuals systems may have (Bourdieu, 1977; 1998; Bronfenbrenner & Ceci 1994; Lin, 2001; Perna & Titus, 2005; Rowan-Kenyon, 2007). Based on information from previous research it is evident that a main factor associated with not succeeding at university has been attributed to a lack of social capital provided by an individual's system. This lack of social capital prevents individuals from obtaining the required resources needed in order to succeed and is closely associated with an individuals' socio-economic position (Bitzer & Troskie-De Bruin, 2004; Perna & Titus, 2005; Rowan-Kenyon, 2007). Such resources include, for example, sufficient information about university and financial aid, supportive parenting, money, access to computers and the internet (McNeal, 1999; Perna & Titus, 2005; Plank & Jordan, 2001; Rowan-Kenyon, 2007). Lin (2001) and Bourdieu (1998) suggest that individuals of upper-income brackets are more likely to have greater quality and quantity of resources than those of lower-income brackets and this largely affects enrolment and success at university. The lack of these resources has been attributed to South Africa's past political circumstances and the stratification of resources through populations (Coughian, 2006; Morrow, 1990; Stevens & Lockhat, 2003; Van Heerden, 1995). Currently South African universities have opened education to all individuals which is one way of redistributing resources and affording all individuals the opportunity to improve social and economic potential (Coughian, 2006). Yet sub-Saharan Africa still has the lowest rate of entry into university in the world (Bloom et al., 2006) and in order to address this, tertiary institutes need to take into consideration individual's past

circumstances and should promote individuals to be more intrinsically motivated to prevent drop out and promote success at the universities. Furthermore some individuals' difficulty pertaining to English also needs to be addressed at both the secondary and tertiary schooling level, as is evident from this study that English is an important and necessary requirement in order to succeed at most South African universities.

6.2 Limitations and direction for future research

This study relied heavily on the self-developed questionnaire. Difficulties were encountered interpreting the data for the questionnaire because the reliability for a number of the issues was not satisfactory. Reliability for the questionnaire ranged from 0.5-0.8 for the importance scale and the lowest satisfactory reliability coefficient, according to Devlin (2006), is 0.7. Therefore reliability coefficients were approximately two points below the acceptable reliability. This poses a difficulty because a less satisfactory reliability suggests that the issues with less satisfactory reliability were less consistent in their measurement of the construct. Future research is needed to develop a questionnaire more suitable and more reliable for the population selected. Furthermore, issues that arose in the qualitative section of this study could be used in the questionnaire instead of basing the questions on prior research that was based mainly on international findings. It should also be taken into account that the questions on this questionnaire may have been misperceived by the participants who were unable to speak English well as well as those who spoke English as a home language.

In addition, further support to justify the effect of an individual's socio-economic status and prior political structures in South Africa should be included in further research. This study, coupled

with previous literature and theory, has shown evidence for the continuing remnants of South Africa's political circumstances but further evidence would be necessary.

Lastly longitudinal analysis would be more useful than the cross-sectional structure of this study. It would be important to understand how the factors and issues assessed affect individuals' success rates throughout their academic career as opposed to only through half a year of study. Due to the limited time available for this research, a longitudinal study was not possible but carrying this research further would allow for the scope of this study to be extended and results to be more generalisable.

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Appendix A: Participant Information Sheet

[Correct Discipline-approved letterhead to be provided by supervisor once granted Ethics approval]

My name is Simona Maraschin, and I am conducting research for the purposes of obtaining a Masters in Educational Psychology at the University of the Witwatersrand. My research is about factors that affect people deciding to enroll at university and the relationship between these factors and academic success. I would like to invite you to take part in this research.

Participation in this research will involve you completing the attached questionnaire. The questionnaire will take approximately 15 - 20 minutes to complete. **Please note that your participation is completely voluntary and you will not be advantaged or disadvantaged in any way for choosing to complete or not to complete the questionnaire.**

Other than your student number, no identifying information, such as your name or I.D. number, is asked for. Your student number has been asked for so that I can access your academic marks in order to look at the relationship between the factors that affected your decision to enroll at university and your academic performance, and will not be used for any other purpose. An independent person will match your marks for this academic year only to your student number, and I as the researcher will only see your marks in relation to the code on your questionnaire which is random. In this way you will remain anonymous. Your completed questionnaire will not be seen by any other person, and will only be processed by myself and your responses will only be looked at in relation to all other responses. This means that feedback that will be given to you and other people in the form of group responses and not individual perceptions.

If you choose to participate in the study please complete the attached questionnaire as carefully and honestly as possible. You can take the questionnaire home to complete. Once you have answered the questions, you can deposit it in the sealed box provided in your class every week for the next three weeks. This will ensure that no one will have access to the completed questionnaires, and will ensure your anonymity. If you do return your questionnaire, this will be considered consent to participate in the study. A separate page has been included for your student number. If you choose to provide your student number please place it on the separate form provided only.

If you have any questions or concerns, please feel free to contact me or my supervisor as per the details below. This research will contribute to a larger body of knowledge on factors affecting university enrolment and improving access to higher education generally and your participation in this study would be greatly appreciated.

Kind Regards

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Nicole.Israel@wits.ac.za

UNIVERSITY OF THE WITWATERSRAND, JOHANNESBURG

Division of the Deputy Registrar (Research)

HUMAN RESEARCH ETHICS COMMITTEE (NON-MEDICAL)
R14/49/1 Maraschin

CLEARANCE CERTIFICATE **PROTOCOL NUMBER H070903**

PROJECT Factors influencing enrolment and academic performance at a South African university

INVESTIGATORS Miss S Maraschin

DEPARTMENT School of Human and Community Development/Psychology

DATE CONSIDERED 07.09.14

DECISION OF THE COMMITTEE* Approved Unconditionally

NOTE:

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

DATE 07.09.18 **CHAIRPERSON** .....
(Professor M Vorster)

cc: Supervisor : Ms N Israel
School of Human and Community D

DECLARATION OF INVESTIGATOR(S)

To be completed in duplicate and **ONE COPY** returned to the Secretary at Room 10004, 10th Floor, Senate House, University.

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

Signature

This ethical clearance is valid for two years from date of approval.

PLEASE QUOTE THE PROTOCOL NUMBER IN ALL ENQUIRIES

Appendix C: Demographic Questionnaire

GENDER: AGE (in years)_____

MALE	FEMALE

RACE:

(please note that this question is for statistical purposes only and is not meant to offend.)

BLACK	WHITE	INDIAN	COLOURED	OTHER: please specify_____

FACULTY:_____ YEAR OF STUDY _____

PARENT'S LEVEL OF EDUCATION: _____

HOME LANGUAGE:_____

SCHOOL LANGUAGE:_____

HOW MANY OF YOUR FRIEND FROM SCHOOL HAVE ATTENDED UNIVERSITY:_____

DID YOU HAVE A GUIDANCE COUNSELLOR AT SCHOOL:

YES	NO

FACULTY:_____ YEAR OF STUDY _____

Appendix D: Student Number Consent

In order to see the relationship between the factors that affected your enrolment into university and your academic performance, it is necessary for the researcher to obtain your marks. In order to do this your student number will be required. An independent person will match your marks for this academic year only to your student number, and I as the researcher will only see your marks in relation to the code on your questionnaire which is random. In this way you will remain anonymous.

If you are willing to provide your student number for the purpose of this study only as described in the participant information sheet please fill it in below.

Appendix E: Factors Questionnaire

Please read the following questions and answer them as fully as possible.

What made you decide to study at university?

Was there anything that made it difficult for you to study at university?

What factors do you think influenced your decision to attend university?

Please read the following questions and for each question indicate whether the issue was something that affected your decision to attend university or not by marking with a cross (X) over either:

Yes	No

For each question please also indicate how important the issue was in affecting your decision to attend university by placing a cross (X) over one of the following:

Very Important	Important	Neutral	Unimportant	Very Unimportant

I decided to attend university because:

1) I qualified automatically/achieved a Matric exemption

Yes	No

Very Important	Important	Neutral	Unimportant	Very Unimportant

2) Even though my parents didn't expect me to, I wanted/needed to

Yes	No

Very Important	Important	Neutral	Unimportant	Very Unimportant

3) My school had access to the Internet

Yes	No

Very Important	Important	Neutral	Unimportant	Very Unimportant

4) My parents/family supported me going to university financially

Yes	No

Very Important	Important	Neutral	Unimportant	Very Unimportant

5) My friends had specific expectations of me

Yes	No

Very Important	Important	Neutral	Unimportant	Very Unimportant

6) I wanted to be like the rest of my family who have degrees

Yes	No

Very Important	Important	Neutral	Unimportant	Very Unimportant

7) Most people in my culture attend university

Yes	No

Very Important	Important	Neutral	Unimportant	Very Unimportant

8) My guidance counselor provided me with enough information about university

Yes	No

Very Important	Important	Neutral	Unimportant	Very Unimportant

9) I wanted to study in the area I am currently studying in

Yes	No

Very Important	Important	Neutral	Unimportant	Very Unimportant

10) My school had computers

Yes	No

Very Important	Important	Neutral	Unimportant	Very Unimportant

11) I wanted the 'social experience' of going to university

Yes	No

Very Important	Important	Neutral	Unimportant	Very Unimportant

12) My education at high school prepared me well for university

Yes	No

Very Important	Important	Neutral	Unimportant	Very Unimportant

13) Even though I didn't get enough points to study what I wanted, I was/am hoping to transfer to my preferred area of study

Yes	No

Very Important	Important	Neutral	Unimportant	Very Unimportant

14) My parents/family expected me to attend university

Yes	No

Very Important	Important	Neutral	Unimportant	Very Unimportant

15) My teachers at school encouraged me to go to university

Yes	No

Very Important	Important	Neutral	Unimportant	Very Unimportant

16) Of my culture

Yes	No

Very Important	Important	Neutral	Unimportant	Very Unimportant

17) I wanted to be the first in my family to get a degree

Yes	No

Very Important	Important	Neutral	Unimportant	Very Unimportant

18) My friends and I decided to go to university in a group

Yes	No

Very Important	Important	Neutral	Unimportant	Very Unimportant

19) My parents/family reassured me that going to university was a good thing

Yes	No

Very Important	Important	Neutral	Unimportant	Very Unimportant

20) I didn't want to struggle financially in the future

Yes	No

Very Important	Important	Neutral	Unimportant	Very Unimportant

21) I wanted to improve my knowledge in the area I am currently studying in

Yes	No

Very Important	Important	Neutral	Unimportant	Very Unimportant

22) My parents/family have university degrees

Yes	No

Very Important	Important	Neutral	Unimportant	Very Unimportant

23) The guidance counselors at my school encouraged me to go to university

Yes	No

Very Important	Important	Neutral	Unimportant	Very Unimportant

24) Most people around me expected me to go to university

Yes	No

Very Important	Important	Neutral	Unimportant	Very Unimportant

25) I wanted to have a career in the area I am currently studying

Yes	No

Very Important	Important	Neutral	Unimportant	Very Unimportant

26) I was forced to attend university by my parents/family

Yes	No

Very Important	Important	Neutral	Unimportant	Very Unimportant

27) I was interested in the area I am currently studying

Yes	No

Very Important	Important	Neutral	Unimportant	Very Unimportant

28) My school had lots of books

Yes	No

Very Important	Important	Neutral	Unimportant	Very Unimportant

29) I thought it was important to learn English

Yes	No

Very Important	Important	Neutral	Unimportant	Very Unimportant

30) My parents/family had specific expectations of me after I matriculated

Yes	No

Very Important	Important	Neutral	Unimportant	Very Unimportant

31) I will need to support myself in the future

Yes	No

Very Important	Important	Neutral	Unimportant	Very Unimportant

32) Of my race

Yes	No

Very Important	Important	Neutral	Unimportant	Very Unimportant

33) I was impressed by what my parents/family told me about university

Yes	No

Very Important	Important	Neutral	Unimportant	Very Unimportant

34) I wanted to do something meaningful with my life

Yes	No

Very Important	Important	Neutral	Unimportant	Very Unimportant

35) Even though my parents/family thought it was a bad idea, I thought it was important

Yes	No

Very Important	Important	Neutral	Unimportant	Very Unimportant

36) My school informed me about the university open days

Yes	No

Very Important	Important	Neutral	Unimportant	Very Unimportant

37) Even though I didn't get enough points to study what I wanted, I still wanted to study at university

Yes	No

Very Important	Important	Neutral	Unimportant	Very Unimportant

38) People in my culture are expected to go to university

Yes	No

Very Important	Important	Neutral	Unimportant	Very Unimportant

39) I wanted to be with my friends

Yes	No

Very Important	Important	Neutral	Unimportant	Very Unimportant

40) I will need to get a job when I finish university

Yes	No

Very Important	Important	Neutral	Unimportant	Very Unimportant

41) I could speak English very well

Yes	No

Very Important	Important	Neutral	Unimportant	Very Unimportant

42) I am female/male

Yes	No

Very Important	Important	Neutral	Unimportant	Very Unimportant

43) Of money

Yes	No

Very Important	Important	Neutral	Unimportant	Very Unimportant

44) My parents/family thought that I should obtain a university degree

Yes	No

Very Important	Important	Neutral	Unimportant	Very Unimportant

45) The teachers at my school were very good

Yes	No

Very Important	Important	Neutral	Unimportant	Very Unimportant

46) I wanted to improve my financial status i.e. have more money than I do now

Yes	No

Very Important	Important	Neutral	Unimportant	Very Unimportant

47) My parents/family supported the idea of me going to university

Yes	No

Very Important	Important	Neutral	Unimportant	Very Unimportant

48) Even though I couldn't understand English very well, I needed/wanted to study

Yes	No

Very Important	Important	Neutral	Unimportant	Very Unimportant

49) Most of my friends attend university

Yes	No

Very Important	Important	Neutral	Unimportant	Very Unimportant

50) Of my gender

Yes	No

Very Important	Important	Neutral	Unimportant	Very Unimportant

51) Of my bursary/scholarship/financial aid

Yes	No

Very Important	Important	Neutral	Unimportant	Very Unimportant

52) Even though I didn't qualify automatically, I wrote the selection test and was accepted

Yes	No

Very Important	Important	Neutral	Unimportant	Very Unimportant

53) The career I want means I have to have a university degree

Yes	No

Very Important	Important	Neutral	Unimportant	Very Unimportant

List five issues that you would consider to be the **most** important in your decision to attend university.

_____
_____
_____
_____
_____

List five issues that you would consider to be the **least** important in your decision to attend university.

_____
_____
_____
_____
_____

Appendix F: Scoring Sheet for the Self-Report Questionnaire

Self-Report Questionnaire

Total items: 53

Factors:

Individual:

Intrinsic Motives:	9, 21, 27 and 34
Extrinsic Motives	25, 31, 40 and 53
Socio-Economic Status	20, 43, 46 and 51
Language	29, 41 and 48
Gender	42 and 50
Race/ethnicity	7, 16, 24, 32 and 38

Parental:

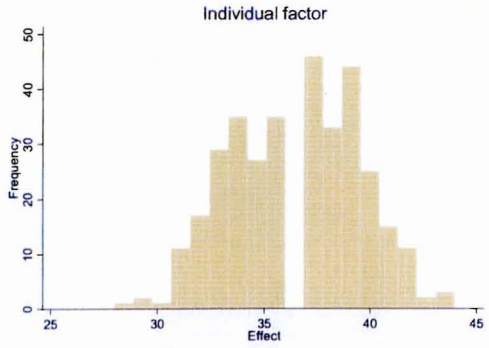
Parents' expectations	2, 14, 26, 30 and 44
Parents' level of involvement	4, 19, 33, 35 and 47
Parents' level of education	6, 17 and 22

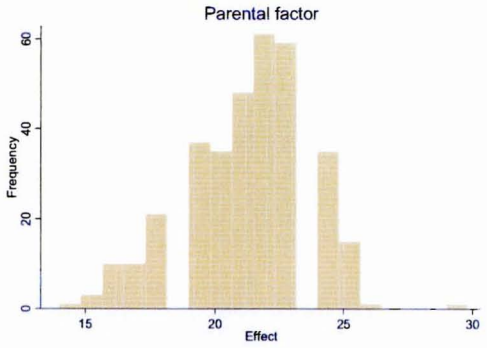
Schooling:

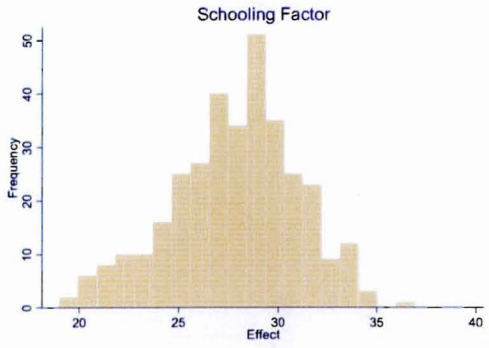
Level of schooling	3, 10, 12, 28 and 45
Academic performance	1, 13, 37 and 52
Guidance	8, 15, 23 and 36
Peer Influence	5, 11, 18, 39 and 49

Very Unimportant:	1
Unimportant:	2
Neutral:	3
Important:	4
Very Important:	5

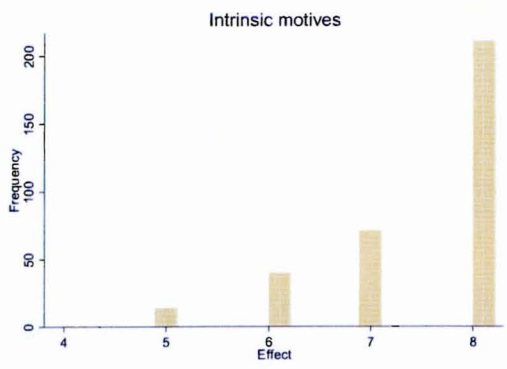
Appendix G: Graphic representations of the frequency distribution of the effect scale for each factor.

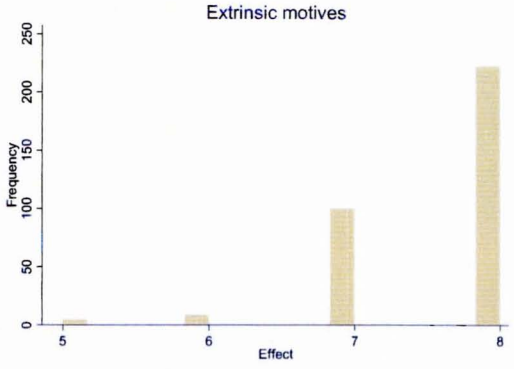


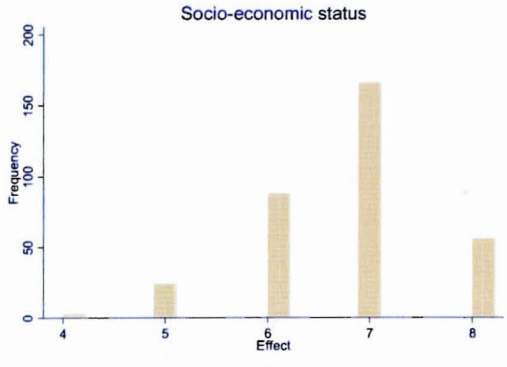


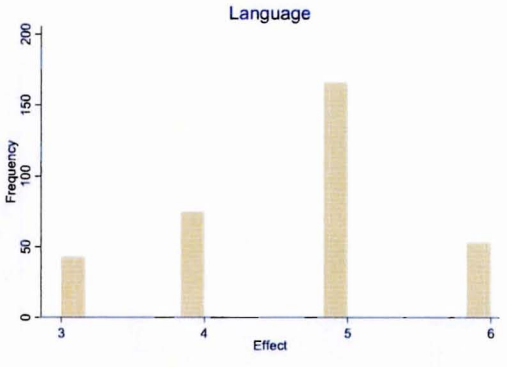


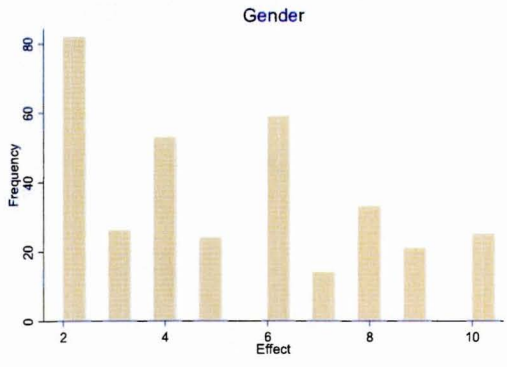
Appendix H: Graphic Representations of the frequency distribution of the effect scale for each issue.

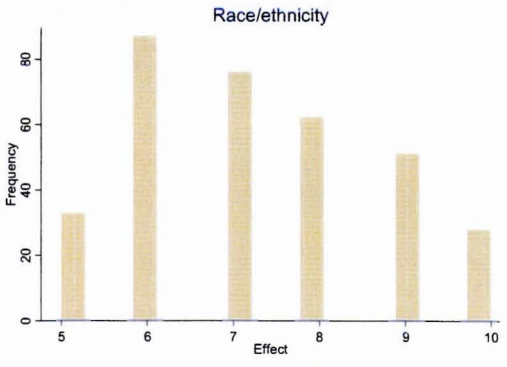


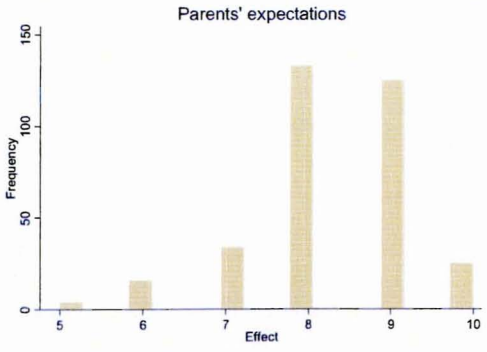


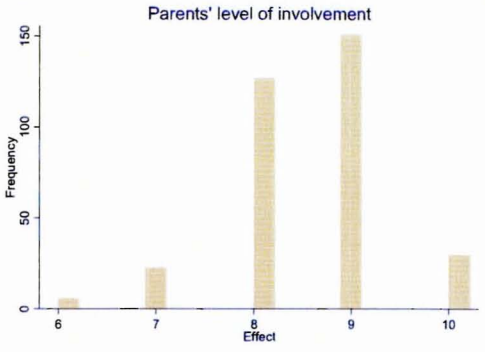


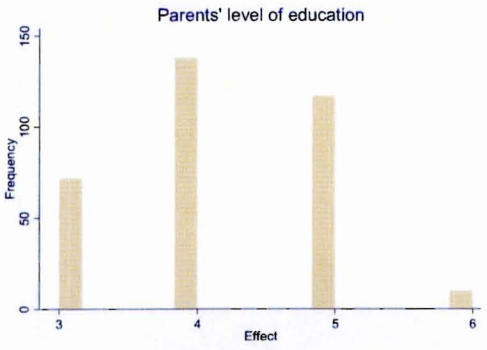


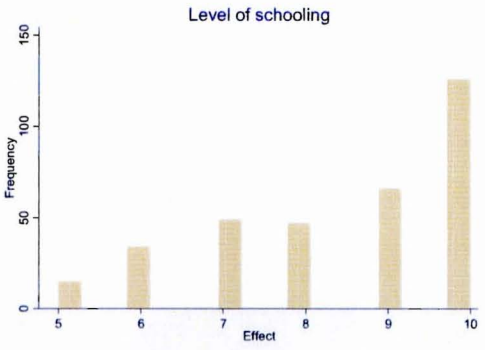


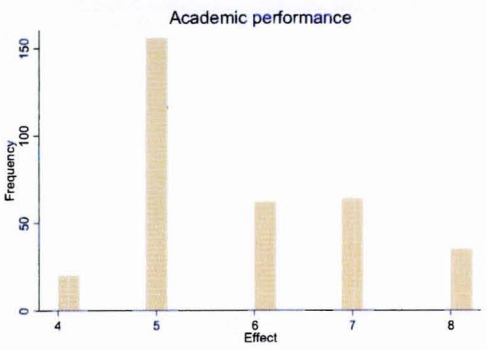


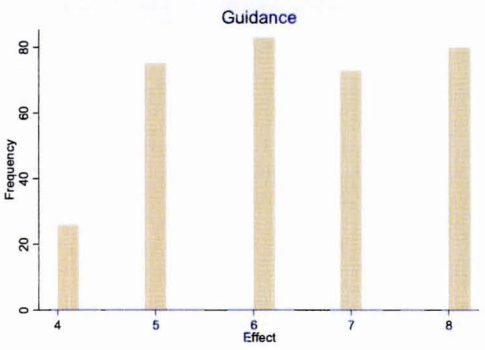

Parents' expectations
Frequency
0
50
100
150
5
6
7
8
9
10
Effect

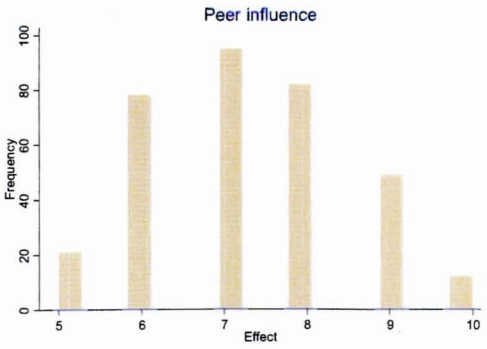

Parents' level of involvement
Frequency
0
50
100
150
6
7
8
9
10
Effect


Parents' level of education
Frequency
0
50
100
150
3
4
5
6
Effect

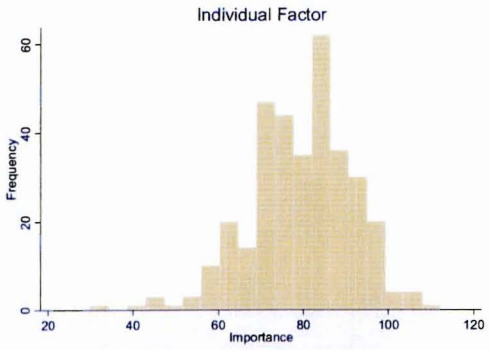

Level of schooling
Frequency
0
50
100
150
5
6
7
8
9
10
Effect

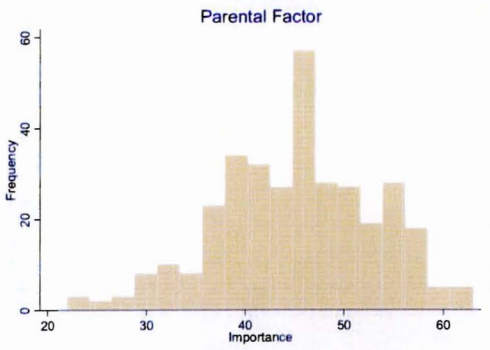

Academic performance
Frequency
0
50
100
150
4
5
6
7
8
Effect

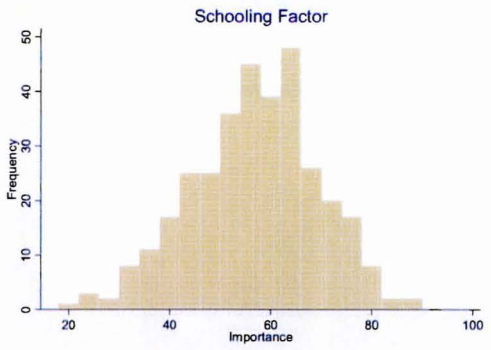

Guidance
Frequency
0
20
40
60
80
4
5
6
7
8
Effect


Peer influence
Frequency
0
20
40
60
80
100
5
6
7
8
9
10
Effect

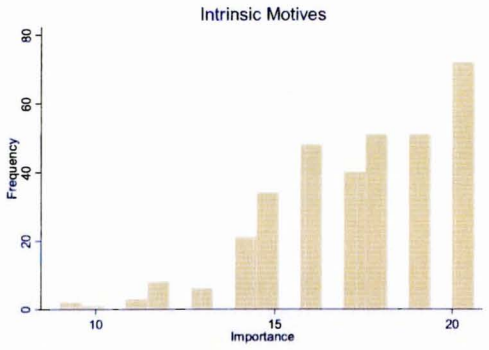
Appendix I: Graphic Representations of the frequency distribution of the importance scale for each factor.

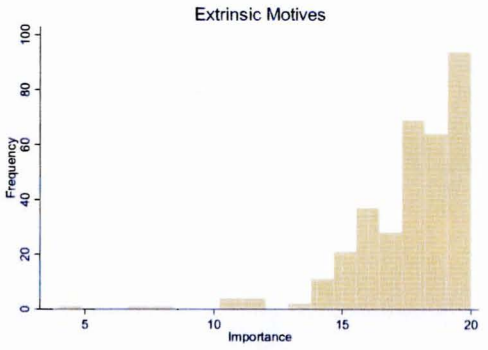


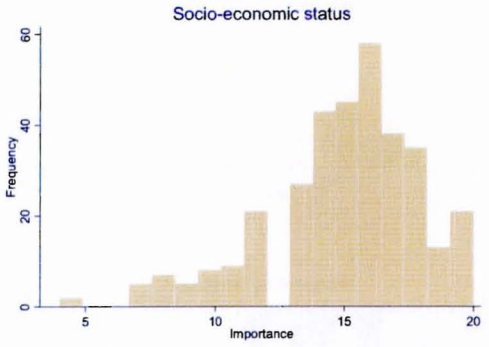


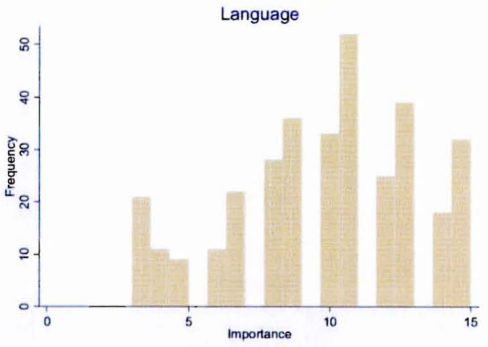


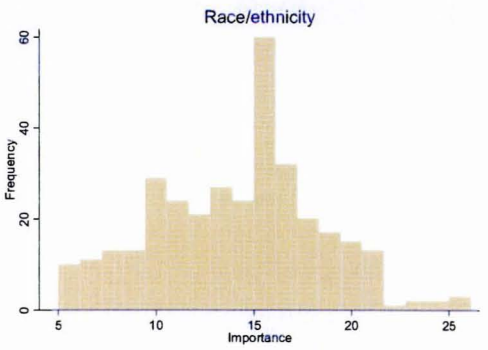
Appendix J: Graphic Representations of the frequency distribution of the importance scale for each issue.

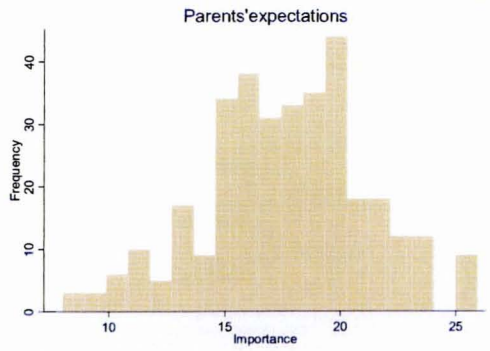


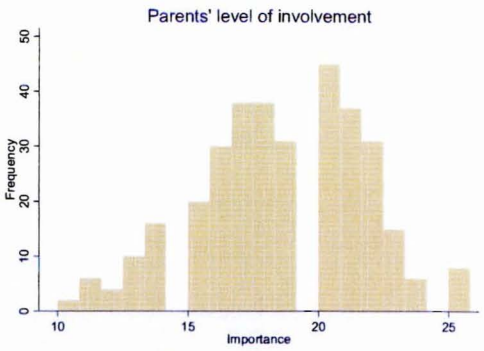


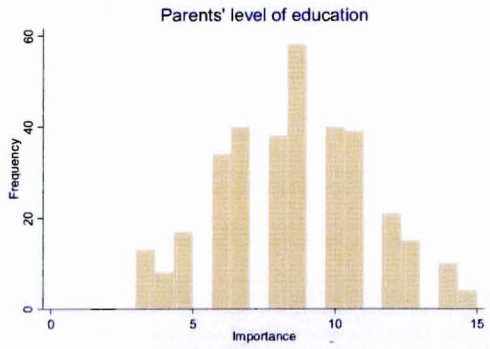


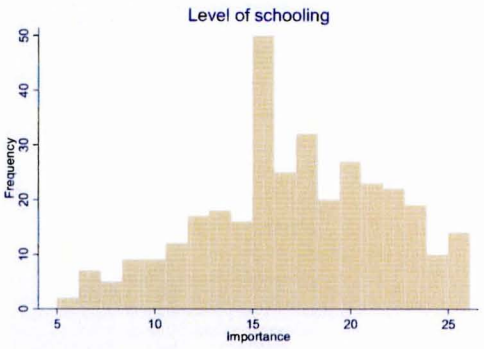


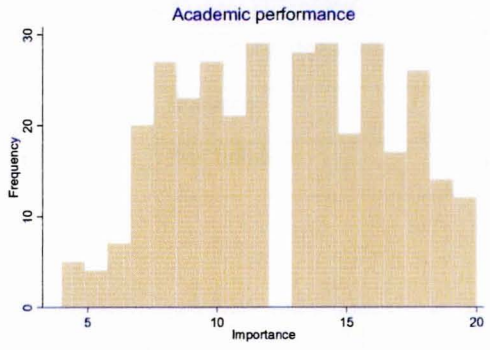


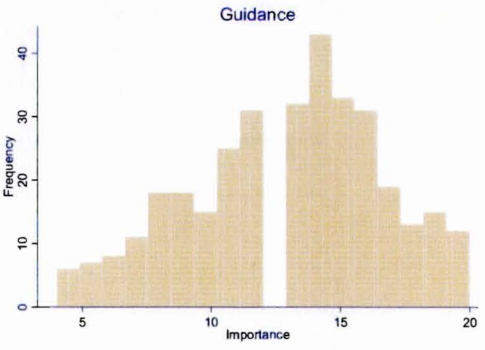

Parents'expectations
Frequency
0
10
20
30
40
10
15
20
25
Importance

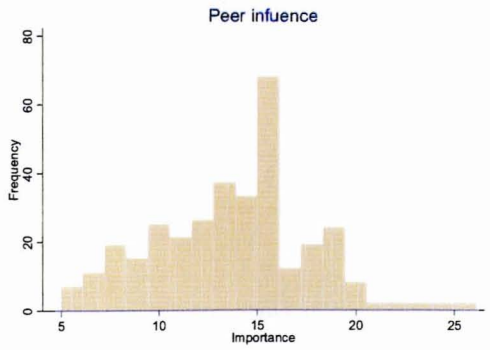

Parents' level of involvement
Frequency
0
10
20
30
40
50
10
15
20
25
Importance


Parents' level of education
Frequency
0
20
40
60
0
5
10
15
Importance


Level of schooling
Frequency
0
10
20
30
40
50
5
10
15
20
25
Importance


Academic performance
Frequency
0
10
20
30
5
10
15
20
Importance


Guidance
Frequency
0
10
20
30
40
5
10
15
20
Importance


Peer infuence
Frequency
0
20
40
60
80
5
10
15
20
25
Importance

Appendix K : The group mean comparison for the two independent sample t-test

Factor	Group	Mean	Number of participants in each group
Individual	High	59.5833	144
	Low	56.75294	170
Intrinsic	High	56.76471	153
	Low	59.27329	161
Extrinsic	High	61.48611	72
	Low	57.02893	242
Socio-economic Status	High	59.37107	159
	Low	56.69677	155
Language	High	60.57764	161
	Low	55.39216	153
Gender	High	59.84483	174
	Low	55.82143	140
Race/ethnicity	High	59.30675	163
	Low	56.69536	151
Parental	High	61.39416	137
	Low	55.43628	177
Parent Expectations	High	60.375	144
	Low	56.08235	170
Parent's level of involvement	High	60.12418	153
	Low	56.08075	161
Parent's level of education	High	59.74479	192
	Low	55.38525	122
Schooling	High	60.05405	148
	Low	56.26506	166
Level of schooling	High	60.28025	157
	Low	55.82166	157
Academic performance	High	61.80682	176
	Low	53.26087	138
Guidance	High	59.31447	159
	Low	56.75484	155
Peer Influence	High	58.14674	184
	Low	57.91538	130

Appendix L: Qualitative analysis for each group

70% an Above Group

Theme 1: Studying at university

Reason	Number who responded
1. Wants to study further/get a good degree/always wanted to study	23
2. Get a good job in the future/it is easier to get a job with a degree	25
3. Experience university lifestyle/ for the social life at university	5
4. Desire to learn more than what was learnt at school	10
5. Discover ideal career through studying	1
6. Qualify for the job they want/enjoyed	12
7. Ability to live a comfortable life	3
8. To add knowledgably to society	1
9.In order to study something specific that can only be studied at university	5
10.Secure a better future if I have a degree	3
11. Parental influence/my parents wanted me to study at university	9
12.Be able to immigrate if I have a degree	1
13. Parent's as role models/parent's are academic	5
14. Most of my friends went to university	2
15. Gain respect from others	3
16. To study something I am interested in	3
17. Gain independence in the future	4
18. Personal decision/it has been a dream of mine to study at university	6
19. Peers influenced me to go to university	2
20. I enjoy studying	3
21. Ambition/making more money with a degree	5
22. I have the money to go to university	1
23. Every one is doing it/it's the next step after school	2
24. My siblings went to university	1

Theme 2: Difficult of studying at university

Reason	Number who responded
1. Difficulty deciding what university to study at	4
2. Nothing	22
3. Financial difficulties/the cost of the university very high	8
4. Neither parent have a degree so it was not expected of me	1
5. Inability to decide what to study	2
6. Transport difficulties. I don't have a car or license/have to rely on friends and family	5

7. Likes traveling and studying restricts that	1
8. Physical distance from the university/university is too far from where I live	1
9. Not having good marks in matric	2
10. Laziness	1
11. Not being accepted into university the first time	1
12. Not being accepted into first degree choice	3
13. Traffic	1
14. Personal family problems	1
15. Disability	1
17. Not sure what to expect at university coming from school	3

Theme 3: Factors influencing decision to attend university

Reason	Number who responded
1. Family's expectations/influence	30
2. Society expectations	7
3. Wanting a good degree/needing a degree for chosen career	3
4. Wanting a good job after/making money	6
5. School environment and teachers	3
6. School expectation/encouragement	5
7. Peer expectations/influence	8
8. In order to reach the goal of having attended university	1
9. Personal choice/doing well for myself	18
10. The marks I got at school (not enough)	1
11. Wanting a social life	2
12. Bettering oneself by having a degree	2
13. Family encouragement to attend university	5
14. Job availability is better if you have a degree	5
15. Lots of my friends went to university	3
16. Parents who went to WITS	1
17. Ambition/wanting to be successful later in life	3
18. University has good facilities	1
19. I have the means (financial) to go to university	2
20. Need for independence	2
21. Being clever/I have a good work ethic	3
22. My parent's have degrees	2
23. Gaining more knowledge/enjoying studying	2
24. Not happy with what they were currently doing	2

50%-69% Group

Theme 1: Studying at university

Reason	Number who responded
1. Wants to study further/get a good degree	17
2. Get a good job in the future/have a successful career	10
3. Experience university lifestyle	1
4. Desire to learn more	8
5. Qualify for the job they want/enjoyed	14
6. It is easier to get a job with a degree	4
7. Secure a better future/earn more money/open doors in the future	9
8. Family influence/my parents wanted me to/expected me to	9
9. Parent's or siblings as role models/parent's are academic	2
10. Gain independence in the future/financially/be able to support myself	7
11. Personal decision to attend university/ I always wanted to stud at university	4
12. Ambition and being successful financially in my chosen career	7
13. My family members all have degrees/its tradition	3
14. My parents don't have degrees	2
15. I would regret it if I didn't go to university	1
16. Being able to live a better life	3
17. Love of the job that I'm working towards	1
18. Obligation to parents after what they have done for me	1
19. Helping my family financially once I have a degree	1
20. Didn't want to work straight away	2
21. Personal interest in the area of study	2
22. Wanted to do something meaningful with my life	2
23. Most of my friends were going	1
24. School teachers influenced me to go to university	1
25. Pleasing my parents by going to university	2

Theme 2: Difficulty of studying at university

Reason	Number who responded
1. Nothing	25
2. Financial difficulties/cost of the university/struggling to get funding	14
3. Transport difficulties	4
4. Physical distance from the university	1
5. Not having good marks/good matric/not getting enough points	4
6. Laziness	1
7. Not being accepted into first degree choice	2
8. Is unsupported by those around them	1

9. Too many external distractions	1
10. Difficulty deciding on a degree	1
11. Anxieties about the future	1
12. Needing a study permit (foreigner)	1
13. Being alone in what I am studying	1
14. Not sure about degree choice initially	1

Theme 3: Factors influencing decision to attend university

Reason	Number who responded
1. Family's expectations/influence	28
2. Society expectations	3
3. Wanting a good degree	1
4. Wanting a good job after/ needing a degree for chosen career	5
5. School environment and teachers	3
6. Peer expectations/influence	8
7. Personal choice/interest	4
8. Bettering oneself/having a better life	6
9. Family encouragement/support	2
10. Job availability/opportunities/having better opportunities with a job	3
11. Ambition/wanting to be successful later in life	3
12. Need for independence	3
13. Gaining more knowledge/furthering education/being able to study something I enjoy further	3
14. The people in my life influenced me	1
15. The media attracted me to studying at university	1
16. Everyone in my family has a degree/felt like I should also/obligation	4
17. My siblings attend university	3
18. Universities are better than technicons	1
19. Not having financial means	4
20. Being able to afford luxuries once I have a degree	1
21. Wanting more money	3
22. Improving my status	2
23. It is a good university	2
24. My marks in matric	1

< 50% Group

Theme 1: Studying at university

Reason	Number who responded
1. Having passed matric well	1
2. Personal choice	5
3. Wanting to pursue a specific career and needing a degree for it/needing a degree to get a better job/better job opportunities with a degree	31
4. Wanting a better future/life	9
5. Being successful/wanting more money	8
6. Wanting to become a professional	1
7. My parents motivated me to study further	6
8. I would be the first child to get a degree	3
9. Wanting to study further and know more/further my level of education	5
10. Being a good citizen and helping alleviate poverty	1
11. Wanted to be independent	3
12. Wanted a social life	2
13. I was told to get a degree/it was expected of me	5
14. Being interested in my area of study	2
15. Bettering myself	5
16. Improving ones status	1
17. All my friends were studying at university	2
18. Be educated more than my parents	2

Theme 2: Difficulties of studying at university

Reason	Number who responded
1. Nothing	26
2. Financial difficulties	18
3. Travelling is difficult	4
4. I needed to study somewhere that has accomodation	1
5. Couldn't do my first choice at university	1
6. My matric results weren't good so I had to write an entrance exam	3
7. Getting back into studying is difficult	1
8. No support at home	1
9. Poor time management	1
10. Late registration	2

Theme 3: Factors influencing decision to attend university

Reason	Number who responded
1. My parent's had no degree so I wanted to be the first	2
2. Having better future/needing a degree for a better future	7
3. Making my parents proud/it was my parents' wish	6

4. Having completed a matric	3
5. My parent's and family members influenced me/expected me to	22
6. My community influenced me to	1
7. Peer influence/many of my friends attend university/my friend influenced me	9
8. Ambition and following a dream/personal goals	9
9. Want to improve socio-economic status/having more money	5
10. Coming from a child headed household made it difficult to study and had to consider my options	1
11. My siblings attended university so I was obliged to	3
12. Wanting a higher level of education/bettering my education	7
13. Wanting to get into my specific career	2
14. Lack of funding so couldn't afford to go initially	2
15. Needing a job and a university degree helps you get a job	4
16. Level of education at the university is very good and reputable	1
17. My options were limited with what I wanted to study	1
18. My schooling environment/teachers	2
19. Expectation from school	1
20. Expectation from friends	1
21. Bettering myself	2
22. Others in my family attended university	1
24. Passion for what I am studying	1